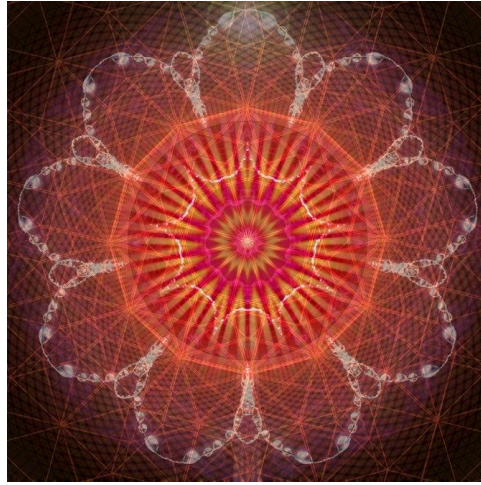


Summer 2013, Volume 9, Number 2



# *The Esoteric Quarterly*

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

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



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# *The Esoteric Quarterly*

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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](mailto:editor@esotericquarterly.com).

## **Pathways to Higher Consciousness**

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**T**he science of consciousness is among several crucial factors residing at the core of humanity's all-enduring spiritual quest. The emphasis on consciousness in the spiritual, meditative and esoteric traditions of both East and West is based on two key concepts. The first is that there are many levels or scales of reality and consciousness in the universe. The second states that "it is the expansion of consciousness and the production of increased sensitivity and perceptive awareness, which is the goal of all divine and hierarchical effort." Yet, it is only when humanity achieves an understanding of the hidden and inter-dependent dimensions of consciousness that it can begin to acquire Self-knowledge, an understanding of the divine pattern, and the power to help regenerate and ennoble life. Only by actualizing the untapped potential of the human mind and enlarging our awareness to include both the macrocosmic and the microcosmic dimensions, can our personal and collective creativity be enhanced and directed to planetary upliftment and transformation.

With these aims in mind, we offer three articles that explore the multi-leveled, but unified, field of consciousness. As such, they suggest profound possibilities for awakened consciousness, enlightenment and identification based on the purifying, illuminating and unifying paths.

Our first offering by Jon Darral-Rew, examines the two fundamental streams of spiritual awakening that have developed in the wisdom traditions of the East and West. These "two rivers of life," as Darral-Rew terms them, are described as evolutionary and radical awakening. The article, which draws upon the works of Alice A. Bailey, Bruce Lyon, Ken Wilbur and others, explores the confluence of the Trans-Himalayan and Integral modalities in an effort to clarify the seemingly disparate and poorly understood distinction between the gradual and sequential process of evolutionary

transformation, which has qualified the first and second phases of the Trans-Himalayan teaching, and the sudden and radical awakening to and identification with the One Life, which characterizes the practices of Dzogchen, Zen and other Non-Dual paths. In addition to expanding our comprehension of the newest and most synthetic forms of spirituality emerging today, Darral-Rew touches upon the significance of this "Great Path of Awakening" for the esoteric community.

The second article, by Iván Kovács, presents an overview of the tiered and evolving levels of consciousness as they are understood in the Vedas, the work of Patanjali and the Ageless Wisdom teachings of Alice A. Bailey. In order to familiarize the reader with the various degrees of consciousness as they are reflected from the macrocosmic whole into the human microcosm, the author opens with a discussion of the Human Constitution as it is presented in Bailey's work. Kovács draws upon numerous passages from the Upanishads which focus on Self-realization and the relationship between the universal and individual Soul, as well as Bailey's commentaries on the Yoga Sutras and Raja Yoga. A section on the Antahkarana as a means of approach to the Spiritual Triad is included. The article serves as a clear introductory exposition of the different types of consciousness and the paths by which one might awaken to the full spectrum of consciousness from matter and the body, to mind to soul and finally from soul to spirit.

Our last full length feature is the third in a series of articles from James Moffatt on modern psychology and the mysteries of consciousness. Based on the Fourth Way teachings of George I. Gurdjieff, the article advances a conceptualization of human consciousness that is profoundly different from the restricted materialist views which dominate contemporary psychology and science. The

article begins with an overview of the issues confronting consciousness researchers. Also included is a brief examination of Gurdjieff's early years, which reveals the enigmatic and controversial teacher to be a thoroughly dedicated seeker of Truth. In the sections that follow, the author proffers a detailed and lucid investigation of the structure of Gurdjieff's spiritual developmental psychology and his complex and challenging cosmological systems. His cogent exegesis, which will be continued in an ensuing article, adds depth and value to our understanding of the man and the Fourth Way path.

As part of the Quarterly's continuing effort to recognize some of the "Great Esotericists of the Past," this issue includes a paper on the life and work of Arthur Edward Waite, best remembered as a prolific writer on Masonic and esoteric subjects and a co-creator of the Rider-Waite Tarot Deck. Three additional papers contributed by the School for Esoteric Studies, focus on the Festivals of Easter, Wesak and Goodwill. Although this year's festival period is now over, we thought our readers would like to read these talks on the three major spiritual festivals of 2013. Also included in this issue is a book review—*Take Your Time: the Wisdom of Slowing Down*—by Eknath Easwaran.

In keeping with the theme of this issue, we offer a poem—*Absolute Consciousness*—from Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi (1879–1950), one of the greatest Indian sages of the twentieth century. We are also pleased to include three luminous watercolors from the visionary artist, Helena Nelson-Reed, whose detailed and strikingly beautiful images derive from her explorations of archetypes, shamanism and myth. Each of the evocative works featured here—*Sacred Circle*, *Enter the Hollow Hills* and *Cycles*—focus on the mystical realm of the Goddess and carry the elevating breath and spirit of other dimensions. For more information on the artist's watercolors and other work, we encourage you to visit: <http://www.helenanelsonreed.com>.

We hope you enjoy the articles and other features in this issue of the *Esoteric Quarterly*. Please let us know what you think.

Donna M. Brown  
[editor@esotericquarterly.com](mailto:editor@esotericquarterly.com).

### 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 or the School for Esoteric Studies 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."

## Letter to the Editor

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Dear Editor:

After reading John Nash's article entitled "The Etheric Body," I had to write to the *Esoteric Quarterly* to express my deep gratitude for this extremely helpful article. I participate as a healing practitioner and teacher with a group called the "International Network of Esoteric Healing"—"INEH." This network's main project is the teaching of a healing course combining practical healing techniques and metaphysical theory based on the Tibetan's teaching. The founder, Brenda Johnston, was a Bailey student herself, and back in the 1960s, she began a deep research of healing practices as put forth in the Bailey books. She just recently passed on at the respectable age of 96. Through dedicated work with several other interested healers, she created the course called "Esoteric Healing."

Over a period of 50 years, various members of INEH have continued to research concepts and practices related to the etheric body, clarifying and expanding this course for healing based on the Tibetan's instructions and teachings. And answers and links to certain questions have not always been easily found. So it was with amazement and delight that I read John Nash's article. Here in this article he guides the reader to essential esoteric concepts relating to the nature of the etheric field—both cosmic and

systemic, the nature and function of prana, and the make-up of the etheric body with specific information about the chakras and nadis. In addition, he discusses the role of the etheric body in the processes of disease, healing, birth, death, and the raising of the kundalini. There are also sections of the article addressing healing therapies and the role of the etheric body in spiritual development.

At the end of the article Mr. Nash writes, "What this article has tried to do, within its length constraints, is to compile the teachings (on the etheric body) into a coherent and logical framework for the convenience of esoteric students, and especially for those who may wish to do further research." To help with further research, he has referenced each source in a comprehensive bibliography so that interested readers can easily look up the fascinating and useful facts presented. This article is an excellent source in itself for gaining a unified overview of the etheric body and as a starting off place for further exploration. For me, many links were clarified and long standing questions answered. And I plan on having copies available for future esoteric healing students and practitioners!

With gratitude and appreciation,  
Wendy Glaubitz

## Poem of the Quarter

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### **“Absolute Consciousness”** by Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

The Absolute Consciousness  
Alone  
Is our Real Nature.  
Your duty is to be,  
And not to be this or that.  
There are no stages in Realization,  
Or degrees of Liberation.  
There are no levels of Reality;  
There are only levels of experience  
For the individual.  
If anything can be gained  
That was not present before,  
It can also be lost,  
Whereas the Absolute is eternal,  
Here and now.  
It is not a matter of becoming,  
But of Being.

Remain aware of yourself  
And all else will be known.  
The ultimate truth is so simple;  
It is nothing more than being in one's  
Natural, original state.  
There is no greater mystery than this:  
Being Reality ourselves,  
We seek to gain reality.  
It is false to speak of Realization;  
What is there to realize?  
The real is ever as it is.  
All that is required is  
To cease regarding as real  
That which is unreal.  
That is all we need  
To attain wisdom (*jnana*).



## Pictures of the Quarter by Helena Nelson-Reed

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### *Sacred Circle*

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## *Cycles*

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## Quotes of the Quarter

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It is not a question of the simple abolition of duality, but rather the sudden appearance of a unity in the heart of the duality. One derives from this an important impression of a healthy, legitimate duality. From what I have heard, a number of teachings or approaches insist on a “nonduality.” Yet, if a “falsified” duality exists, there is also a completely legitimate duality that manifests itself not only in space but also in time. Ordinarily, there seems to be a lot of insistence on spatial duality—certainly there is that which separates me from the tree, but there is also that which separates me from what I was or what I will be, that which, for example, separates me from my death. After all, a man’s life is very important! My death is an object that is, in its way, more solid, and for me more real than the tree that means little to me! The duality is there; it manifests itself in time and space, and it is in space and time that duality is either healthy or corrupt. In my opinion, it is a grave tactical error to set people going in an assault against duality without clarifying the difference between a healthy duality and a corrupt one. They run as much risk of hurting or even destroying themselves as they do of being saved. One cannot deny duality since it is the principle of life. Certainly, a false duality that is the product of given individual’s mind should be destroyed. I repeat and insist: duality, to the extent that it is a duplicate of reality, a dreamlike and personally fabricated reality, must be ruthlessly destroyed. But when this veil, in the center of which we habitually evolve, is consumed, when this enormous subjective bubble bursts, what then is left? What will you see once you are outside the bubble? The world, plainly and simply. There is something! There is me and the tree. Duality exists.

Stephen Jourdain, *Radical Awakening: Cutting through the Conditioned Mind* (Carlsbad, CA: Inner Directions Foundation, 2011), 38.

The Great Search is the loveless contraction hidden in the heart of the separate-self

sense, a contraction that drives the intense yearning for a tomorrow in which salvation will finally arrive, but during which time, thank God, I can continue to be myself. The greater the Great Search, the more I can deny God. The greater the Great Search, the more I can feel my own sensation of seeking, which defines the contours of myself. The Great Search is the great enemy of what is.

Should we then simply cease the Great Search? Definitely, if we could. But the effort to stop the Great Search is itself more of the Great Search. The very first step presumes and reinforces the seeking sensation. There is actually nothing the self-contraction can do to stop the Great Search, because the self-contraction and the Great Search are two names for the same thing.

If Spirit cannot be found as a future product of the Great Search, then there is only one alternative: Spirit must be fully, totally, completely present right now—AND you must be fully, totally, completely aware of it right now. It will not do to say that Spirit is present but I don’t realize it. That would require the Great Search; that would demand that I seek a tomorrow in which I could realize that Spirit is fully present, but such seeking misses the present in the very first step. To keep seeking would be to keep missing. No, the realization itself, the awareness itself: this, too, must somehow be fully and completely present right now. If it is not, then all we have left is the Great Search, doomed to presume that which it wishes to overcome.

There must be something about our present awareness that contains the entire truth. Somehow, no matter what your state, you are immersed fully in everything you need for perfect enlightenment. You are somehow looking right at the answer. One hundred percent of Spirit is in your perception right now. Not 20 percent, not 50 percent, not 99 percent, but literally 100 percent of Spirit is in your awareness right now—and the trick, as it were,

is to recognize this ever-present state of affairs, and not to engineer a future state in which Spirit will announce itself.

And this simple recognition of an already present Spirit is the task, as it were, of the great Nondual traditions.

Ken Wilber, *The Eye of the Spirit: An Integral Vision for a World Gone Slightly Mad* (Boston, MA: Shambhala Publications, 2001), 291.

Spirituality is a very important and natural dimension of the human psyche, and the spiritual quest is a legitimate and fully justified human endeavor. However, it is necessary to emphasize that this applies to genuine spirituality based on personal experience and does not provide support for ideologies and dogmas of organized religions. To prevent misunderstanding and confusion that in the past compromised many similar discussions, it is critical to make a clear distinction between spirituality and religion.

Spirituality is based on direct experiences of ordinarily invisible numinous dimensions of reality, which become available in holotropic states of consciousness. It does not require a special place or officially appointed persons mediating contact with the divine. The mystics do not need churches or temples. The context in which they experience the sacred dimensions of reality, including their own divinity, is provided by their bodies and nature. And instead of officiating priests, they need a supportive group of fellow seekers or the guidance of a teacher who is more advanced on the inner journey than they are themselves.

Stanislav Grof, *Science and Spirituality: Observations from Modern Consciousness Research* (<http://dev.worldshiftmovement.org/science-spirituality>).

According to Vedanta the whole material universe is merely a finite wave in Consciousness. Out of consciousness, it emerges, sustains itself for a few trillion years and subsides back into it. Though it appears solid because we are perceiving it through

material instruments, the senses, it is actually formless Spirit.

James Swartz, *Knowledge of Truth* (Portland, OR: Shinning World Publications, 2011), 19.

Our whole experience is a construction in the mind, a form appearing in consciousness. These mental forms are composed not of physical substance but of “mindstuff.” We imagine that the world out there is like the forms that appear in consciousness, but it turns out, that in nearly every aspect, the external is not at all like the images created in the mind. What appear to us as fundamental dimensions and attributes of the physical world—space, time, matter and energy—are but the fundamental dimensions and attributes of the forms appearing in consciousness.

Peter Russell, “The Primacy of Consciousness,” in Ervin Laszlo *The Re-Enchantment of the Cosmos* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 2006).

Our apprehension of the One does not partake of the nature of either understanding or abstract thought as does knowledge of other intelligible objects, but has the character of presentation higher than understanding. For understanding proceeds by concepts, and the concept is a multiple affair and the soul misses the One when she falls into number and plurality. She must then pass beyond understanding.

Plotinus, *Ennead VI* (Burdett, NY: Larson).

Matter is derived from mind, not mind from matter.

Padmasambhava, *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, (Boston, Mass: Shambhala Publications Inc., 1975).

Mind is consciousness which has put on limitations. You are originally unlimited and perfect. Later you take on limitations and become the mind.

Sri Ramana Maharshi (1879 –1950).





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## THE SPIRITUAL GLOBAL NETWORK

Today we can discern a growing global network of people who are becoming an increasingly potent force for transformation in human affairs. They are inclusive, not separative; they seem to be in touch with the “soul of humanity,” urging “a conspiracy of love,” as did paleontologist-priest Teilhard de Chardin.

People aligned with this higher consciousness inevitably become transmitters of a wider vision, dedicated to the well-being of humanity. They are linked together by an attitude of mind and heart rather than by outer organization.

A view of the deeper spiritual significance of this integrating group, including practical evidence of their work today, is offered in *Building and Bridging: The New Group of World Servers*, available from:

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From the point of Light within the Mind of God  
Let light stream forth into the minds of men.  
Let Light descend on Earth.

From the point of Love within the Heart of God  
Let love stream forth into the hearts of men.  
May Christ return to Earth.

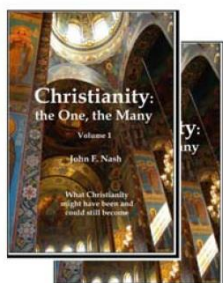
From the centre where the Will of God is known  
Let purpose guide the little wills of men –  
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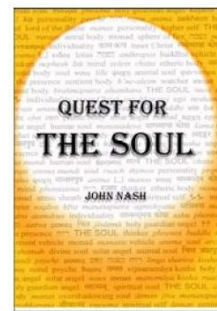
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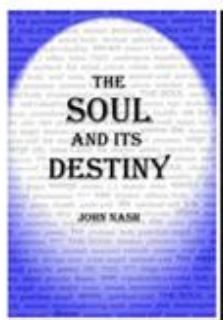
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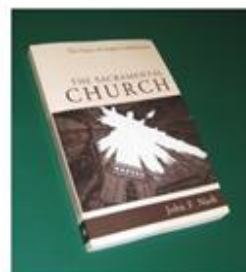
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# The Two Rivers of Life: Radical and Evolutionary Awakening, and the Trans-Himalayan Tradition

Jon Darrall-Rew

## Abstract

In a recent book, Bruce Lyon explores the two major forms of awakening that have been cultivated in the wisdom traditions of the East and West. The first is radical awakening, which involves awakening to Absolute Reality. The second is evolutionary awakening, which involves awakening to ever-wider spheres of the relative, evolving cosmos. This article explores these two forms of awakening and discusses their integration and contribution to the Trans-Himalayan tradition. It considers how both forms have manifest in the first and second phase of the teachings, and what their synthesis might look like in the third phase. I also consider how the Shamballa Impacts are contributing to the emergence of these two forms of awakening on unprecedented scales, before finally looking at the implications of these impacts for the Trans-Himalayan community.

## Introduction

In *Occult Cosmology*, Bruce Lyon makes the distinction between two fundamental forms of awakening: radical awakening and evolutionary awakening.<sup>1</sup> The combination of these two forms of awakening is increasingly central to the newest and most synthetic forms of spirituality emerging today, from Ken Wilber's distinction between growth through states and structures;<sup>2</sup> Adi Da's teaching on Transcendentalist and Emanationist paths;<sup>3</sup> Andrew Cohen's focus on Being and Becoming in his Evolutionary Enlightenment teachings;<sup>4</sup> Thomas Hubl's focus on Silence and Movement;<sup>5</sup> and Aisha Salem's description of the difference between the realization of Truth and Life.<sup>6</sup> In certain passages of Djwhal Khul's teaching with Alice Bailey, he refers to these two forms of awakening in terms of identification (radical awakening) and initiation (evolutionary awakening). I will return to how these

terms show up in Djwhal Khul's teaching with Alice Bailey later, but first, here is how Bruce Lyon defines these two forms of awakening:

Evolutionary awakening refers to the process of initiation wherein self-conscious individuals gradually and sequentially experiences themselves through transformation becoming identified with subtler and more inclusive levels of identity. Radical awakening occurs when self-conscious individuals suddenly and radically experience themselves as the One Life.<sup>7</sup>

As is pointed to in this quote, radical awakening is awakening to and as Absolute Reality that transcends, includes and is arising as the entire multi-plane cosmos. This type of realization has been cultivated in various radical awakening lineages such as Dzogchen, Mahamudra, Zen, Vedanta, and Kashmir Shaivism, for instance.

Evolutionary awakening refers to the shifts of a relative self's level of polarization that take place *within* the seven sub-planes of the cosmic physical plane, from personality to soul to monad, and then into wider and deeper spheres of incarnation along the cosmic paths. This form of growth also includes various other lines of unfoldment too, such as an individual's cultivation of relationship with communities of beings operating in all kingdoms; access to more and more planes of experience; and

## About the Author

Jon Darrall-Rew lives in Bristol, United Kingdom, and is the current head of Shamballa School ([www.shamballaschool.org](http://www.shamballaschool.org)). He recently completed a forthcoming book with Dustin DiPerna, *Earth is Eden*,<sup>8</sup> from which much of the content of this article is taken. He can be contacted on [jondarrallrew@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jondarrallrew@yahoo.co.uk)

the unfoldment of forms of intelligence on each plane.

Something I wish to address in this article is how the differentiation between these two forms of awakening seems to have been poorly understood in the Trans-Himalayan community until recently. Indeed, it seems to me that this has produced a number of areas of confusion for students when comparing the Trans-Himalayan teachings to those of other traditions, particularly the Eastern traditions. It is my hope that this article may contribute to the continued clarification of the “Great Path of Awakening” both theoretically, in terms of how it is understood and presented in the global spiritual field and in terms of its embodied expression by awake, powerful, loving and creative beings and groups in the world. Thus may the Trans-Himalayan community as a whole continue to act as both a repository of some of the most profound esoteric wisdom available, and as a growing field for today and tomorrow’s initiates.

### **Radical and Evolutionary Awakening as described in the Trans-Himalayan Tradition**

To understand these two forms of awakening, and how they have been encapsulated in the previous Trans-Himalayan teachings, we need to consider the distinction between Absolute and Relative Reality. This distinction was one that was first most fully explored by the great Buddhist philosopher, Nagarjuna, in his Two Truths doctrine that forms a core teaching of Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism. That doctrine states that all Reality has two fundamental truths to it. The first is an Absolute, unchanging, eternal, omnipresent Truth. The second is a Relative, changing, evolving, and impermanent truth.

Absolute Truth is that which relates to the Absolute Reality that transcends, includes and arises as the entire cosmos. Relative Truth relates to the recognition that the entire cosmos is real, but only relatively so, as there is no part of it which can be proven to be permanent, unchanging, and independently existent. In Buddhist philosophy, Absolute Truth is the basis for understanding the doctrine of Empti-

ness, which relates both to the absence of any permanent and inherent existence to anything in the relative cosmos, and to the primordial, unmanifest Ground of Being out of which the entire cosmos arises. Relative Truth is the basis for understanding the doctrine of Dependent Origination, which considers the whole relative cosmos to be composed of interconnected, mutually interdependent, only relatively real entities.

In the Trans-Himalayan teachings, Absolute Reality is described as the Boundless Immutable Principle, which is pointed to in the First Fundamental of the Secret Doctrine.<sup>9</sup> For clarity, it serves to note that in this article and in accordance with both the teaching and my own experience, I use the terms Boundless Immutable Principle, the One Life, Infinite Awake Presence, and Absolute Reality, as synonymous.

Just as is the case in some of the most profound Wisdom Traditions, in the Trans-Himalayan teachings, this Absolute Reality is understood to have both a Consciousness, or Awareness, aspect, and an Energy, or Life-force aspect. Ultimately, these two are non-dual, or not two, yet in order to understand our current topic more clearly, it can help to differentiate them.

The Consciousness aspect should not be understood as equivalent to the subtle, loving and yet still dualistic consciousness that is often spoken of in relation to the soul. Rather, it is unbounded, selfless, centerless, objectless, primordial, timeless, infinite Consciousness. In the Secret Doctrine, Blavatsky described it by saying,

We call absolute consciousness “unconsciousness,” because it seems to us that it must necessarily be so, just as we call the Absolute, “Darkness,” because to our finite understanding it appears quite impenetrable...<sup>10</sup>

And,

In the occult teachings, the Unknown and the Unknowable MOVER, or the Self-Existing, is the absolute divine Essence. And thus being Absolute Consciousness, and Absolute Motion—to the limited senses

of those who describe this indescribable—it is unconsciousness and immovableness.<sup>11</sup>

And the same in Djwhal Khul's teachings with Alice Bailey:

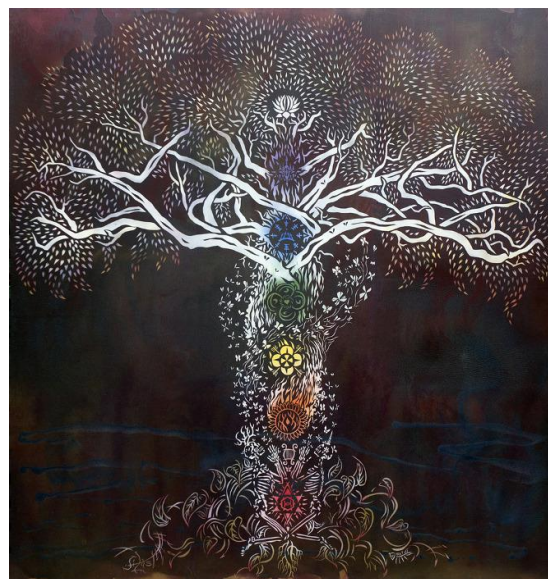
...the Absolute is consciousness in its fullest expression, though at the stage of human existence the Absolute must be regarded as unconsciousness.<sup>12</sup>

This Consciousness aspect of Absolute Reality is known by many names in the radical awakening lineages. In Dzogchen, it is described as the Natural State, Rigpa, and Primordial Awareness; In Zen, it is the unborn Buddha-Nature; in Kashmir Shaivism, it is personified as Shiva; and in Vedanta, it is described as Brahman.

The Energy or Life-force aspect of the Absolute is the Absolute Motion that Blavatsky describes. This is the "Great Breath"<sup>13</sup> or Perfect Life-force expression of Absolute Consciousness that arises, uncoils and becomes the active dynamic Energy of Pure Life at the cyclically recurring birth of the universe, and that is retracted into passivity at its dissolution. This Life-force of Absolute Reality is "The Perfect Dynamic Energy of the Lion," to quote the title of a Dzogchen Tantra, and it is the Para-Shakti of the Indian nondual lineages. It arises as the incarnating and supremely awakened entity, or One Universal Monad, Logos, or Life, of the universe. This Universal Monad is the One that is the radiation of the Absolute Zero of Boundless Awareness-Space, and together, the Infinite Awake Presence and dynamic Life; Non-Being and Being; Emptiness and Form—the perfect 10—they are the nondual Absolute Reality, the Boundless Immutable Principle or the One Life of the Trans-Himalayan teachings.

The Trans-Himalayan scholar and teacher, Michael Robbins, has suggested that it is the will toward deliberate Self-Perception that arises within this One Universal Monad, to which there is nothing external that allows a process of what he calls, "emanative-Self-division."<sup>14</sup> By this process, the One Universal Monad progressively, and willfully (an important point—it is as if the One *wills* to become the many and yet remain, in synthesis, as One) divides Itself through emanation (so that it re-

mains never really not Itself) and thus reflects Itself. This Self-emanation allows the One Universal Monad to "ray forth" the galactic monads that incarnate through entire galaxies, which themselves emanate super-constellational monads, which incarnate through systems of constellations, which themselves emanate constellational, solar, planetary and intra-planetary monads, which all incarnate through their respective fields, until *and beyond* that "point" at which we have what is understood as a "human monadic essence." The One Universal Monad then has the opportunity to express itself on the seven sub-planes of the cosmic physical plane through the three primary levels of polarization—the human personality, the soul, and the monad.<sup>15</sup>



**Figure 1. "The Tree of Life" by Silas Stoddard.<sup>16</sup>**

We can vision this in the symbol of the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden—a divine tree whose roots and trunk periodically grow out of the rich, black soil of the Ground of Infinite Awake Presence as an overflowing of its pure fertility. That trunk—the One Universal Monad or Life—then begins to separate into scaffold branches, from which lateral branches grow outwards, from which stems extend, and upon which grow untold numbers of leaves. There is no part of this tree that is more "tree" than another, and it doesn't make sense to ask if there is any part of it more connected to the Ground of Infinite Awake Presence from

which it has sprouted. And yet still, the leaves would have a journey of many stages to trace their source back to the trunk.

Radical awakening then relates to our awakening to the ever-present Source, Ground, and essential True Nature of the entire cosmos as the living matrix of the Absolute Reality of the Boundless Immutable Principle—the Infinite Awake Presence that transcends, includes and arises as the entire cosmos.

Evolutionary awakening relates to the stage by stage process whereby a particular stream of emanation of the One Universal Life or Monad, identified as a human personality, for instance, progressively re-traces that emanated stream of its own relative identity, from personality to soul to monad to a particular planetary Logos, a solar Logos, a constellational Logos, a galactic Logos, a universal Logos....

Again, here is Bruce Lyon describing these two forms of awakening in detail,

The lesser self is always contained in the greater self and “self-transformation” involves the sequential shifting of identity into the larger sphere through the process of initiation. The personality self is contained within the ring-pass-not of the lower three planes and within the time ring-pass-not of the physical incarnation. The soul expresses through five planes and its cycle in time is through many thousands of incarnations. The monad is relatively immortal from the perspective of the personality—“lasting” for a manvantara. We can see, however, that a monad is also an evolving self if it is understood in terms of reference to a particular level of “identification.” For example, a “human monad” or an “Earth Chain monad” has reference to a spark of the one flame that is “identified” with a particular sphere of life within the One Life. It could be said that a “self-realized” human monad in the Earth Scheme is one that recognizes their identification with the identity of the Planetary Logos. By “identification,” we mean something like “direct participation in the life of.” We know too that a human monad (or the essence of the monad) will take one of the cosmic paths and pass into

other spheres of awareness and identity. What we understand by the human monad then is a far vaster being than what we understand by the human soul, but it is still an “evolving self.” The evolution now takes place “in life” rather than strictly “in consciousness,” but it is an evolution nonetheless. The monad experiences itself as the “One,” however, that One keeps getting bigger until it is the solar, galactic and universal identities expressing through greater and greater time and space ring-pass-nots. The human personality was always the monad whether or not it realized this to be the case. Similarly, the human monad has always been the One Universal Life even though that realization occurs in the experience of progressive identification.

There is a second “self” that begins to make its presence felt when the experience of the monad begins to become a reality in human awareness, however, and this is the non-evolving “absolute” self. The evolving self lives embedded in the world of becoming—within the manifest universe. The absolute self is neither confined to the manifest universe nor excluded from it. It neither evolves nor realizes itself. It is beyond all definition and all duality. It is what the Ageless Wisdom calls the One Boundless Immutable Principle.<sup>17</sup>

### **Marriage of Trans-Himalayan and Integral**

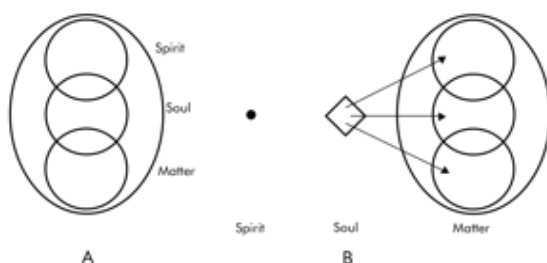
To help us understand the Truth of these two forms of awakening, Bruce Lyon provides us with both a vertical and horizontal definition of spirit and matter.<sup>18</sup> He makes the point that spirit and matter, when viewed dualistically, can be understood in both a horizontal (radical) and vertical (evolutionary) sense.

Horizontally, spirit is the Infinite Awake Presence that is the unborn and ever-present root of all subjectivity, and matter is its eternal Life-Force arising as the entire cosmos. Vertically, within the relative universe, spirit is the pure energy found on the subtlest planes (systemic or cosmic), and matter is the most solidified expression of that energy in gross form. Spirit or pure energy, which is found on the subtlest



planes, is the One Universal Monad that we are in the deepest cosmic root of our identification, and that is revealed in ever wider and more inclusive forms as identification is shifted into the monad and beyond.

These two approaches to understanding the spirit/matter duality can be seen in the diagram below. On the left, (A) depicts spirit, soul and matter defined in evolutionary or vertical terms, where soul exists on a subtler plane of energy/matter than personality, and spirit on a subtler plane than soul. On the right, (B) adds a horizontal definition, where instead of spirit and soul existing in a subtler frequency of energy-matter on the continuum of the planes, they are actually transcendent to the entire spectrum of manifestation on all planes, dense or subtle.



**Figure 2. The vertical-evolutionary and horizontal-radical approaches to understanding the spirit, soul, and matter trinity.<sup>19</sup>**

Interestingly, (B) gives us two trinities. One is horizontal, relating to radical awakening and the Absolute Reality that transcends the entire cosmos, and one is vertical, relating to evolutionary awakening and existing within the manifest cosmos, on progressively subtle planes.

One approach that has integrated and synthesized a considerable depth of wisdom on both the radical and evolutionary forms of awakening, and that is able to shed light on the two directions of movement shown in the above diagram—vertical and horizontal—is Ken Wilber's Integral Theory.<sup>20</sup> Integral Theory is what could be described as a meta-framework, or a model for integrating the perspectives offered by theorists, scientists and philosophers across disciplines, across the globe, and pre-modern, modern and post-modern eras, into a

coherent whole. Described by some as a "Theory of Everything," it works according to the injunction that all perspectives are true but partial, and is composed of five core elements. These are quadrants, levels, lines, states, and types. For those unfamiliar with these, they are described in an endnote.<sup>21</sup>

The two elements of Integral Theory that have most relevance here are states and levels (levels are also known in Integral Theory as "structures.") In Integral Theory, spiritual awakening is understood to involve awareness re-tracing its source horizontally, from right to left in the above diagram (B), from gross to subtle to causal states. Conversely, the vertical movement involves the shifting of consciousness into ever higher and more inclusive levels, or structures of consciousness. These two movements should not be confused. The horizontal movement relates to the recognition of the true nature of awareness, or the seer. This process involves the continued release of awareness from the structures through which it operates (e.g. the body, thought, personality, time, individual consciousness...), until it is recognized as transcending, including and arising as the entire cosmos. The vertical movement involves the unfoldment of more and more inclusive and all-embracing lenses through which the seer, or awareness, can view and understand the world.

When attempting to understand the difference between radical and evolutionary awakening as they appear in the Trans-Himalayan teaching, the differentiation offered by Integral Theory between states and levels is important. Often, Trans-Himalayan students familiar with the Integral use of the terms gross, subtle, causal, and nondual, understand them as equivalent to the vertical trinity in the figure above (B), of matter, soul and spirit. However, I suggest that this is incorrect and that the former terms more accurately have specific reference to the horizontal categorization in the above figure. According to this reasoning, rather than having relation to components of the relative evolutionary cosmos (monads, souls, personalities...), the terms, gross, subtle, causal and nondual, refer to *states or phases* of Absolute Reality's involution into the entire spectrum of

cosmic manifest form through all planes. From this perspective, they are states of Absolute Reality rather than levels of the relative self.

The wisdom traditions describe to us how this process of involution—the horizontal movement in the figure above, from left to right in (B)—can be thought of using at least two different scales. First, it can be conceived from a macrocosmic scale. From this orientation, one can conceive of the process by which the entire cosmos is created. Nondual Absolute Reality first externalizes as the causal state. This is the Primordial Unmanifest, Pure Emptiness, Non-Being, Absolute Darkness, and the Void—which is described in *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* as the First Cosmic Logos.<sup>22</sup> Such causal formlessness is still beyond time and beyond space. It could even be said that the causal state is *pre-time* and *pre-space*. Causal formlessness, which is Infinite Unmanifest Being resting as pure potentiality and intention, then externalizes into the subtle state. This subtle state, which is composed of infinite energy, sound, light, vibration and rays, is the Second Cosmic Logos.<sup>23</sup> Subtle Reality then externalizes further into the gross state, which is composed of all universal gross forms and objects, at which point the Big Bang explodes into existence. This is the Third Cosmic Logos.<sup>24</sup> (Models of involution, like the one just provided, are commonly found within esoteric traditions of both the East and West.)

The second way to conceive of involution is on a moment-to-moment basis. From this perspective, one can perceive involution in *every single instant* as spontaneously present. In each moment, nondual Absolute Reality remains unmoved as the Infinite Awake Presence that is the One Life. In the very same instant, the Infinite Awake Presence emanates as causal formlessness. Simultaneously, it is present as the energy, light, rays, sound and vibration of the subtle state. And equally, it is spontaneously present as all gross form. From this perspective, there is no sequential involutionary movement into form but rather the spontaneously present existence of all three phases of nondual Absolute Reality all at once.



**Figure 3. The three states of water (H<sub>2</sub>O): solid, liquid and gas.<sup>25</sup>**

When first becoming familiar with the phases of involution, it can be helpful to liken the process to the movement of water (H<sub>2</sub>O) through state-phase shifts from gas, to liquid, to solid. In this sense, nondual Absolute Reality (H<sub>2</sub>O) can be seen as manifesting from causal (gas), to subtle (liquid), to gross states (solid). As described above, this process can be seen as sequential or all at once. All phases of relative creation, whether gas, liquid or solid, are equally water. In a similar way, all phases of creation (causal, subtle, and gross) are equally the nondual One Life, or Boundless Immutable Principle of Absolute Reality.

From the perspective of state-phases, radical awakening is the process by which awareness recognizes itself as water rather than identifying as a specific state or phase of creation. Radical awakening, therefore, involves the Infinite Awake Presence that is nondual Absolute Reality and the true nature of awareness, recognizing itself as such through all three states of Reality—boundless, empty, formless awareness (causal), infinite living light-energy (subtle), and all cosmic form (gross). Those familiar with Buddhist philosophy will recognize these as the three great spheres of being, or buddha-bodies—the dharmakaya, sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya, respectively, whose ultimate indivisible unity is known as the svabhavikakaya.<sup>26</sup> From this root-perspective, all of Reality is revealed as an infinite matrix of the One Life.

Within these state-phases, the evolutionary planes (the cosmic physical plane, the cosmic

astral, cosmic mental, etc.) compose the gross state of Reality, and thus the process of evolutionary awakening occurs within the infinite form expression of the Absolute. Therefore, rather than the gross state being equated to just the systemic physical plane, *all the planes*, systemic, cosmic and beyond *ad infinitum*, can be understood to embody the gross state of the Absolute. Deeper still, since ultimately, from a nondual perspective, there is nothing but the Absolute Reality of the One Life, all of its state-phases—gross, subtle, causal, and nondual—are present on every plane. This means that radical awakening is available to all beings regardless of their stage of evolutionary awakening.

### Detail

The lack of explicit differentiation about these two forms of awakening in the Trans-Himalayan teaching prior to Bruce Lyon's recent contribution has resulted in some points of confusion about the nature of the Path. These though, when clarified, paint a profound picture both for the wonder of the cosmos we inhabit, and the contribution the Trans-Himalayan teachings can make to the world. To my mind, the principal areas of needed clarification have been around the relation of the monad to Absolute Reality; the degree to which radical awakening, described at times by Djwhal Khul in terms of identification, is dependent upon a high stage of initiation; and how radical awakening and evolutionary awakening, or identification and initiation, differentially unfold in such advanced stages of development as the cosmic paths.

The lack of clarity about these matters is understandable. In his work with Alice Bailey, Djwhal Khul does not explicitly differentiate between identification (radical awakening—the horizontal movement in the diagram above) as experienced through an evolutionary shift of the self's center of gravity into the monad, and as it might be opened to from other depths of the self, such as the personality or soul. Students could therefore be forgiven for confusing the monad with the non-evolving Absolute Reality, with the adjunct assumption that whenever other spiritual traditions speak of awakening to Absolute Reality, they are

speaking of a shift of consciousness into the monad.

As understandable as this is, any in-depth exploration of the teachings of the radical awakening lineages such as Dzogchen, Mahamudra, Zen, Vedanta, or Kashmir Shaivism, for instance, will demonstrate that such a position cannot explain the data. Specifically, if we look to the great teachers, sages and siddhas of the above named radical awakening traditions, one can easily find examples of beings understood to be fully radically awake, i.e., stable, persistent abiding in the nondual state regardless of the level of evolutionary attainment. Examples here might include Ramana Maharshi, the great Dzogchen philosopher-siddha, Longchen Rabjam, or contemporary teachers such as Adyashanti or Ken Wilber, for instance. And yet these are *not* beings we would not normally understand to be fully monadically polarised. If they were, then the sheer intensity and power of their presence and energy would be equivalent to that of Chohans, and beings operating within Shamballa. While the presence and energy of such radical awakening realizers was and is certainly powerful, the presence we would expect from a monadically polarised being would be of several levels of magnitude beyond this.

This dissociation leaves us in with an interesting asymmetry: monadic polarization *does* entail radical awakening to and as Absolute Reality, but radical awakening to and as Absolute Reality *does not* necessarily involve monadic polarization. This asymmetry serves as the basis for the needed differentiation between radical and evolutionary awakening, as highlighted in Bruce Lyon's recent work, and also here. But it also calls us not to stop there. Rather, we are called to go deeper into the relationship between these two forms of awakening in order to understand the asymmetry, and why it is that they seem to converge into one in some places, and not in others.

One way to understand this is to explore the relationship between the states previously described (gross, subtle, causal, nondual) and the evolutionary planes (systemic, cosmic, etc.). If we do this, we can see that on each subtler plane of the cosmic physical plane (and indeed

of all cosmic planes), the Absolute Reality of the unchanging One Life is less and less veiled. This means that as a being shifts their polarization into subtler and subtler planes through evolutionary awakening along the path of initiation, radical awakening is more and

more naturally opened up. This is owing to the fact that increasingly for such a being, the planes upon which they are polarized are so subtle that the True Nature of Absolute Reality is nakedly disclosed.

**Table 1. Correspondences between the sub-planes of the cosmic physical plane, the depths of the self residing upon them, the communities and energies operating on those planes, the corresponding Integral attitudes, and the states of the radical Absolute Reality most prevalent to relative vision on those levels.**

Integral altitude	Level of Self-hood	Community	Plane Energy	Plane	Radical State of the Absolute most pervasive
Clear light	Monad	Shamballa	Planetary Life, Destiny, Will, Power	Logoic	Nondual Causal/witness
				Monadic	
				Higher atmic	
Ultraviolet	Soul	Hierarchy	Spiritual Will	Lower atmic	Subtle
Violet			Love-Wisdom	Buddhic	
Indigo			Higher mind	Higher mental	
Red – Turquoise	Personality	Humanity	Intelligence, Creativity	Lower mental	Gross
Magenta	Emotional self	Animal Kingdom	Emotional energy	Astral	
Infrared	Etheric impulsive self	Plant Kingdom	Etheric energy, Chi / Prana / sexual energy Kundalini	Higher physical: etheric	
	Physical self	Mineral Kingdom		Lower physical: dense	

A model for how this can be represented can be seen above, where on the most subtle three planes of the cosmic physical plane (the logoic, monadic and higher atmic), the nondual and causal states are most nakedly exposed. Thus, the community of Shamballa abides ever in the glory of the nondual Great Perfection and the causal unmanifest void from which the subtle state emerges.

Djwhal Khul points to the causal state's relation to the monadic planes when he describes spirit in terms of "pure darkness," and also when he describes "That 'unknown impenetrable Void, the utter darkness of negation' which Those Who are in the Council Chamber of the Lord of the World and Who are focused in

Shamballa face when the time comes for Them to 'negate' our planetary life-expression and experience altogether."<sup>27</sup> These are the levels that the Master Morya refers to as those of "the Lion of the Desert," which is another fitting appellation of the causal state.

The naked revelation of the nondual State of Absolute Reality as it pervades the higher monadic planes is encapsulated in Djwhal Khul's words when he speaks of the realized "omnipresence of divinity within all forms"<sup>28</sup> that comes with monadic contact. It is clear that full radical awakening has been established through penetration from the causal into the nondual when the material cosmos (dense and subtle) is reintegrated into the realization. In



the causal state, there is no form. Indeed, all form has dropped away, leaving only boundless, empty, unmanifest Being. This is the Emptiness or Void described in the esoteric traditions, the realization of which involves the total falling away of the entire manifest cosmos. It is for this reason that paths that lead a practitioner only up to causal realization often describe the manifest cosmos as an illusion or apparition. With the shift deeper into the nondual, however, the manifest cosmos arises again, but now instead of being considered something antithetical to the deepest realization of Reality; it is innately recognized as not other than the energy expression of the Infinite Awake Presence. That Infinite Awake Presence is still recognized as transcendent and not limited to the manifest cosmos, but it is now seen to include and actually arise as the manifest cosmos as well.

On the soul planes (the lower atmic, buddhic and higher mental), the subtle state is most pervasive, making these planes ones which are pervaded by forms of variously colored light, sound and rays. Thus, the planes upon which Hierarchy primarily operate at this time are predominantly colored by Absolute Reality's subtle state. Djwhal Khul points to this when he describes the "clear cold light," the blended

light of the triad, which pervades the levels upon which the Ashrams operate.

And on the three most dense planes (the lower mental, astral, and physical-etheric), the gross state of Absolute Reality is most prominent to our vision, hence the materialistic focus and orientation of perception of so many human beings whose center of self-gravity resides on these planes.

These points have deep implications for the way we understand the types of consciousness exhibited by the various aspects of our nature—monadic, soul, and personality—on their respective planes. Specifically, with this perspective in place, it can be seen that the monad remains ever awake to and as nondual the Ab-

solute Reality of the One Life, and the Primordial Emptiness of causal formlessness. It can also be seen that the soul, owing to the perpetual shining of the subtle state of the Absolute on the soul planes, is ever enveloped in Light-Energy, and need only glance into the true nature of its own awareness for full radical awakening to break forth. Additionally, it becomes clear that though radical awakening remains available to all selves operating on the personality planes, the prevalence in vision of the gross state of Absolute Reality tends to obscure the ever-present Truth of the One Life. This is clarified in the below figure.

**Evolutionary awakening refers to the process of initiation wherein self-conscious individuals gradually and sequentially experience themselves through transformation becoming identified with subtler and more inclusive levels of identity. Radical awakening occurs when self-conscious individuals suddenly and radically experience themselves as the One Life.**

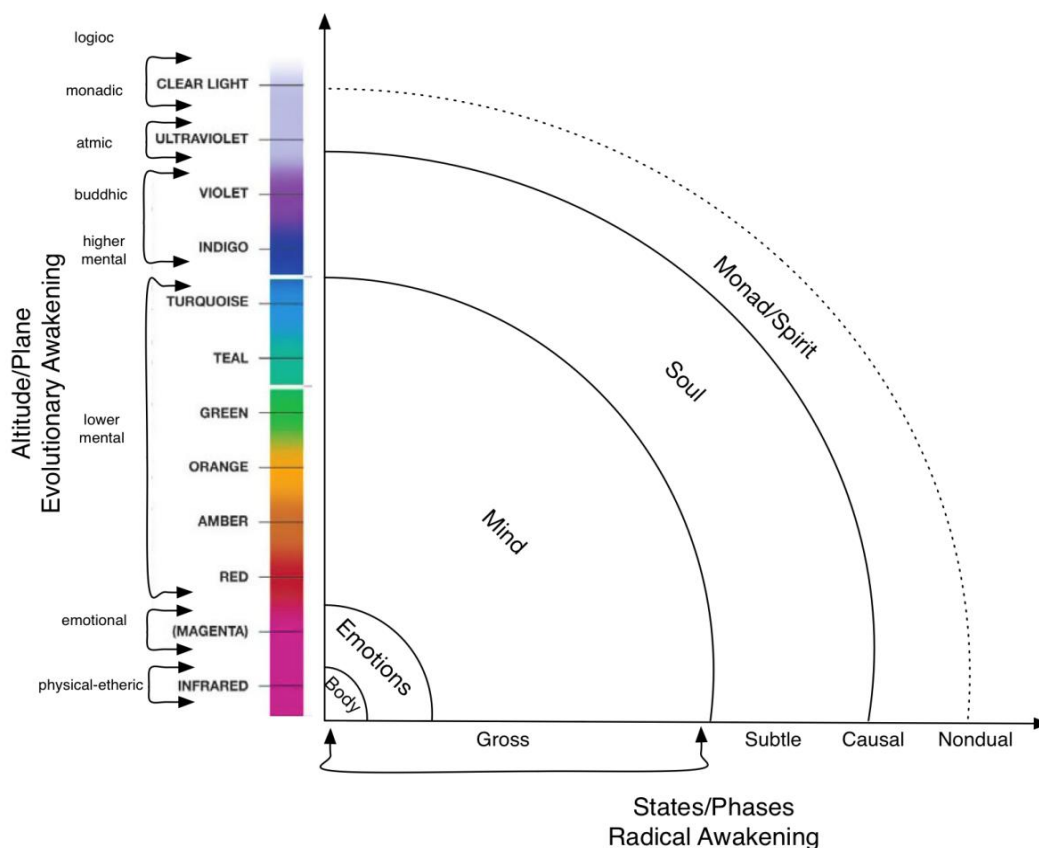


Figure 4. Correspondence between the evolutionary levels of our being and the radical states of Absolute Reality.

## Relationship between Radical and Evolutionary Awakening on the Path

These points also have compelling implications for how the radical and evolutionary awakening processes can be understood to interact on the path. For example, owing to the nondual and causal states being most nakedly pervasive on the highest three planes of the cosmic physical plane, an evolutionary shift of one's center of gravity into the monad (clear light altitude above) *necessarily entails* stabilized causal into nondual radical awakening as the Absolute Reality of the Boundless Imutable Principle.

Similarly, since the subtle state shines so pervasively on the soul planes (indigo-ultraviolet altitude above), we can see that a shift of one's center of gravity into the soul *necessarily entails* an opening of awareness into at least the

subtle state—an infinite field of light, sound and energy.

And owing to the fact that the gross state of the Absolute is most prevalent to our vision on the personality planes (infrared-turquoise altitude above), those whose center of gravity is rooted here, which is the majority of humanity, will have awareness of this, largely in its physical plane expression—the physical universe. However, since its subtle, causal and nondual levels are not so obvious to relative vision on the personality planes as they are on soul and monadic planes, the majority of human beings will not experience the continuous recognition of the One Life through all phases—gross, subtle, causal and nondual.

However, this is not to say that in order to radically awaken to nondual Absolute Reality one needs to be an initiate of a high degree first, i.e., to have shifted the self's polarization from

personality to soul to monad. As the radical awakening traditions such as Dzogchen, Mahamudra, Zen, Vedanta, Kashmir Shaivism, and Bon teach, radical awakening to and as the Absolute Reality of the Boundless Immutable Principle—Infinite Awake Presence and its dynamic Life-force—is ever-available to all beings on the personality planes. And in terms of its sudden and gradual realization, it is a testament to the truth that radical awakening requires no further evolutionary awakening than a stable sense of self, that the radical awakening traditions have successfully taught this path for millennia, without any attempt to shift people's center of gravity in the self any higher than the levels of personality.

This allows us to begin to consider why Djwhal Khul, in his work with Alice Bailey, normally associates identification with an advanced stage of initiation. To my mind, the reason lies in the distinction between radical awakening experienced as a *temporary* peak experience, and as a *stabilized* stage of development. While anyone, regardless of their level of evolutionary awakening, or their place on the path of initiation, can have a temporary experience of radical awakening to Absolute Reality, simply because it is the realization of Reality as it truly is, I would propose that *abiding* radical awakening is something that does not begin to stabilize naturally until after the third initiation. This explains why Djwhal Khul normally associates the third initiation with the first point on the path when identification starts to naturally stabilize—something that is fully consummated at the fourth initiation. This also points to why radical awakening seems to open up and become stabilized with comparative ease for some individuals and not for others.<sup>29</sup>

When exploring Djwhal Khul's use of the term, identification, it is important to be clear that it has both Absolute and Relative definitions. The Absolute definition, which is what is being pointed to here, is the full and stabilized radical awakening of the initiate to the Reality of the Boundless Immutable Principle that transcends, includes and arises as the entire cosmos. The relative definition of identification relates to the series of identifications that

begin to occur once the initiate's locus of identity begins to shift into the monad and beyond the cosmic paths. This series of identifications involve a monad's identification with and transmission of the Will and Purpose of various scales of Logoi (planetary, solar, constellational, galactic) within whose bodies it finds its place. While this series of identifications involves extraordinary levels of cosmic development and expressions of cosmic service that express over vast cycles of time, they are still occurring within the changing, evolving universe, and thus must still be defined as relative. The Absolute dimension of identification with and as the Absolute Reality of the Boundless Immutable Principle is considered as such because it involves awakening to the Reality that is changeless through and beyond the entirety of all time and space.

The idea that radical awakening opens up naturally in the higher initiations (after the third) begins to explain why Djwhal Khul does not clearly differentiate between the Absolute and Relative definitions of identification. Instead, he uses the word in reference to both radical awakening to the Absolute Reality of the One Life, and to the advanced stages of evolutionary awakening that come online once the center of gravity for the relative self has shifted into the monad. The human monadic essence shares its ultimate identity with the One Universal Monad, as an emanation of its Self. The evolutionary Path of Return that becomes accessible then can be understood as the path along which these "lines" of emanation are retraced and the monadic essence progressively recognizes that it IS, and has always been, the One, on greater and greater scales. But simultaneously, from a radical perspective, once the relative self's polarization has shifted into the monad, every single stage of that path is enfolded and saturated with radical Wakefulness to the Absolute Reality of the One Life.

Furthermore, it serves to note that just as evolutionary awakening into deeper and deeper levels of polarization (personality to soul to monad) necessarily evokes radical awakening to deeper and deeper states (gross to subtle to causal to nondual), *so is the reverse also true*. Radical awakening, as it is stabilized, opens

the door and lubricates the path of evolutionary awakening. That is, radical awakening opens the possibility along the line of evolutionary awakening for shifts of selfhood into deeper and deeper levels of spontaneously arising creativity, love, and power in the unfoldment of cosmic Purpose. As this unfolds, and the Infi-

nite Awake Presence of the One Life realizes itself through a human being, their relative sense of self dissolves into clear light—an empty sky through which patterns of energy, rays of light, and bolts of lightning naturally arise through the apparent form of “a Master.”



**Figure 5. Tibetan Buddhist representation of the Dzogchen master, Padmasambhava, having attained a rainbow body.<sup>30</sup>**

The capacity of radical awakening, as it becomes stabilized, to naturally evoke shifts in evolutionary awakening, is a phenomenon attested to in the Tibetan teaching on the rainbow body. In the Dzogchen lineages of both the Buddhist and Bon traditions of Tibet, which are explicitly radical awakening lineages, there are descriptions of advanced practitioners who, upon bodily death, literally transform the physical elements of the body into light. This phenomenon, known in Tibetan as

*jalus*, is often referred to in English as the cultivation of a *rainbow body*, due to the sudden appearance of rainbows in the vicinity of the Master's body at the moment of, and immediately following, death. Upon attainment of the rainbow body, it is said that these beings are no longer restricted by time and space, and can appear and disappear on the physical plane *at will*. Here is the Dzogchen Master, Chogyal Namkai Norbu:



When a person has that realization of Rainbow Body then their physical body slowly disappears and other people cannot see it. It seems as if that person has disappeared, but in the real sense, he/she is alive and continuing their activities actively in the Rainbow Body. They can continue doing benefit, being active in the Rainbow Body for centuries and centuries, just like Guru Padmasambhava.<sup>31</sup>

In the occurrences when a Master attains rainbow body it is reported that his or her physical body dissolves (or shrinks), sometimes leaving no trace of its once physical existence. Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche, a lineage Master in the Tibetan Bon tradition, describes this occurrence in the following way: “The realized Dzogchen practitioner, no longer deluded by apparent substantiality or dualism such as mind and matter, releases the energy of the elements that compose the physical body at the time of death.”<sup>32</sup>

It is said that the rainbow body phenomena occurs as a result of the fact that the practitioner’s stabilization in the Infinite Awake Presence of the One Life as the base of all Reality has matured so fully that it begins to affect the physical body. According to this perspective, the experiential knowing of Absolute Reality is so well established that it penetrates all the way down to the physical cells and atoms of the body. From this perspective, the attainment of a rainbow body is also a sign of the full cultivation of the buddha bodies (nirmanakaya, sambhogakaya and dharmakaya). At this level of realization, all bodies (physical, emotional, mental, soul, triadic, and monadic) arise and are known directly as a dynamic energy-expression of the One Life.

Over the past century, there have been several well-documented cases of both men and women who have attained the rainbow body. The list of Masters includes Shardza Tashi Gyalten (1935), Kenchen Tsewang Rigdzin (who reportedly transformed into rainbow body and disappeared alive in 1958), Ayu Khandro (1953), and Khenpo A-chos (1998), just to name a few of the more recent accounts within the Tibetan tradition. One of the most interesting reports received from the students of these

Masters is that the teacher is often said to reappear, reconstituting him or herself in the form of a light body to offer final teachings. The founding of the Dzogchen lineage itself is understood to have been initiated in this way. According to the tradition, Garab Dorje returned in a body of light after his death to give his student, Manjusurimitra, a final set of instructions on how to perfect radical awakening according to the Dzogchen view.

The transference of a fully awakened human being into a body of pure light has a basis in many other traditions too, such as the Tamil Siddha tradition, Taoism, Christianity, and many other lineages. According to the Trans-Himalayan cosmology, it could be posited that the attainment of the rainbow body corresponds to the passing of an advanced initiate through stages of development subsequent to the fourth initiation. The evolutionary momentum of that development leading into and beyond this point stems from the natural flow of unfoldments that occur with stabilized radical awakening.

The fourth initiation involves the individual’s full stability in radical awakening to and as the Absolute Reality of the Boundless Immutable Principle; their stabilized polarization in buddhi whilst opening more and more fully to the monadic; full transition into Hierarchy; plane access increasingly opened to all seven subplanes of the cosmic physical plane, and the being’s transcendence of concrete mind so as to operate fully through the intuitive wisdom-intelligence of the buddhic plane. Correspondingly, in the Trans-Himalayan teachings it is understood that subsequent to the fourth initiation and into the fifth, the initiate gains the capacity, should they choose, to manifest at will on the physical-etheric, astral and mental planes through a *mayavirupa*, or body of light. Here is Djwhal Khul:

He [the initiate] can work through a physical body (with its subtler sheaths) or not, as he sees fit. He realizes that he, as an individual, no longer needs a physical body or an astral consciousness, and that the mind is only a *service instrument*. The body in which he now functions is a body of light which has its own type of substance. The

Master, however, can build a body through which He can approach His incoming disciples and those who have not taken the higher initiations; He will normally build this body in semblance of the human form, doing so instantaneously and by an act of the will, when required. The majority of the Masters who are definitely working with humanity either preserve the old body in which They took the fifth initiation, or else They build the “mayavirupa” or body of maya, of physical substance. This body will appear in the original form in which They took initiation. This I personally did in reference to the first case; i.e., preserving the body in which I took initiation. This the Master K.H. did in creating a body which was made in the form in which He took the fifth initiation.<sup>33</sup>

So, it seems that while radical and evolutionary awakening need to be differentiated in order to understand the key contributions of the different spiritual traditions, and also the path itself, in the advanced stages of one tradition, the advanced stages of the other are naturally made more available and more likely. As has been shown, evolutionary awakening into the monadic planes necessarily evokes radical awakening to and as the Absolute Reality of the One Life. And equally, it seems fair to posit that radical awakening has an electrifying effect on all aspects of development along the line of evolutionary awakening.

This means that as an initiate stabilizes realization of the Infinite Awake Presence of the One Life as the ever-present Base of their awareness, heart and body, the capacity for the unfolding of ever-deeper levels of polarization intensifies. From personality to soul to monad and beyond, the egg-shell of their relative identity will continue to crack open and reveal the path of monadic emanation along which line they *came in*. Additionally, such stabilization will allow the opening up of their relationship with other SELF-reflections of the Absolute on progressively celestial levels. It will involve their naturally arising penetration into progressively subtler planes of experience into the cosmos. And it will evoke the rippling forth of deeper developmental expressions of

cosmic intelligence and creativity. In the words of Bruce Lyon, “Radical awakening is like pouring gasoline on all the other fires.”

## Radical and Evolutionary Awakening on the Cosmic Paths

The cosmic paths embody one of the most profound points of teaching contained in the Trans-Himalayan cannon. They testify to the wonder of the evolutionary journey into cosmos. In the words of the Master Morya, “The endlessness of the path is so very beautiful!”<sup>34</sup>

Radical awakening is awakening to that which is the Ultimate Base of all Reality on all cosmic planes. The cosmic paths embody those trails of evolutionary unfoldment on which the scale of the relative cosmos that is integrated into that realization is steadily increased. To understand this, it can be noted that while radical awakening is awakening to Reality *beyond* the entire spectrum of time and space in the manifest universe (on all levels), that awakening still happens *within* time and space. That is, it occurs within some particular plane of vibrational energy-matter, and at some point in the history of the evolutionary process. For a Master on Earth, the plane on which it occurs is the cosmic physical plane (on any of its seven sub-frequencies), and so the extent of the manifest universe that is able to be revealed as the nondual One Life *extends only to the cosmic physical plane*. In the words of Djwhal Khul with Alice Bailey:

When the student realizes that the great universal Oneness which he associates with monadic consciousness, is only the registration of impressions localized (and therefore limited) and defined within the etheric levels of the cosmic physical plane, he can perhaps grasp the implications of the wonder which will be revealed to the initiate who can transcend the entire cosmic physical plane (our seven planes of the human, superhuman and the divine worlds) and function upon another cosmic level. This is what the treading of the Way of the Higher Evolution enables a Master eventually to do.<sup>35</sup>

This is a crucial point. Radical awakening involves awakening to the nondual nature of *as much of the manifest cosmos that one has access to*. As the path of evolutionary awakening continues to unfold, and the kernel of relative self is abstracted and retraced ever deeper into the cosmic planes, the scale of the manifest cosmos that the Master is able to integrate into the realization of nonduality progressively expands. It is important to note here that the nature of radical awakening—to the awakened state—does not change, ever. Whatever the level of polarization of initiation, it is awakening to and as the Infinite Awake Presence enfolding all. But, as the periphery of the cosmic physical plane is pierced, there unfold more and more cosmic energy-fields through which the Master is able to integrate their radical realization of nondual Absolute Reality.

### Implications for the Trans-Himalayan Tradition

Having explored how the differentiation expresses through Trans-Himalayan cosmology and the path, I now want to focus on its possible consequences for the Trans-Himalayan tradition. As we look to the forms of wisdom that have been most especially cultivated on Earth during the last few thousand years, it can be seen that the wisdom on radical awakening to Absolute Reality has been primarily the contribution of the East. It can also be seen that the wisdom on evolution has been primarily the contribution of the West. The latter is the case, whether we are speaking of the Western esoteric tradition, where such teachers as Plotinus offered profound teachings

on the evolutionary Great Chain of Being, or the Western scientific tradition on evolution.

It is interesting to note that this radical/evolutionary division has qualified the first and second phases of the Trans-Himalayan teachings.<sup>36</sup> The first phase of the Trans-Himalayan teachings, which expressed primarily through the Theosophical Society, offer a cosmology and wisdom on the arising of “Absolute Reality as cosmic Form” that are no doubt as profound as anything found in the other Eastern radical awakening traditions. The teachings of the second phase, as presented through such servers as Alice Bailey, Lucille Cedercrans and Helena Roerich, were far more explorative of evolutionary awakening.

Indeed, the tension that arose between the Eastern emphasis of the early Theosophical teachings, and the Western Christian emphasis of Alice Bailey’s work with Djwhal Khul, can be explained, in part, by this differential emphasis. And so too can the inconsistencies that present themselves in the models of the constitution of the human being that are offered in first two phases of the Trans-Himalayan teachings. For instance, in the Theosophical presentation, the deepest level of a human being’s nature is understood to be atman, and the model used is very much in keeping with the Vedantic presentation of the increasingly subtle *koshas*, or sheaths, at the core of which the Infinite Awake Presence of the Atman resides. However, in the model offered in the Bailey teachings, the atman is relegated to atma, the subtlest level of the triad, and very explicitly a particular layer of our evolving, continually unfolding being. The deepest level of our nature is described as the monad, which is differ-

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entiated from atma, and even then, the monad is presented as an ultimately growing and evolving being. In light of this, I would argue that in the Theosophical presentation, the model offered is much more radically oriented, while in the Bailey teachings (and those of Cedercrans and Roerich too), the emphasis is more evolutionary.

Furthermore, I would suggest that this differentiation of emphasis is no coincidence, and that it is actually expressive of a fundamental point of integration between radical and evolutionary perspectives, and the Eastern and Western forms of wisdom, which the Trans-Himalayan teachings are intended to pioneer. Indeed, both the first and second phases have not just integrated and synthesized wisdom from the different lineages and domains of human activity (radical and evolutionary, East and West), but as a transmission from Hierarchy concerning the evolutionary process as it expresses across all planes and throughout the cosmos, the Trans-Himalayan teaching stands as a bridge *between kingdoms* too. In the words of Bruce Lyon,

To understand the [Trans-Himalayan] teaching it must be realized that the teaching IS ITSELF that which it seeks to teach. It is a relationship, both vertical and horizontal, within the consciousness of humanity. Its purpose is to bring together different spheres of awareness within the mental life of mankind and to bring the mind of man into relationship with both the super and sub-human kingdoms. When this has been achieved the teaching is complete.<sup>37</sup>

As is described by Djwhal Khul in his work with Alice Bailey, the Trans-Himalayan teaching still has a third phase of expression to come, which is forecast to emerge around the year, 2025.<sup>38</sup> I propose that this third phase teaching will involve the ultimate synthesis of these radical and evolutionary perspectives in a manner that may then open a space for their respective forms of awakening to spread increasingly through humanity as a whole.

As is in keeping with the group-centered nature of the Aquarian Age that is presently dawning, as well as previous proposals by

Bruce Lyon,<sup>39</sup> I envision that the third phase of the Trans-Himalayan teachings will not be transmitted again to a single individual initiate, but to a *group initiate*. Furthermore, I would suggest that this group initiate will not be composed of individuals all drawn from the Trans-Himalayan community, but of individuals from many traditions who have entered into spheres of radical and evolutionary awakening that have taken them beyond their traditions into identification with Absolute Reality and the one humanity. Only such a group would be able to represent, in the cultures and lineages they have grown to transcend and include, a synthesis of Eastern, Western, and other global perspectives.

Developmentally, such a group would likely be composed of beings who are both radically awake to and as the One Life, and evolutionary awakened to the personality, soul and monadic levels of their being. Their radical awakening would allow them to represent the divine nature of Reality that is no less present in humanity than any other kingdom. And their evolutionary awakening would simultaneously preserve the dignity of humanity's place in the great chain of being by allowing us to more deeply serve the divine Purpose emanating from Shamballa. As such, my sense is that radical awakening to and as the Boundless Immutable Principle will serve as the basis of the third phase teaching, in terms of the state of awareness that it is transmitted from, the state in which it is received, and in terms of its mysteries forming a foundational pillar of content. Additionally, from an evolutionary perspective, such a group will have as its focus the revelation of the mysteries related to the monadic level of our being, the cosmic Purpose of Earth and the Life aspect as it expresses through the universe, on all planes and through all kingdoms.

The emergence of a trans-lineage group initiate that is able to receive the third phase teachings continues to be deeply empowered by the Shamballa Impacts.<sup>40</sup> As a result of these Shamballa Impacts, and as can be seen from a glance at the present world condition, the Fire of Truth and the Force of Awakening that flows from this center of planetary power has



begun to impact humanity *globally*. This is occurring both within and outside of the wisdom traditions, cleaving through all obscurations to identification with and as the One Life of Absolute Reality, resulting in profound unfoldments within humanity along both the lines of radical and evolutionary awakening.

In relation to radical awakening, the Shamballa Impacts are expressing in radical, nondual awakening breaking forth globally on an unprecedented scale. In terms of evolutionary awakening, humanity is penetrating into ever deeper levels of monadic identity. More groups are learning to open up mature multidimensional relationships with the subtle planes (e.g. Hierarchy and Shamballa). The resurgence of shamanic forms of spirituality, as an expression of the incoming 7<sup>th</sup> Ray, is facilitating humanity's penetration into new planes of experience. Many other groups are evoking the emergence of new forms of wisdom-centered intelligence. Neuroscientific research studying advanced meditators is documenting the emergence of new levels of neurobiological complexity sufficient to support the incarnation of these deeper levels of consciousness on the physical plane.<sup>41</sup> There is also an increase in earthquakes, tsunamis and volcanic eruptions as the inner fires of the body of the Earth are increasingly stimulated.

### Implications for the Trans-Himalayan Community

As 2025 approaches, I propose that it is likely that these phenomena will not only continue, but also intensify. And as this process unfolds, the Trans-Himalayan community will have a great deal to offer to the world, in terms of its increasing ability to serve as profound repository of both radical and evolutionary wisdom.

There is more to the Trans-Himalayan community's role, however, than simply holding this wisdom. According to Djwhal Khul, 2025 is the year in which the Hierarchy will determine if and when their full Externalization can commence.<sup>42</sup> While the Externalization will surely involve a descending movement of consciousness and energy—expressed as humanity's open recognition of certain Hierarchical

members—it will continue to involve an ascending movement of human beings through the first, second, third, fourth and fifth initiations so that they too might serve as the living presence of Hierarchy in the world.<sup>43</sup> As the chalice into which some of the most profound teachings on this process have been poured, the Trans-Himalayan community bears the responsibility not simply to remain faithful custodians of the wisdom it has been given, but to deepen into those spheres of awakening, identification, and integration that in truth, are the basis of mastery and whole new levels of service capacity.

If the global Trans-Himalayan community truly is to contribute to the Externalization of the Hierarchy in the fullest way possible, it is vital that it integrates and embodies a deep experiential understanding of both of these forms of awakening on mental, emotional, etheric and physical levels. In the radical sense, disciples are called to open to ever-present identification with the One Life's own spontaneously arising mastery, and both die into and live from that place. In the evolutionary sense, the community must continue to unfold, in the fire of its own experience, the deepest expression of what humanity truly is, in addition to the cosmic destiny that is seeking to express through the Earth. In wondrous recognition of the Great Perfection of the One Life as it is radically ever-present and complete, moment-to-moment, and a humble visioning of the evolutionary path that lies before us, I dedicate this article to humanity's collective awakening.

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<sup>1</sup> Bruce P. Lyon, *Occult Cosmology* (Palmerston North, NZ: Whitestone Publishing, 2010), 48.

<sup>2</sup> Ken Wilber, *Integral Spirituality* (Boston, MA: Integral Books, 2006), 3-4.

<sup>3</sup> Adi Da, *The Knee of Listening* (Middletown, CA: Dawn Horse Press, 2004 Revised and updated edition), 50.

<sup>4</sup> Andrew Cohen, *Evolutionary Enlightenment: A New Path to Spiritual Awakening* (New York, NY: SelectBooks, Inc.), 59.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.beamsandstruts.com/essays/item/-934-inner-ecology-thomas-hubl-on-the-shadow> (accessed May 14, 2013).

<sup>6</sup> <http://aishasalem.com/en/> (accessed May 14, 2013).

7 Lyon, *Occult Cosmology*, 55.  
8 Jon Darrall-Rew & Dustin DiPerna, *Earth is Eden*. (Forthcoming).  
9 Helena P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* (London, UK: Theosophical Publishing House, 1928), 42.  
10 Ibid., 86.  
11 Ibid., 86.  
12 Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation: Human and Solar* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing House, 1922), 92.  
13 Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, 39.  
14 Michael D. Robbins, *On the Monad*, (Jersey City Heights, NJ: University of the Seven Rays Publishing House, 2004), 38.  
15 This point necessarily entails the differentiation between the monadic essence and the monadic sheath it expresses through on the monadic plane.  
16 <http://silasstoddard.com/Tree-of-Life> (accessed June 22, 2013).  
17 Lyon, *Occult Cosmology*, 46.  
18 Ibid., 50.  
19 Lyon, *Occult Cosmology*, 50.  
20 It is important to note that Integral Theory has also synthesized a profound depth of wisdom in relation to evolutionary awakening, or what Wilber describes as development through structure-stages.  
21 The quadrants are based in the position that when considering any question from any subject (e.g. psychology, politics, economics, culture, spirituality, etc.), at least four different perspectives need to be taken into account. These are the interior and exterior perspectives of the individual and the collective.  
Levels refer to the understanding that reality can be enacted from various different levels of consciousness, and that our perspectives will be colored according to what level we are operating through. In the Trans-Himalayan teaching this finds its correspondence in the model of the planes and the various levels of our being (personality, soul, monad) that operate on progressively subtler levels.  
Lines refers to the understanding that whether we are considering individuals or collectives, there are many different lines of development that unfold through the levels (or planes). For an individual, for instance, we might speak of a cognitive line of development, an emotional line, a psycho-sexual line, a social intelligence line, and so on.  
The category of states refers to gross, subtle,

causal and nondual states that are prevalent in almost all religious and spiritual traditions. Whereas the quadrants, levels, lines and types relate to the changing and evolving relative reality of the cosmos (evolutionary awakening – a vertical movement in the diagram above), states relate to the phases whereby the Absolute Reality that transcends and includes all the planes, comes into manifestation. As such, the states relate to radical awakening and will be discussed further below.

According to both Integral Theory, these states are clearly differentiated from levels of consciousness, and the first three of them (gross, subtle, and causal) can be seen as basic variations on the human sleep cycle. In a twenty-four hour period, no matter what level of consciousness we may have as our center of gravity (our plane of polarization in Trans-Himalayan terminology), we move through states of waking (gross), dreaming (subtle), to deep sleep (causal). According to Integral Theory, and this is a crucial point for the current article, so also is it the case that no matter what level of consciousness development a human being may be operating from as their general center of gravity, we all have access to gross, subtle, causal and nondual states. This means that all human beings can experience radical awakening, at least as a temporary peak experience.

Lastly, types refer to the understanding that both individuals and collectives may express differently according to their typology. In the Trans-Himalayan teachings, this might be understood according to the Seven Ray teaching, which tells us that all individuals and groups are colored by a particular combination of Rays.

22 Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing House, 1925), 3.  
23 Ibid., 3.  
24 Ibid., 3.  
25 [http://www.xdwallpapers.com/file/7657/750-x488/16:9/water-liquid-solid-gas\\_21243.jpg](http://www.xdwallpapers.com/file/7657/750-x488/16:9/water-liquid-solid-gas_21243.jpg) (accessed June 22, 2013).  
26 The dharmakaya, sambogakaya and nirmanakaya form the trikaya, or three buddha-bodies that are understood within multiple streams of Buddhist philosophy as both the three great spheres of being that encompass all Reality, and as the attained state of being of a realized buddha. Their nondual indivisibility as one

- single Absolute Reality is known in some Buddhist lineages as the svabhavikakaya. Ibid., 199.
- 27 Bailey, *The Rays and Initiations*, 40.
- 28 Ramana Maharishi is a good example of an individual whose radical awakening at the age of 16 seemed to spontaneously occur and stabilize virtually effortlessly.
- 29 <http://www.rainbowbody.net/Shabkar.htm> (accessed June 22, 2013).
- 30 Transcription of an oral teaching in Barcelona, Spain. Oct 3, 2010, by Chogyal Namkhai Norbu.
- 31 Tenzin Wangyal, *Healing with Form, Energy, and Light* (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 2002), 141.
- 32 Bailey, *The Rays and Initiations*, 705.
- 33 Helena I. Roerich, *Infinity* (New York, NY: Agni Yoga Society), stanza 357.
- 34 Bailey, *The Rays and Initiations*, 363-364.
- 35 Djwhal Khul has described that his teaching through The Trans-Himalayan tradition is intended to have three primary phases of expression. The first phase ran from 1885-1890 and was given primarily through Helena Blavatsky. The second phase ran from 1919-1949, and was given through Alice Bailey, though significant contributions also came through Helena Roerich, and Lucille Cedercrans. The third phase is projected to emerge around the 2025, though some within the tradition understand that Bruce Lyon's work embodies an initial expression of this.
- 36 Lyon, *Occult Cosmology*, 12-13.
- 37 Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age Volume 1* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing House, 1944), 778.
- 38 Lyon, *Occult Cosmology*, 322.
- 39 In the Trans-Himalayan teachings it is taught that the crown, heart and throat chakras of the planetary Logos of the Earth are embodied in the communities of Shamballa, Hierarchy and Humanity respectively. Additionally, it is understood that at the present time of planetary evolution, there is an activation of the planetary chakras occurring. As a result of this, now not just the cosmic love-wisdom transmitted by Hierarchy, but the cosmic Will, Purpose and monadic Life of the planetary Logos of the Earth, held in Shamballa, are being released into humanity for the first time.
- 40 Farb et al. (2007) found that mindfulness practitioners (with mindfulness understood according to the Vipassana position of cultivated meta-awareness rather than the Tibetan definition of mindfulness as related to concentration) were shown to have differentiated the regions of the brain that process immediate self-referential experience from those that support more narrative-based forms of self-reference (i.e. self-beliefs and self-construct born of life-experience over time), whereas non-mindfulness practitioners had not. This demonstrates that for the majority of human beings, awareness remains confused with thought, self, time and individuation, but that through spiritual practice and the neuroplasticity of the brain, this confusion can be remedied, and the freedom and well-being of awakening stabilized. See: Farb, N. A., Segal, Z. V., Mayberg, H., Bean, J., McKeon, D., Fatima, Z., et al. (2007). Attending to the present: Mindfulness meditation reveals distinct neural modes of self-reference. *SCAN*, 2, 313-322. doi:10.1093/scan/nsm030
- 41 Alice A. Bailey, *Externalisation of the Hierarchy* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing House, 1957), 530.
- 42 Ibid., 529.

# The Path to Higher States of Consciousness as Perceived in the Upanishads, the Yoga Sutras, and the Books of Alice A. Bailey

Iván Kovács

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Consciousness might be defined as the faculty of apprehension, and concerns primarily the relation of the Self to the not-self, of the Knower to the Known, and of the Thinker to that which is thought about.<sup>1</sup>

Alice A. Bailey: *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*

Being, per se, can only be grasped by those who have ‘come alive’ monadically, who function in the three worlds of the Spiritual Triad with even greater positivity than the highly advanced personality functions in the three worlds of human evolution . . .<sup>2</sup>

Alice A. Bailey: *The Rays and the Initiations*

## Abstract

The purpose of this article is to acquaint the reader with those types of consciousness which are considered to be higher than self-consciousness, and in a general sense, spiritual in nature. In the teachings of Alice A. Bailey and the Tibetan Master, Djwhal Khul, these higher types of consciousness are clearly distinguished from each other as regards their level of influence as well as their nature and quality. In this article knowledge about their existence is sought, firstly, in the Upanishads, then in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, with special references to occult meditation, one of the surest means of arriving at higher levels of consciousness. Lastly, an attempt is made to clarify the nature of the higher consciousness of the Spiritual Triad, by means of discussing and referencing select passages from the works of Alice A. Bailey.

## Introduction

The average person might, at times, give thought to that weighty issue concerning the meaning of life, and probably try to answer it in terms of his or her individual religious belief system, or if he or she is an agnostic or atheist, assign no importance to the question at

all. The esoteric student, however, will inevitably consider life in terms of the evolutionary process and the development of consciousness. Seen in this context, life as it manifests through the evolutionary process, has as its goal the achievement of full awareness,<sup>3</sup> and includes all stages of consciousness, and ultimately also that high level of awareness known as pure Being, “in which the monad or spirit eternally rests.”<sup>4</sup>

Broadly speaking, the uniquely human characteristic which distinguishes us from the sub-human kingdoms is self-consciousness, or that faculty which allows us to see ourselves as individual units of awareness. However, an exception needs to be made regarding the higher primates, specifically chimpanzees and orangutans, who are capable of forming a self-

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## 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.



image by means of mirror recognition.<sup>5</sup> Mirror recognition is based upon the mirror test, an experiment developed by psychologist Gordon Gallup Jr. to determine whether an animal possesses the ability to recognize itself in a mirror. The mirror test is the primary indicator of self-awareness in non-human animals.<sup>6</sup> Human beings are not only capable of experiencing their selfhood in a distinctly personal and individual way; they are also capable of self-reflection and deeper introspection. In exceptional cases this can be pursued with such acuteness, that it gives rise to branches of learning that are identified as philosophical or metaphysical.

It is possible to approach the subject of consciousness and the human psyche from various angles and schools of thought. The approaches that come readily to mind in our contemporary times are those that are to be found in the various schools of western psychology. Yet, if one bears in mind that modern psychology goes back no further than William James and Sigmund Freud, with James's *The Principles of Psychology*<sup>7</sup> first appearing in print in 1890, and Freud's *The Origin and Development of Psycho-Analysis*<sup>8</sup> first seeing the light of day in 1910, it needs to be acknowledged that one is dealing with a branch of science that is still largely experimental and has barely come out of its infancy.

Those who are familiar with the works of Freud will agree that there is no acknowledgement of either the Will or the Soul in his writings. Furthermore, Freud attributed all motivational strivings in a human being to basic drives and urges of a physical nature, with particular emphasis on the sexual. C. G. Jung, Freud's most important co-worker, corrected this notion, and developed such concepts as the archetype, the collective unconscious, the complex, and synchronicity. His interests included Eastern and Western philosophy, alchemy, astrology, sociology, as well as literature and the arts.<sup>9</sup> With such an open-minded attitude, he at least allowed for the possibility of spheres of influence reaching beyond the concrete and material. Yet, it is only with the advent of Transpersonal Psychology that the subjective aspects of life and being, and the true nature and essence of the human psyche

came under investigation, and were consequently acknowledged.

In contrast with the aforementioned disciplines, the esoteric tradition and its formulations of the Self or the psyche reach back into antiquity. The terms *atma*, *buddhi*, and *manas*, as used in theosophical literature and the books of Alice A. Bailey, are of Sanskrit origin, and part of the terminology by which the ancients tried to make sense of the higher states of human consciousness. Taken, each in turn, *atma* can be correlated with spirit, *buddhi* with intuition, and *manas* with the intellectual faculty, or the mind.

There are various branches of esoteric study which each use their own method and terminology when dealing with different levels of consciousness and the constitution of a human being. To avoid any misunderstandings or confusion, it needs to be pointed out that in this article, consciousness will be discussed within the context in which it was presented by the Tibetan Master, Djwhal Khul, and his amanuensis, Alice A. Bailey.

In order to understand the various degrees of consciousness, it is first necessary to look at the constitution of human beings, and clearly distinguish between their various vehicles whereby they are able to engage with the realities of life. The constitutional model that will be discussed is in use by theosophists, and esotericists who follow the teachings of Alice A. Bailey and the Tibetan.

## **The Human Constitution**

The following discussion of the human constitution is intended to provide readers with a framework whereby a distinction is made between the various vehicles by which reality can be perceived. Once these distinctions are understood it will be easier to grasp the meaning of the different types of consciousness with which the spiritual seeker needs to get acquainted once he or she is determined to tread the Spiritual Path.

The first thing that needs to be remembered regarding the human constitution is that each of its vehicles or bodies corresponds to a parallel level or plane which goes into the making

of the world in which we function. Thus, we have, from the lowest to the highest or from the most concrete to the most subtle, the following gradations:

Physical vehicle – Physical plane

Etheric vehicle – Etheric plane

Astral (Emotional) vehicle – Astral plane

Lower mental vehicle (Concrete mind) – Lower mental plane

Causal (or Soul) vehicle (Son of Mind) – Causal plane

Higher mental vehicle (Abstract mind) – Higher mental plane

Buddhic (Intuition) vehicle – Buddhic plane

Atmic (Spiritual) vehicle – Atmic plane

Monadic vehicle – Monadic plane

To a layman, these gradations might appear to be foreign and bewildering, but once these vehicles are sorted into their respective groups, such as the threefold personality, the three aspects of the mind, and the Spiritual Triad; their interaction and relationship to each other can be better understood and appreciated.

The first grouping to be considered is the threefold personality, which consists of the physical-etheric, astral and lower mental vehicles, and is that vital part of the human constitution whereby we interact with our environment and fellow human beings. For the majority of humanity, the next great step on the evolutionary ladder is an integrated personality, by means of which the physical, astral and lower mental vehicles are fully integrated, and can thus work as a unit. Presently, the greater part of humanity is still astrally centered, and needs to be uplifted by means of a proper education so that the lower mental plane can become accessible to them. This will do much to dissipate the glamour in which the masses are caught up, and open up the path to the higher realities.

The soul, or causal body, is receiving much attention in all esoteric schools that offer discipleship training, since it is on the level of the soul that all true disciples are united. The soul occupies the midway point between the con-

crete mind and the spiritual or higher mind, and is thus a mediator between the lower world of concrete manifestation, and the world of the spirit. In Christian terms the soul can be likened to the Inner Christ, or what St. Paul calls “the Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians, 1:27). Soul or causal consciousness is the “first major” objective of all true spiritual seekers. This type of awareness is only possible when the personality recognizes the soul as the true inner self, and thus allows itself to be inspired and guided.

The Spiritual Triad is the last grouping under consideration, and stands in the same relationship to the monad as the personality to the soul. It is the triad that is formed by *atma*, *buddhi* and *manas*, which respectively stand for the spiritual will, the intuition, and the abstract, or higher mind. On a microcosmic or human level, it is a replica of the Holy Trinity, with the spiritual will standing for the Father aspect; *buddhi*, or intuition standing for the Son aspect; and the higher mind standing for the Holy Spirit aspect. (In Hinduism these aspects would translate into the trinity of Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma.) It is by using the light of the soul that the disciple is able to create a pathway of light between the personality and the Spiritual Triad, and thereby access the spiritual will, intuitive understanding and the higher mind.<sup>10</sup>

The last and highest aspect of the human constitution is the monad. Its state of awareness is very different to soul consciousness, which is fundamentally magnetic, and thus group conscious. The monad’s unique characteristic is that it is dynamic, and in its fully active state, aware of its own being and power, without the need to define itself in terms of relationship. Its nature is pure Spirit,<sup>11</sup> and all that one can assume is that it radiates the unadulterated Will of God with dynamic intensity.

## The Upanishads or the Search for the True Nature of Reality

When writing about the *Upanishads*, which form the theoretical basis for the Hindu religion, Radhakrishnan in his *Indian Philosophy* says the following: “The inner immortal self and the great cosmic power are

one and the same. Brahman is the Atman, and the Atman is the Brahman. The one supreme power through which all things have been brought into being is one with the inmost self in each man's heart."<sup>12</sup> This quotation clearly affirms that the composers of the Upanishads recognized man's inmost essence as being divine.

Unlike the *Vedas*, which are the earliest documents of the human mind that we possess,<sup>13</sup> and, which are written in poetic and symbolic form, the *Upanishads* are philosophical, and expound Hindu thought in more direct language, although they do retain some of the poetic tone.<sup>14</sup>

In his discussion of the *Upanishads*, Radhakrishnan points out another important distinction between these ancient texts. He writes that the transcendent conception of God held in the *Rig-Veda* is being transformed into an immanent one in the *Upanishads*, and that the Brahman and the Atman, the cosmic and the psychical principles, are looked upon as identical.<sup>15</sup>

Juan Mascaró, translator of the Penguin Classics version of the *Upanishads* confirms Rhadakrishnan's view, and putting it in a Christian context, says the following: "The spirit of the *Upanishads* can be compared with that of the New Testament summed up in the words "I and my Father are one" and "The kingdom of God is within you," the seed of which is found in the words of the Psalms "I have said: Ye are gods; and all of you are the children of the most High."<sup>16</sup>

It is when man realizes his inner divinity that he becomes an integral part of the creation, and discovers the potential powers that make him an important link in the hierarchical chain of being. As this truth dawns on him, his aspiration is fired, and his yearning for truth finds ways and means to quench the thirst in his soul.

Lead me from the unreal to the real!  
Lead me from darkness to light!  
Lead me from death to immortality!<sup>17</sup>

Thus reads that uplifting and evocative prayer in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* (1.3.27) that

is characterized not only by its poetic beauty, but also its high idealism and deep spirituality. It is expressive of the sincerest yearning of the spiritual seeker who will stop at nothing in his desire to experience the highest truth. In Alice A. Bailey's *Glamour: A World Problem* it becomes the subject of closer analysis. Bailey explains that it refers to the three aspects of glamour, i.e., *maya*, *glamour*, and *illusion*. These three aspects are considered the major obstacles that prevent humanity from realizing that the phenomenal world of the three lower planes, namely the physical, astral and concrete mental are only transitory, and that true joy and fulfillment is only to be found in the realm of the soul. In her book, *Glamour: A World Problem*, Bailey says the following:

'Lead us from darkness to light' refers to the mind as it becomes eventually illumined by the light of the intuition; this illumination is brought about by the means of the Technique of the Presence from Whom the light shines. This is the mediating factor producing the Transfiguration of the personality, and a centre of radiant light upon the mental plane. This statement is true whether one is speaking of an individual or of that focal point of light, which is formed by the mental unity and the clear thinking of advanced humanity. These, through the power of their unified mind, will succeed in ridding the world of some aspects of the Great Illusion.

'Lead us from the unreal to the Real' has specific relation to the astral plane and its all-encompassing glammers. These glammers embody the unreal and present them to the prisoners of the astral plane, leading them to mistake them for the Reality. The imprisonment by glamour can be ended by the activity of the Technique of Light, utilized by those who work – in group formation – for the dissipation of glamour and for the emergence in the consciousness of men of a clear conception and recognition of the nature of Reality.<sup>18</sup>

In the *Katha Upanishad*, the conflicting values of the lower and higher worlds are clearly demonstrated in a lengthy dialogue between the spiritual aspirant, Nachiketas, and Yama,

the god of death. Nachiketas, who has been offered as a sacrifice to Yama by his father, had waited for three nights in Yama's abode without food.<sup>19</sup> Finally, Yama had pity on him and granted him three boons.<sup>20</sup> The first boon Nachiketas asked for is that he may be reunited with his father, a boon that was easily granted by Yama.<sup>21</sup> The second boon Nachiketas asked for concerned the sacred fire which leads to heaven, and Death explained to him how this fire-sacrifice was to be carried out.<sup>22</sup> Regarding the third boon, Nachiketas addressed Yama as follows:

'When a man dies, this doubt arises: some say "he is" and some say "he is not." Teach me the truth.'<sup>23</sup>

Death replied:

'Even the gods had this doubt in times of old; for mysterious is the law of life and death. Ask for another boon. Release me from this.'<sup>24</sup>

However, Nachiketas remains firm, and replies:

'This doubt indeed arose even to the gods, and you say, O Death, that it is difficult to understand; but no greater teacher than you can explain it, and there is no other boon so great as this.'<sup>25</sup>

With the above answer, Nachiketas clearly indicates that his resolve to clear up the mystery is in earnest. However, Yama, the king of death, is not so easily persuaded, and replies as follows:

'Take horses and gold and cattle and elephants; choose sons and grandsons that shall live a hundred years. Have vast expanses of land, and live as many years as you desire.

Or choose another gift that you think equal to this, and enjoy it with wealth and long life. Be a ruler of this vast earth. I will grant you all your desires.

Ask for any wishes in the world of mortals, however hard to obtain. To attend on you I will give you fair maidens with chariots and musical instruments. But ask me not, Nachiketas, the secrets of death.'<sup>26</sup>

Considering this reply by Yama, one is reminded of the parallel that can be drawn between it and the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness by the devil. (*The Gospel According to Matthew*, 4:1-11). It is the successful withstanding of temptation, which allows for the reward of a higher realization, or the initiation onto a higher level of consciousness, and in the Katha Upanishad, Nachiketas successfully passes the test by replying to Yama:

'All these pleasures pass away, O End of all! They weaken the power of life. And indeed how short is all life! Keep thy horses and dancing and singing.

Man cannot be satisfied with wealth. Shall we enjoy wealth with you in sight? Shall we live whilst you are in power? I can only ask for the boon I have asked.

When a mortal here on earth has felt his own immortality, could he wish for a long life of pleasures, for the lust of deceitful beauty?

Solve then the doubt as to the great beyond. Grant me the gift that unveils the mystery. This is the only gift Nachiketas can ask.'<sup>27</sup>

Yama is now convinced that Nachiketas is in earnest and cannot be swayed from his purpose, thus he decides to instruct Nachiketas, and reveals the mysteries to him:

'You have pondered, Nachiketas, on pleasures and you have rejected them. You have not accepted that chain of possessions wherewith men bind themselves and beneath which they sink.

There is the path of wisdom and the path of ignorance. They are far apart and lead to different ends, You are, Nachiketas, a follower of the path of wisdom: Many pleasures tempt you not.

When the wise rests his mind in contemplation on our God beyond time, who invisibly dwells in the mystery of things, and in the heart of man, then he rises above pleasures and sorrow.

When a man has heard and understood and, finding the essence, reaches the Inmost, then he finds joy in the Source of joy. Na-



chiketas is a house open for thy Atman, thy God.<sup>28</sup>

It is important to note that in the passage above contemplation is identified as the means to spiritual consciousness, which then will reveal that God *dwells in the mystery of things and in the heart of man*, and once the spiritual consciousness has been attained, the devotee manages to rise above pleasures and sorrow and as the next verse points out, partakes in the true blessing of the soul, which is joy. Yama also assures Nachiketas that his earnest spiritual attitude has made him a fit abode for Atman, or the spirit.

Nachiketas, who has now gained the status of an accepted disciple, is now entitled to receive the ever deepening words of wisdom which Yama systematically reveals to him:

Atman, the Spirit of vision, is never born and never dies. Before him there was nothing, and he is ONE for evermore. Never-born and eternal, beyond times gone or to come, he does not die when the body dies.

If the slayer thinks that he kills, and if the slain thinks that he dies, neither knows the way of truth, The Eternal in man cannot kill; the Eternal in man cannot die.

Concealed in the heart of all beings is the Atman, the Spirit, the Self; smaller than the smallest atom, greater than the vast spaces. The man who surrenders his human will leave sorrow behind, and beholds the glory of the Atman by the grace of the Creator.<sup>29</sup>

From the above, one can conclude that the author of this Upanishad clearly identifies the essence of life with Atman, or the Spirit, which he considers immortal, and which he considers to be concealed in the heart of all beings. In Alice Bailey's *Esoteric Psychology II*, the two

energies of the soul, namely mind and love, or the principle of consciousness and the life principle, are each assigned their specific localities: consciousness in the human brain, and the life principle in the human heart.<sup>30</sup> It is

noteworthy that various cultures besides the Indian, such as the Chinese, Egyptian and many classical Greek philosophers, such as Aristotle, consider the heart as the seat of the soul.<sup>31</sup> Is it any wonder that most of the profound experiences that we register are primarily felt in our hearts before they are made conscious, and later analyzed, in our brains?

Yama's exposition about higher consciousness becomes even more specific when he says:

'Beyond the senses are their objects, and beyond the objects is the mind. Beyond the mind is pure reason, and beyond reason is the Spirit in man.

Beyond the Spirit in man is the Spirit of the universe, and beyond is Purusha, the Spirit Supreme. Nothing is beyond Purusha: He is the End of the path.'<sup>32</sup>

An attentive reading of the above reveals a clear distinction between the mind, pure reason and the Spirit in man. The practiced occultist will readily recognize them as the unity of the Spiritual Triad, mind being understood in its higher or abstract sense, pure reason being equated with the intuitional or buddhic faculty, and Spirit being equated with the atma, also known as the power or will aspect of a human being. As regards Purusha, the above passage defines it as the Spirit Supreme. In Radhakrishnan's *Indian Philosophy, Volume I*, Purusha is identified with the Absolute<sup>33</sup> and the ultimate principle,<sup>34</sup> thus identical with what the above Upanishad calls the Spirit Supreme.

Yama's concluding words to Nachiketas are as follows:

**It is when man realizes his inner divinity that he becomes an integral part of the creation, and discovers the potential powers that make him an important link in the hierarchical chain of being. As this truth dawns on him, his aspiration is fired, and his yearning for truth finds ways and means to quench the thirst in his soul.**

‘Awake, arise! Strive for the Highest, and be in the Light! Sages say the path is narrow and difficult to tread, narrow as the edge of a razor.

The Atman is beyond sound and form, without touch and taste and perfume. It is eternal, unchangeable, and without beginning or end: indeed above reasoning. When consciousness of the Atman manifests itself, man becomes free from the jaws of death.’<sup>35</sup>

Yama’s final words do not hide the fact that the path is difficult to tread, indeed narrow as the edge of a razor, a simile which is very similar to the Noble Middle Path of Buddhism, whereupon the disciple walks by a wise balancing of the pairs of opposites, and thus avoiding extreme behavior and fanaticism. Yama also points out that Spirit is beyond the senses and even beyond reasoning, and consciousness of it is so precious that it surpasses even death.

In conclusion, an example from the *Chandogya Upanishad* sums up what the spiritual seeker can expect once his or her inner eye has been opened. Time and space are no more experienced as hindrances to unity with the Divine and the disciple can say with conviction and clarity what this Upanishad expresses as follows:

There is a bridge between time and Eternity, and this bridge is Atman, the Spirit of man. Neither day nor night cross that bridge, nor old age, nor death nor sorrow.

Evil or sin cannot cross that bridge, because the world of the Spirit is pure. This is why when this bridge has been crossed, the eyes of the blind can see, the wounds of the wounded are healed, and the sick man becomes whole from his sickness.

To one who goes over that bridge, the night becomes like unto day, because in the worlds of the Spirit there is a Light which is everlasting.<sup>36</sup>

### **The “Yoga Sutras”: From Self-Consciousness to Soul-Consciousness**

In the introduction to her book, *The Light of the Soul*, Alice A. Bailey comments on Patanjali’s *Yoga Sutras* as follows:

The Yoga Sutras are the basic teaching of the Trans-Himalayan school to which many of the Masters of the Wisdom belong, and many students hold that the Essenes and other schools of mystical training and thought, closely connected with the founder of Christianity and the early Christians, are based upon the same system and that their teachers were trained in the great Trans-Himalayan School.<sup>37</sup>

Bailey also points out that this “Kingly Science of the Soul” will find its greatest demonstration in the West, because the fifth root race in its fifth subrace, i.e. the Anglo-Saxon, must inevitably touch its highest point.<sup>38</sup> The opportunity to reach the highest point will reach its zenith between the years 1965 and 2025 (written in 1927),<sup>39</sup> which to the present-day disciple leaves but a little more than a decade to avail him or herself of the opportunity to be part of that group which will attain the projected goal. This should be seen as an urgent appeal to spiritual seekers in the Occident to redouble their efforts, and avail themselves of the opportunity to study, meditate and serve, because this opportunity is available *right now*.

In answer to the question “What are the Yoga Sutras?” Swami Jnaneshvara Bharati of the Abhyasa Ashram answers as follows:

The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali succinctly outlines the art and science of traditional Yoga meditation for Self-Realisation. It is a process of systematically encountering, examining, and transcending each of the various gross and subtle levels of false identity in the mind field, until the jewel of the true Self comes shining through.<sup>40</sup>

Radhakrishnan in his *Indian Philosophy* basically says the same thing: “Patanjali’s yoga is a system of psychic discipline by which we can clear the intellect, free the mind of its illusions and get a direct perception of reality,” and further on, a bit more specifically, he writes:

The Yoga Sutra of Patanjali is the oldest textbook of the Yoga school. It has four parts, of which the first treats of the nature and aim of samadhi, or meditative absorption (samadhipada), the second explains the means of attaining this end (sadhanapada), the third gives an account of the supernormal powers that can be attained through the yoga practices (vibhutipada), and the fourth sets forth the nature of liberation (kaivalyapada).<sup>41</sup>

According to Bailey the *Yoga Sutras* are so comprehensive, and of such a high order, that not only disciples and initiates, but even the Masters make use of them and derive benefit from their teachings.<sup>42</sup> Their importance as a spiritual treatise cannot be underestimated, and this is reinforced by the fact that there are at least 48 different translations of it into English, and that it has been translated into as many as 33 different languages.<sup>43</sup> For those students who approach the esoteric teachings in context of the writings of Bailey and the Tibetan, the preferred version of the *Yoga Sutras* is Bailey's *The Light of the Soul*, which is a paraphrase of the *Yoga Sutras* by the Tibetan Master, Djwhal Khul, with a commentary by Bailey.

In an article such as this all that one can do is to touch upon some key elements of the subject under discussion and point out their significance and relevance, and then trust that readers' interests are sufficiently piqued so that they will follow it up with their own investigations.

In this sense, it needs, firstly, to be pointed out that the most important distinction between Raja Yoga as expounded in the *Yoga Sutras* and the yoga traditions that preceded it, is that Raja Yoga is primarily the yoga of the mind. When the mind is properly disciplined and subjugated, it can be turned into an instrument whereby higher states of consciousness become possible, and thus bring the practitioner closer to the ideal of realizing his or her spiritual destiny.

In Bailey's rendering, the first book of the *Yoga Sutras*, subtitled *The Problem of Union*, has as its topic the versatile psychic nature and

begins by defining the higher and lower natures, and considers the obstacles that arise from there and the need for their removal. Book I concludes with a summation of the Raja Yoga system.<sup>44</sup> A closer look at Book I reveals in a nutshell, what the *Yoga Sutras* intend to do as a whole, i.e. the achievement of union between the lower and higher self, while the remaining three books concentrate on how this can be achieved in practice.

The second book of the *Yoga Sutras* is subtitled *The Steps to Union*, and is more practical and detailed than the first book. Its topic is the means of attainment, which is to be achieved by the recognition of the five hindrances to union and their removal.<sup>45</sup> These hindrances are identified as *avidya* (ignorance), *the sense of personality*, *desire*, *hate*, and *the sense of attachment*.<sup>46</sup>

At this point, it is appropriate to digress somewhat from the summation of the *Yoga Sutras* and examine in more detail how the five hindrances to union are perceived and what the suggested methods are so that they can be successfully overcome.

The first of the five hindrances, *avidya* or ignorance, is considered as the cause of all the other obstructions, because it is "*the condition of confusing the permanent, pure, blissful and the Self with that which is impermanent, impure, painful and the not-self*."<sup>47</sup> Bailey comments on this specific sutra by pointing out that this condition of ignorance is characteristic of all those who as yet do not discriminate between the real and the unreal, between death and immortality, and between light and darkness. In this respect, ignorance governs life in the three worlds, because the correspondence between *avidya* on the physical plane as experienced by man in incarnation is to be found on all planes. Bailey argues that *avidya* in the initial stage is unavoidable, because "*the spiritual unit is born blind and senseless*."<sup>48</sup> At this stage, Bailey points out three factors that must be borne in mind in connection with the spiritual unit. Firstly, the senses have to be evolved; secondly, their recognition and use must follow; and thirdly, a period undergone wherein the spiritual man utilizes the senses in the fulfillment

of his desire and in so doing, identifies himself with his apparatus of manifestation.<sup>49</sup>

It becomes clear from the above why the second hindrance is considered the sense of personality, because the personality is the vehicle by means of which we access the physical world; and why the third hindrance is desire, because the physical world is made up of those objects of pleasure that give rise to desire. The fourth hindrance, hate, goes hand in hand with the third, because it is the complementary opposite of the third hindrance, namely aversion for certain objects of the senses.<sup>50</sup> The fifth hindrance, attachment, sums up all the others and is defined in Sutra 9 as follows: "*Intense desire for sentient existence is attachment. This is inherent in every form, is self-perpetuating, and known even to the very wise.*"<sup>51</sup>

The five hindrances and the need for their removal are a very apt description of the all too familiar world in which we live and struggle, and an unbiased, but realistic view of the general human condition which results from it. The reasoning behind it is intrinsically sound, and it is very different to the Christian doctrine of atonement. The atonement, as it is customarily understood, is a doctrine in light of which human beings are by nature considered sinful, and need to be saved from their evil ways. Contrasting such a view, Radhakrishnan points out the following in his *Indian Philosophy*:

There is a cordial harmony between God and man in Indian thought, while the opposition between the two is more marked in the West. The mythologies of the peoples also indicate it. The myth of Prometheus, the representative man, who tries to help humanity by defending it against Zeus who desires to destroy the human race and supplant them with a new and better species, the story of the labours of Hercules, who tries to redeem the world, the conception of Christ as the Son of Man, indicate that man is the centre of attention in the West. Our point here is that the main tendency of the western culture is an opposition between man and God, where man resists the might of God, steals fire from him in the interests of humanity. In India, man is a product of

God. The whole world is due to the sacrifice of God.<sup>52</sup>

According to the *Yoga Sutras*, the true reason for our human failings is that we are inevitably subjected to maya, glamour, and illusion, which are inherent in the very substance of the three lowest levels of the cosmic physical plane. Through our recognition of a higher destiny and the ability to identify ourselves with our souls, we are able to transcend maya, glamour and illusion and thereby achieve liberation.

Perhaps the best answer and alternative view that one can give regarding the Western point of view is summed up in the Three Truths which appear in Mabel Collins's *The Idyll of the White Lotus*, and which is worth repeating here:

There are three truths which are absolute  
and cannot be lost,  
But yet may remain silent for lack of  
speech.

The soul of man is immortal, and its future  
is the future  
Of a thing whose growth and splendor have  
no limit,

The principle which gives life dwells in us,  
and without us,  
Is undying and eternally beneficent, is not  
heard or seen  
Or smelt, but is perceived by the man who  
desires perception.

Each man is his own absolute law-giver, the  
dispenser of glory  
Or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life,  
his reward, his punishment.

These truths, which are as great as is life itself,  
are as simple  
As the simplest mind of man. Feed the  
hungry with them.<sup>53</sup>

Now that this basic difference between eastern and western religious doctrines has been pointed out, one can return to answer the all-important question of how the five hindrances mentioned in the *Yoga Sutras* are to be dealt with so that they can be successfully overcome. Book II, Sutras 10 - 11 provide the answer:

These five hindrances, when subtly known, can be overcome by an opposing mental attitude.

Their activities are to be done away with, through the meditation process.<sup>54</sup>

Meditation is the practice for which the Orient is so well-known, and it can be safely stated that the Orientals have developed it to a level which one can call scientific. It is the heart and soul of the spiritual quest and, besides study, the most important means to esoteric understanding and occult wisdom.

Before considering the more technical aspects of meditation, it is best to look at a few definitions of it and thereby gain a more comprehensive view of what it entails. In Bailey's *Letters on Occult Meditation*, there are three definitions that are noteworthy and which are worded as follows:

Meditation is the expression of the intelligence that links life and form, the self and the not-self, and in time and in the three worlds the process of this connection eventuates on the plane of mind which links the higher and the lower.<sup>55</sup>

Meditation is the means whereby the higher consciousness is contacted.<sup>56</sup>

The basis of all occult growth is meditation, or those periods of silent gestation in which the soul grows in the silence.<sup>57</sup>

Meditation in the *Yoga Sutras* is treated in greater detail in Book III, which is subtitled "*Union Achieved and its Results*" and has as its topic the powers of the soul. The first part of this book treats meditation and its various stages, and the second part the twenty-three results of meditation.<sup>58</sup> These results refer to the various powers that emanate from meditation, but which ultimately need to be transcended, because they can become the very obstacles that stand in the way of spiritual union and liberation.<sup>59</sup>

The first five sutras of Book III are of vital

importance since they contain the key elements of occult meditation. They sum up the three indispensable stages of the meditation process, namely: *concentration*, *meditation* and *contemplation* which, when successfully followed, lead to *sanyama*. *Sanyama* is a Sanskrit word which is very difficult to translate into English, but which describes a state in which the mediator "has learnt to pierce through all the veils and contact the reality behind."<sup>60</sup> To get a better idea of this process it is necessary to examine each stage more closely. Sutra 1 says the following about concentration:

Concentration is the fixing of the chitta (mind stuff) upon a particular object. This is dharana.<sup>61</sup>

Among the key elements in the commentary on this sutra, Bailey points out that to the untrained mind concentration "is one of the most difficult stages in the meditation process and involves constant unremitting ability to keep bringing the mind back to that 'object' upon which the aspirant has chosen to concentrate."<sup>62</sup> She suggests the choice of some object upon which to concentrate, which can be chosen from four distinct groups, namely *external objects*, such as images of the deity; *internal objects*, such as the centers in the etheric body; *qualities*, such as the various virtues; or *mental concepts* which may take the form of symbols or of words.<sup>63</sup> Concentrating on an object without the interference of any thoughts about other objects, when done successfully for the space of twelve seconds, is a sure sign that true concentration is being achieved.<sup>64</sup>

Sutra 2 is very straightforward, and simply states that "*Sustained Concentration (dharana) is meditation (dhyana)*."<sup>65</sup> Bailey expands on this by saying that meditation is but the extension of concentration, and grows out of one's facility in fixing the mind at will on any particular object. As such, it falls under the same rules and conditions as concentration, with the only difference between the two being the time element.<sup>66</sup>



The next stage of the meditation process, contemplation is, in a general sense, the culmination of the yogi's efforts. Bailey writes that in contemplation, the yogi loses sight of his or her brain consciousness; does not allow for emotional reactions regarding the meditation process; and even loses sight of his or her mental activities, "so that all the 'modifications' of the thinking process, all the emotional reactions of the desire-mind (*kama-manas*) vehicle are subdued, and the yogi is unaware of them. He is, however, intensely alive and alert, positive and awake, for the brain and the mind are held by him in a steady grip, and are used by him without any interference on their part."<sup>67</sup>

The outstanding characteristics of contemplation are *absorption in the soul consciousness, liberation from the three worlds, realization of oneness with all souls, and illumination*. Absorption in the soul consciousness allows for awareness of the soul in all things; liberation from the three worlds allows the yogi freedom from form, from desire and from the lower mental substance; realization of oneness with all souls brings about a true sense of group consciousness; and illumination, or perception of the light aspect of manifestation brings the yogi *en rapport* with the light which an object might be hiding.<sup>68</sup>

Sutra 4 of Book III sums up the three preceding sutras as follows:

When concentration, meditation and contemplation form one sequential act, then is sanyama achieved.

Reading Bailey's commentary on this sutra, arriving at the stage of sanyama is to be understood as a significant achievement. It entails the following: a freeing of the yogi from the three worlds; the ability to focus the attention

indefinitely and at will; polarization of the consciousness in the ego, or soul; the recognition of the lower man as simply an instrument for communicating with the three lower planes; the acquisition of the faculty of con-

templation, or the attitude of the real Identity towards the realm of the soul; and the ability to transmit to the brain, via the controlled mind, the knowledge of the self and its kingdom to the man on the physical plane. Sanyama is thus the attainment of the power of meditation, which is the objective of the Raja Yoga system.<sup>69</sup>

Sutra 5 states that "as a result of sanyama comes the shining forth of the light."<sup>70</sup> The light referred to in this

sutra is the light of the soul, and with it come *illumination of perception, lucidity of consciousness, the shining forth of insight, and illumination of the intellect*.<sup>71</sup>

The greater part of Book III is a description of the various powers or siddhis that are acquired as a result of soul consciousness, which will not be dealt with in this article. Many of them might appear as fantastic, and thus difficult to attain by the average disciple, so it is deemed more reasonable to point out how soul consciousness is expected to be experienced by those who can achieve it by means of regular meditation, rather than by those highly advanced disciples who take soul consciousness for granted, and in whom continuity of consciousness is fully developed.

Once the soul starts to assert itself; its presence will be experienced in a variety of ways, such as a sense of joy, a sense of heartfelt identification with other souls, a sense of deeper meaning resulting from the recognition of the subjective aspects of life, and a sense of true spiritual destiny and purpose. Soul consciousness also brings with it a new way of perceiving

space and time, and we experience in a more direct and real sense what it means to live in the Eternal Now. The phenomenal world of concrete manifestation and the senses become just *that*, namely phenomenal, in which each player plays an intricate part, but also a part which in context of the greater whole is conditional and transitory, i.e. qualified by the restrictions of space and time.

As far as the discussion of the *Yoga Sutras* in this article is concerned one need go no further than to point out that even this detailed and scientific treatise on Raja Yoga only makes brief reference to what is to be expected when one advances beyond soul consciousness.

### **The Higher Consciousness of the Spiritual Triad**

There are several ways of approach by which one can try to understand the consciousness which is characteristic of the Spiritual Triad, and all of them are equally important to aid the disciple in trying to form a comprehensive idea or view. These ways of approach are closely interrelated, and are to be looked upon as fragments that go into the making of a whole.

The most practicable way is by means of a comprehensive understanding of all that has been given out in regard to the teaching about the antahkarana, or the building of the “rainbow bridge,” which forms a link between the lower and higher mind, and thus creates a pathway between the lowest aspect of the Spiritual Triad and the highest aspect of the personality. In a previous article dealing specifically with the antahkarana this author described this building process as follows:

(It) is dependent on the conscious effort and evocative power of the soul-infused personality, aided by visualization and the ability to keep the channel between soul-mind-brain open and aligned. The final stages of the building process extend to include the consciousness of the intuition and the spiritual will, and ultimately, the monad itself, by which time the role of the soul as mediator between that which is “lower” and that which is “higher” becomes redundant,

and a direct link between the three aspects of the monad and the three aspects of the personality becomes possible and effective, and by means of which the monad, or spirit, can express itself fully in the world of manifestation or the world of form.<sup>72</sup>

Another way of approach to the Spiritual Triad is by means of studying those qualities and properties which are characteristic of the initiate of the third degree, or the disciple who has appropriated and can make conscious use of his mental vehicle as it is employed in service of the soul. This is more succinctly expressed in Alice A. Bailey’s *The Rays and the Initiations*, which reads as follows:

After the third initiation, the “Way” is carried forward with great rapidity, and the “bridge” is finished which links perfectly the higher spiritual Triad and the lower material reflection. The three worlds of the Soul and the three worlds of the Personality become one world wherein the initiate works and functions, seeing no distinction, regarding one world as the world of inspiration and the other world as constituting the field of service, yet regarding both together as forming one world of activity.<sup>73</sup>

Thirdly, a way of approach to the Spiritual Triad can be made by studying the degree of awakening of the human energy centers, and how they are transmuted into and related to their corresponding higher centers. In this regard, one needs to examine the relationship between the three head centers, i.e. the crown center, the brow or ajna center, and the alta major center, and their significance as related to the opening of the third eye.

In *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* Bailey points out that one first needs to know that there is a close connection between the alta major center and the throat center, the heart center and the pituitary body, and between the head center and the pineal gland.<sup>74</sup> Further on she explains that the accurate realization by the physical brain of what the Ego is seeking to convey concerning the work to be done only becomes possible when two things are realized:

Direct alignment.

The transmission of the egoic energy or will to one or other of the three physical centres in the head:

The pineal gland.

The pituitary body.

The alta major centre, or that nerve centre at the top of the spine, where the cranium and the spine make approximate contact. When this congery of nerves is fully developed, it forms a centre of communication between the vital energy of the spinal column (the kundalini fire) and the energy of the two head centres above enumerated. It is the physical correspondence to the antaskarana (sic) on higher levels.<sup>75</sup>

Bailey concludes her most essential observation about the above mentioned three centers as follows:

As these three types of energy, or the vibration of these three centres, begin to contact each other, a definite interplay is set up. This triple interplay forms in time a vortex or centre of force, which finds its place in the centre of the forehead, and takes eventually the semblance of an eye looking out between the other two. It is the eye of the inner vision, and he who has opened it can direct and control the energy of matter, see all things in the Eternal Now, and therefore, be in touch with causes more than with effects, read the akashic records, and see clairvoyantly. Therefore, its possessor can control the builders of low degree.<sup>76</sup>

Lastly, it needs to be said that although the monad first makes its influence felt after the disciple has taken the third initiation, there are several important steps before full monadic consciousness can be realized. Initiates of the third degree are disciples who are rapidly developing soul consciousness and who are adept at using their higher minds. It is only when disciples are in the process of preparing for the Great Renunciation, whereby they will be able to cut all binding ties from the concrete world of manifestation, that they will have the ability to fully appropriate the next plane of consciousness, that of buddhi, also known as the plane of intuition or pure reason. Even the

candidate preparing for the fifth initiation, which will qualify him as a Master, can reach no higher than the spiritual or atmic plane. It is only those Masters who have taken initiations higher than the fifth that can be said to possess monadic consciousness, a state of being that no one who manifests through a physical body can fathom, unless he is an Avatar who has incarnated for a specific purpose, and therefore, needs to make use of a physical body.

## Conclusion

Mankind's journey from its earliest beginnings, and its consequent odyssey from self-consciousness to group consciousness and beyond, is a work of arduous effort and striving that can only be achieved within the span of countless epochs and innumerable existences. Yet it is a journey which can be achieved with more and more surety as we witness the tangible results of our evolution, and follow the dictates of those great Sons of God who have walked before us, and due to their achievements, are qualified to point the way which leads us from the unreal to the real, from darkness to light, and from death to immortality. It is by our firm decision to set our feet on the Spiritual Path that we find the Kingdom of God, and consequently, allow for the promise to be fulfilled that puts us in direct and spiritual kinship with God.

<sup>1</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (1962; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1977), 243.

<sup>2</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* (1960; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1976), 263.

<sup>3</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, Vol. I (1962; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1979), 131.

<sup>4</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic* (1951; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1980), 212.

<sup>5</sup> <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2F02437424?LI=true> (accessed January 20, 2013).

<sup>6</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mirror\\_test](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mirror_test) (accessed January 20, 2013).

<sup>7</sup> William James, *The Principles of Psychology* (1952; reprint; Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1980), vi.

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29 Ibid., 59.  
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31 [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human\\_heart](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_heart) (accessed March 22, 2013).  
32 *The Upanishads* (1965; London: Penguin Books Ltd), 61.  
33 Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I, 105.  
34 Ibid., 121.  
35 *The Upanishads* (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1965) 61.  
36 Ibid., 121.  
37 Alice A. Bailey, *The Light of the Soul*, (1955; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1978), xv.

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76 Ibid., 1010-1011.

# Modern Science, Psychology, and the Enduring Mystery of Consciousness: An Esoteric/Mystical Critique, Part III, G.I. Gurdjieff and the Fourth Way

James Moffatt

## Abstract

In continuing to develop an esoteric critique of the study of consciousness as it is undertaken by most modern psychologists and scientists, this is the first of two articles focusing on Gurdjieff's Fourth Way teaching. According to Gurdjieff, *our normal waking consciousness is a state of waking sleep* and, therefore, human beings are not properly conscious. However, Gurdjieff asserts that *human beings possess dormant faculties of higher consciousness and being that may be awakened through a process of self-transformation*. He contends that this process of "knowing oneself" is dependent upon *the systematic study of oneself and the Universe in terms of an esoteric teaching*. This article is intended to provide an introduction to Gurdjieff's teaching, while also using it to identify and elaborate upon the radical differences between an esoteric teaching's understanding of and approach to the study of consciousness and the materialist paradigm which dominates modern science and psychology.

## An Overview of Issues Confronting Consciousness Researchers

In the first two articles in this series, a review of modern psychology's peculiar history, regarding the subject of consciousness, was presented in order to identify why behavioral psychologists initially banned "consciousness" from their studies as being "unscientific"—particularly, because of its association with other such ethereal concepts as "the soul"—and how that perspective continued to influence psychologists' theoretical assumptions and methodological choices when they eventually recognized consciousness as a legitimate

topic of scientific interest. Typically, during the 1970s, psychologists' renewed interest in consciousness focused primarily on the contents of experience—particularly thinking—and tended to equate consciousness with what William James termed "the stream of experience."

In the ensuing years, as consciousness research has become increasingly the domain of brain researchers, its study has been pursued in terms of a materialist-mechanistic-reductionist-atheistic paradigm. The governing assumption, which guides that research, is that consciousness is somehow generated by the brain's physiological processes. While the evidence to substantiate that view is essentially non-existent, it is regarded, paradoxically, as a self-evident truth. There is also widespread, tacit agreement among consciousness researchers that there is no spiritual property or principle at the heart of a human being and, therefore, no need to include any consideration of spiritual properties or dimensions when contemplating the mysteries of consciousness. Further, as part of the behavioral legacy within modern psychology, there exists a convention *cum* article of faith that the scientific study of consciousness precludes any form of self-study

## About the Author

James Moffatt was raised in Ottawa, Ontario, where he attended Carleton University and earned degrees in both Sociology and Psychology. For the past 35 years, James has collaborated with Dr. Christopher Holmes in studying, writing, and lecturing about consciousness from an esoteric mystical perspective. James resides in Toronto, where he is employed as a law clerk, and also works as a freelance legal and medical writer.



and, thus, must necessarily involve external observation. Finally, the reductive complex, which dominates modern psychology, dictates that increased precision—as determined by predictive power—demands explanations at the simplest, most rudimentary material level. Within consciousness studies, this has led theorists and researchers to either dismiss consciousness as being epiphenomenal—nothing more than a label to describe psychological functioning—or to focus on determining the “neural correlates of consciousness” which are assumed to provide the missing causal link between the brain and behavior.

The modern psychological approach to consciousness must be understood as being part of the fulfillment of Galileo’s contention that science must deal with only those primary qualities that are measurable. In fulfilling what R.D. Laing termed Galileo’s “audacious program,” modern science grew increasingly dismissive of anything which was not quantifiable, and as such, “experience” came to be regarded as nothing more than a secondary quality which, because it could not be measured, was of no particular significance. Ken Wilber has explained the distrust of the reality of experience as part of the wider dismissal of interior qualities which resulted in the collapse of “the Great Chain of Being”—or that which he terms “the Great Nest of Being”—which followed the Enlightenment and accompanied the ascendancy of modern science. The Great Nest refers to a hierarchical conceptualization of consciousness and the cosmos—a hierarchy of being and knowing—in which each lower level, while possessing its own distinct qualities and laws, is subsumed by higher levels. The Great Nest—a ladder of Creation which involved matter, body, mind, soul, and Spirit—collapsed into the flatland of matter, which modern scientists came to regard as the only realm of significance.

As part of the collapse which resulted in that which Max Weber described as “the disenchantment of the world,” Wilber says that modern science also dismissed epistemological pluralism. Thus, the three traditional ways of knowing—the eye of the flesh, the eye of the mind, and the eye of the spirit—were no longer

recognized as legitimate complementary epistemological approaches. Instead, only the eye of the flesh, which apprehended the material world through external observation, was considered to yield objective knowledge. Moreover, in legitimizing this blatant misrepresentation of both epistemology and science, materialists invoke “the myth of the given”: the contention that their empiricism involves nothing more than recording that which may be apprehended by the senses through external observation and, thus, is unsullied by any source of subjectivity.

Esoteric teachings depict humans as multi-dimensional beings existing within a multi-dimensional Universe. They claim that the level of one’s knowledge is dependent upon the level of one’s consciousness, and as such, the most objective knowledge of oneself and the Universe demands the attainment of those higher states of consciousness which involve transcendent experiences of unity and a direct unmediated knowledge of oneself and the Universe. From an esoteric perspective, the primary failing of modern consciousness research is that it does not recognize the existence and significance of scale in addressing the hierarchy of consciousness, which exists both within human beings and the cosmos. Because modern psychologists and scientists do not recognize the importance of scale, they fail to understand that a lower level of consciousness cannot understand a higher level. From an esoteric perspective, the objective knowledge of the material realm is incomplete and limited precisely because it does not recognize the higher levels in the Great Nest—the subtle dimensions—that inform and subsume it. Esoteric teachings consistently describe consciousness as a universal property which manifests, in varying degrees of subtlety and refinement, in the dimensions that comprise the cosmological hierarchy. As such, consciousness is neither reducible to human psychological functions, nor to the brain’s physiological processes. The ancient esoteric aphorism, inscribed above the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, stated: “Man, know thyself, and thou wilt know the Universe and the gods.” Esoteric teachings take the meaning of that aphorism literally: by knowing

oneself, it is possible to acquire those higher states of consciousness and being that yield an objective knowledge of the Universe and the gods.

George I. Gurdjieff's esoteric Fourth Way teaching comprises a highly sophisticated, elegant, and coherent model of consciousness that proffers a radically different understanding of the nature of human beings and their cosmic connections from that which modern scientific materialists put forth. Gurdjieff's insistence that the proper study of consciousness demands systematic self-study aimed at self-transformation challenges the epistemological assumptions that underlie and guide virtually all contemporary scientific studies of consciousness. In contrast to modern science's distrust and dismissal of experience, Gurdjieff's method demands a comprehensive understanding of experience and a dynamic dissipation of its habitual structures—in pursuit of the aim of transforming the very nature of one's consciousness and being. Gurdjieff claims that the distinctions between psychology and cosmology are, in essence, artificial; as such, his system involves the pursuit of self-knowledge through the parallel study of both oneself and the Universe. This article provides an overview of some of the fundamental tenets of Gurdjieff's teaching. The author's aim is to describe a model of the origins and nature of human consciousness which challenges modern science's fundamental assumptions, postulates, and methods with respect to the study of consciousness.

### **G.I. Gurdjieff**

George I. Gurdjieff (1866-1949)<sup>1</sup> was a remarkable, enigmatic, profound, and mysterious figure. He has been called a mystic, a master, a messenger from above ... a charlatan, a con man, an ignoramus, a "rascal sage"... and, in his own uncharacteristically self-effacing term, "a teacher of dance." While all of these terms are useful, to some extent, in coming to terms with certain aspects of Gurdjieff—or, at least, of the roles that he played—they are, ultimately, misleading and entirely inadequate in terms of capturing the singular nature of his being and his level of consciousness. Moreover, questions as to who Gurdjieff

was and how he is to be regarded must be separated from assessing his remarkable Fourth Way teaching. As the focus of this article is on his teaching, the provocative and highly significant question of coming to terms with Gurdjieff will be deferred to a subsequent article.<sup>2,3</sup>

Gurdjieff was born in the Caucasus region of what was, then, Russia and is currently Armenia. He maintained that he began, at a very early age, to experience "an irrepressible striving" to know and understand the purpose of life on Earth and, in particular, that of humanity. In pursuing his seemingly impossible aim, he read voraciously and, as a young man, he began what would become more than twenty years of travels throughout Asia in search of esoteric knowledge. Having contacted and studied with various esoteric groups, he claimed to have fulfilled his search when he discovered the existence of an ancient esoteric teaching which had been lost or, at least, had disappeared for thousands of years. As a result, he made it his mission to reformulate the Fourth Way in order to make it comprehensible to the modern mind and to bring it to the West.

Establishing himself in Moscow in 1913, Gurdjieff began working with select groups of pupils—to whom he introduced his teaching. From that time until his death in Paris in 1949, his work with various groups of pupils (primarily in France and the United States after the revolution had forced him to leave Russia) was continually changing in terms of its presentation and its emphasis. In addition to lecturing on the psychological and cosmological aspects of the Fourth Way, he worked intensively with his students to develop physical awareness and consciousness by instructing them in highly sophisticated movements, "sacred gymnastics," and Eastern dances. While the external form and content of his work was continually changing, Gurdjieff's purpose—to aid those who were seeking to awaken—remained his most immediate goal. However, the nature and purpose of his mission—his larger purpose in reformulating the Fourth Way—is as mysterious as Gurdjieff himself and continues to be a topic of intense debate.<sup>4</sup>

### **The Fourth Way**

Many of those who have written about Gurdjieff have put forth the idea that his teaching is an amalgamation of the numerous esoteric ideas, practices, and disciplines that he encountered in his years of searching and studying. They cite the existence of several elements of The Fourth Way in the teachings of other esoteric groups and schools—such as the Sufis, Essenes, Gnostics, Tibetan Buddhists, Zoroastrians, Kabbalists, neo-Platonists, Egyptian mystery cults, and Rosicrucians—as evidence that Gurdjieff cobbled his teaching together from numerous esoteric sources. William Patrick Patterson, a Fourth Way student and teacher whose lineage is directly related to Gurdjieff, argues compellingly that those making that claim have seriously misrepresented the teaching and, in doing so, misunderstood its uniqueness. As Patterson points out, Gurdjieff stated unequivocally that the Fourth Way was an ancient teaching which had appeared and disappeared over the course of thousands of years. Furthermore, Gurdjieff characterized the Fourth Way as occupying a unique position within the esoteric tradition, which he defined as consisting of four principal lines: the Hebraic, the Egyptian, the Persian, and the Hindu.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, Gurdjieff said of The Fourth Way: “The teaching whose theory is here being set out is *completely self-supporting and independent of other lines and it has been completely unknown up to the present time.*”<sup>6</sup> [emphasis added] There is nothing ambiguous in Gurdjieff’s description of the uniqueness of his teaching; yet, somehow, numerous commentators have ignored his unequivocal declaration.

At the very heart of Gurdjieff’s teaching is his claim that human beings are “asleep.” What we take to be our normal waking state of consciousness, he says, is a *waking sleep*—not sleep as we normally understand it, but rather a state of *hypnotic* sleep and mechanical, associative existence. The fact that virtually no one believes or even suspects this to be true reflects both the extent to which our lives are lived out in this sleep, as well as the existence of several other unrecognized psychological illusions that are critical in maintaining our characteristic state of ignorance about ourselves. In addition to “consciousness,” we typically ascribe to ourselves the properties of

unity, will, and freedom. According to Gurdjieff, our apparent possession of such attributes is illusory. Human beings—*sleepwalkers* *sleepwalking through a sleeping world*—are machines; automatons who are not properly conscious, unified, able to *do* anything or free. We do not *know ourselves*.

Gurdjieff states that human beings typically exist in two states of consciousness: sleep and the so-called “waking state”—or what he sometimes refers to as “relative consciousness.” However, he asserts that there exist two states of higher consciousness that human beings can acquire, through systematic efforts to awaken, and make more or less permanent within themselves: “self-consciousness” and “objective consciousness.” Gurdjieff characterizes self-consciousness as a state in which an individual knows the truth about himself, and objective consciousness as the state in which he knows the truth about everything. He claims that, while we assume that we are normally in a state of self-consciousness when we are awake—or *that we can be at will*—such a belief is an illusion: one which is responsible for our profound failure to realize the nature of the “sleeping world” in which we exist and in which “everything happens.” Moreover, according to Gurdjieff, we mistakenly believe that we are properly conscious, unified beings who possess will. Nevertheless, he contends that self-consciousness is a human being’s rightful state—rather than the waking sleep and false consciousness system in which most people are unknowingly imprisoned—and that by working to acquire self-consciousness, an individual can begin to attain unity and self-mastery.

In broad terms, the ideas and practices that Gurdjieff taught may be understood as being a method of *awakening* and developing those higher faculties of human consciousness and being that are normally dormant. Thus, his system begins with the study of human beings, *as they are*, in order to suggest the miraculous possibilities of what they are capable of becoming through a process of *conscious evolution*. This conscious transformation of one’s being demands that one must fulfill the ancient esoteric dictum, *know thyself*. To know one-

self, according to Gurdjieff, demands the parallel study of oneself and the world; for he asserts that psychology and cosmology are integrally related and inform one another. For such study, a system is necessary; for self-study undertaken on an *ad hoc* basis or in terms of any arbitrarily selected or determined approach is useless. Moreover, in order to awaken, one must have a teacher—one who possesses a higher level of consciousness and being—in order to instruct and guide one's efforts to meet the extraordinary demands and challenges involved in fulfilling the arduous and often perilous process of self-transformation and self-realization.

The term, "the Fourth Way," denotes both the teaching's connections with and distinction from the three classic esoteric paths or ways of conscious development: those of the *fakir*, the *monk*, and the *yogi*. According to Gurdjieff, the way of the fakir involves the transformation of one's being through the discipline of the body, resulting in the attainment of will. The path of the monk focuses on mastering worldly desires through faith and devotion. The yogi attains self-realization through knowledge by concentrating on the development and control of the mind. While acknowledging that each of these ways can yield significant results in the quest for self-realization, Gurdjieff contended that each also imposes formidable limitations on most aspirants' efforts. The Fourth Way, he explained, was a method designed to surmount the respective deficiencies of the other three paths by coordinating the simultaneous awakening of the distinct intelligences of the body, the emotions, and the intellect. As a result, the student's development was at once accelerated and economized—especially so, because the pattern and focus of effort, which the teacher prescribed, took each individual's unique characteristics into account.

Other differences between the traditional methods and The Fourth Way, which make the latter seem particularly well-suited to Westerners, are the system's emphasis on the development of understanding through self-study and its accessibility. Although the Fourth Way contains profound spiritual teachings, it is not

a path of faith or devotion per se. Instead, it is a path of *understanding*: a method which involves what Ken Wilber terms "spiritual empiricism." Thus, one must confirm the validity of the teaching's concepts through the study of oneself and the Universe. Indeed, Gurdjieff cautioned his pupils that the willingness "to believe any old tale" was a most insidious manifestation of the state of sleep and suggestibility from which they were striving to awaken. Unlike most esoteric schools, there is no need to isolate oneself or retire from the rounds of daily life by entering a cloistered community in order to follow the Fourth Way. Instead, it is the path of *the sly man* who is, as the Sufis say, "in the world, but not of it."

### The Imprisonment of "Waking Sleep"

Gurdjieff asserts that, in our lives as we live them "normally," *everything happens*. All our great ideas about what we do and what we should do are illusory, he claims. In a conversation with P.D. Ouspensky—his most famous pupil and the author of *In Search of the Miraculous*, the classic account of their years together in Russia—Gurdjieff spoke of man as a machine who cannot *do*:

... man's chief delusion is his conviction that he can *do*. All people think that they can do, all people want to do, and the first question all people ask is what they are to do. But actually, nobody does anything and nobody can do anything. This is the first thing that must be understood. *Everything happens*. All that befalls a man, all that is done by him, all that comes from him—all *this happens*.

Man is a machine. All his deeds, actions, words, thoughts, feelings, convictions, opinions, and habits are the result of external influences, external impressions. Out of himself a man cannot produce a single thought, a single action. Everything he says, does, thinks, feels—all *this happens*. Man cannot discover anything, invent anything. It all happens.

To establish this fact for oneself, to understand it, to be convinced of its truth, means

getting rid of a thousand illusions about man ... Everything happens.

But no one will ever believe you if you tell him he can do nothing. This is the most offensive and the most unpleasant thing you can tell people. It is particularly unpleasant and offensive because it is the truth, and nobody wants to know the truth.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to this seemingly preposterous statement, Gurdjieff makes the equally radical assertion that there is an absence of unity in human beings: that we possess no permanent “I.” He maintains that, in our normal waking sleep, we lack unity—that, rather than being integrated, unified beings possessing a permanent and unchangeable “I,” we exist as a collection of many little, separate “i”s. Our “i”s are continually and unconsciously changing in ways we neither recognize nor suspect. “Every thought, every mood, every desire, every sensation says ‘I,’”<sup>8</sup> according to Gurdjieff and, therefore, we make a profound mistake when we take ourselves—as we normally do—to be, always, one and the same person. We believe erroneously that the actions, thoughts, desires, moods, and feelings are expressions of the Whole—one’s entire being—whereas, in reality, the Whole exists only in the sense of the continuity of our physical being and in the abstract, as a concept. Instead, we exist as a series of changing, unconscious, independent and frequently antagonistic different “i”s. Although there are some collections of “i”s that are more or less coherent and some “i”s are stronger than others, they have been formed accidentally and mechanically. Most importantly, Gurdjieff argues: there is, in reality, no coherent and unchangeable “I.”

To this rather grim and unforgiving depiction of human beings’ sleeping, mechanical existence, Gurdjieff adds one potentially positive element: that *it is possible to awaken and escape this imprisonment*. Further, he states unequivocally that it is possible to achieve unity by uncovering and apprehending the real “I” element which exists within us, but which must be attained through the process of awakening. To cultivate the realization of “I” within oneself is an unimaginably difficult, subtle, and complex process, according to Gurdjieff,

but one which is essential to becoming what he terms “a man without quotation marks.” Gurdjieff often said that, for a serious person, the possibility of escaping the imprisonment of the sleeping world can be the only thing of real importance. But few people give any thought to escape—for the simple reason that hardly anyone realizes that he or she is in prison, and would not believe you if you told them so. And even fewer people are interested in making an effort to escape, because to do so means long and hard work.

Within Gurdjieff’s system, awakening depends on the development and acquisition of consciousness. But the acquisition of consciousness must begin with the realization that, in our normal waking state, we are typically not conscious. When Ouspensky, who was thoroughly schooled in western psychology and philosophy, stated that it is generally agreed that “consciousness” is indefinable, Gurdjieff dismissed the objection as being nothing but the parroting of what he termed “rubbish” and “the usual scientific sophistry.” He countered by identifying the definitive feature of consciousness and the means by which it must be studied:

... you *can know* consciousness only in yourself. Observe that I say you *can know*, for you can know it only when you have it. And when you have not got it, you can know that you have not got it, not at that very moment, but afterwards. I mean that when it comes again you see that it has been absent a long time, and you can find or remember the moment when it disappeared and when it reappeared.<sup>9</sup>

By studying consciousness within oneself, it is possible to observe that there have been periods in which consciousness has been absent—that one has been asleep—but one is only capable of realizing that this is so only *after* regaining consciousness. Continuing, Gurdjieff explains that:

You can also define the moments when you are nearer to consciousness and further away from consciousness. But by observing in yourself the appearance and disappearance of consciousness you will inevitably see one fact which you neither see nor



acknowledge now, and that is that *moments of consciousness are very short and are separated by long intervals of completely unconscious, mechanical working of the machine.* [emphasis added] You will see then that you can think, feel, act, speak, work, *without being conscious of it.* And if you learn to see in yourselves the moments of consciousness and the long periods of mechanicalness, you will as infallibly see in other people when they are conscious of what they are doing and when they are not.”<sup>10</sup>

It is impossible to overestimate the importance of Gurdjieff’s characterization of the normal waking state as consisting of “long intervals of completely unconscious, mechanical working of the machine.” Certainly, there are numerous Fourth Way pupils who would readily attest to the fact that, by observing themselves, they have determined that it is not only entirely possible to *think, feel, act, and work without being conscious of it*, but also to assert that this lack of consciousness is indeed the principal feature of our normal waking consciousness. And, as Gurdjieff says, once one begins to understand that people are not properly conscious, the extent to which *every-one* “thinks, feels, acts, and works without being conscious of it” becomes increasingly apparent and alarmingly obvious. Nevertheless, this is not a “fact” which one can or should attempt to establish by argument; its truth—or lack thereof—is entirely dependent upon each individual’s efforts to study one’s own waking state with an open and receptive mind. With that qualification in mind, it is fair to say that Gurdjieff’s characterization of the waking state as a state of sleep and his claims about the possibility of observing the appearance and disappearance of consciousness within oneself iden-

tify critical aspects of consciousness which, with few exceptions, have escaped modern psychologists and scientists—because they do not study consciousness within themselves. Between the poles of “waking sleep” and “self-consciousness,” there exists a continuum of degrees and gradations of self-awareness. Once one becomes aware of this hidden variable of consciousness, begins to observe its vicissitudes, and attempts to actively alter one’s experience of it by trying to be more conscious of oneself, one undertakes the study of a new psychology.

Amongst contemporary psychologists who theorize about and study consciousness, the nature of the waking state is, typically,

of little or no concern. Most psychologists subscribe to the assumption that there exist two fundamental states of human consciousness: sleep and the waking state. Further, while the waking state may be thought of as varying in terms of degrees of alertness, most psychologists simply do not regard any such variations as being significant. By contrast, Gurdjieff’s contention—that the waking state is typically a state of “sleep” and that there are moments when people are more consciousness—is the basis for a radically different understanding of and approach to the study of consciousness. To the extent that he characterizes the normal waking state of consciousness as consisting of extensive periods of “completely unconscious, mechanical working of the machine,” Gurdjieff is in agreement with the behaviorists regarding the utility of describing the waking state in terms of conditioning and the mechanisms that underlie the laws of behavior. However, in contrast to the behaviorists, Gurdjieff maintains that consciousness may be studied within oneself and that it is possible, by doing so, to not only dramatically change, but

**The primary failing of modern consciousness research is that it does not recognize the existence and significance of scale in addressing the hierarchy of consciousness, which exists both within human beings and the cosmos. Because modern psychologists and scientists do not recognize the importance of scale, they fail to understand that a lower level of consciousness cannot understand a higher level.**

*transform*, one's level of awareness and consciousness to such an extent that one is not functioning mechanically. This claim is, of course, something which not only the behaviorists, but most modern psychologists either deny or ignore.

### "Know Thyself"

**K***now thyself.* All esoteric teachings are premised on this succinct, profound, and enduring aphorism. To know oneself, Gurdjieff says, is to know that one is not properly conscious: that, instead, one functions mechanically in terms of one's conditioning and acquired habits. Therefore, one must become properly conscious through a process of self-transformation. But work to develop consciousness begins with studying oneself as one is now and, in Gurdjieff's teaching, that task involves the study of one's machine:

... man must study the structure, the functions, and the laws of his organism. In the human machine everything is so interconnected; one thing is so dependent upon another, that it is quite impossible to study any one function without studying all the others. In order to know one thing, one must know everything. To know *everything* in man is possible, but it requires much time and labor, and above all, the application of the right method and, what is equally necessary, right guidance.<sup>11</sup>

In order to awaken and develop consciousness and being, Gurdjieff said, it is necessary to begin by studying oneself in terms of a system. In the Fourth Way, self-study begins with the processes of "self-observation" and "self-remembering." Pupils begin to observe themselves in order to acquire an understanding that, indeed, the majority of their lives consist of being in a state of "waking sleep." Furthermore, the process of self-observation is organized and guided by the application of Gurdjieff's teaching: an undertaking which requires extensive study in learning an entirely new psychological framework and the distinct language and principles of knowledge in which it is articulated.

Initial attempts to self-observe do not involve analyzing oneself, but simply studying oneself

in order to become aware of one's state of waking sleep and the extent to which everything which one does is essentially an expression of one's conditioning. Having acquired an understanding of the fundamental principles operative in the human machine's functioning, one begins to analyze one's observations, in terms of the teaching, and to acquire self-knowledge.

Concurrent with initiating the process of self-observation, the Fourth Way pupil also attempts to remember himself or herself. The concept of self-remembering is as profound, dynamic, and almost as elusive as consciousness itself; one's understanding of what it means to remember oneself changes as one's knowledge and understanding of oneself becomes increasingly more complex and comprehensive. In its most basic sense, self-remembering involves trying to be present such that one is aware that *I AM here, now, in this moment*. Self-remembering means bearing witness to oneself: that is, being impartially aware of oneself as one thinks, feels, and acts. Attempting to do so quickly reveals the startling truth that is extremely difficult *to remember to remember oneself*. But even when one does succeed in remembering to self-remember, that state and one's resolve to remain in it soon passes: unconsciously and imperceptibly yielding to the waking sleep which inevitably, like the monster of the deep which consumed Jonah, resumes its silent rule by swallowing one whole.

In attempting to explain why he characterizes our normal waking state as a state of "waking sleep," Gurdjieff asked the pupils in Ouspensky's St. Petersburg group to describe the most important thing that he or she had noticed during self-observation. There were various interesting observations offered in reply, but no one stated what should have been most obvious, as Gurdjieff explained:

Not one of you has noticed the most important thing that I have pointed out to you... That is to say, not one of you has noticed that *you do not remember yourselves*. You do not feel *yourselves*; you are not conscious of *yourselves*. With you, "it observes" just as "it speaks," "it thinks," "it

laughs.” You do not feel: *I observe, I notice, I see*. Everything still “is noticed,” “is seen.”... In order really to observe oneself one must first of all *remember oneself*. Try *to remember yourselves* when you observe yourselves and later on tell me the results. Only those results will have any value that are accompanied by self-remembering. Otherwise you yourselves do not exist in your observations. In which case what are all your observations worth?<sup>12</sup>

Gurdjieff’s emphasis on recognizing the distinction between the “I” and “it” within oneself comprises a discrimination which is at once so subtle as to be invisible without repeated efforts to self-remember, and yet is of such profound significance that it should be regarded as providing a critical insight into the proper study of consciousness. Moreover, despite the remarkable difficulties encountered when one first begins to work at remembering oneself, the effect of experiencing those instances of self-conscious awareness serves as the key to unlocking the most essential secret about the nature of consciousness: *that, typically, one is not properly conscious, but with effort, one might be*. In addition, ongoing efforts to remember oneself begin to provide one with a sense of why Gurdjieff contended that people are incapable of even imagining the profound possibilities that they would realize if they were to awaken and become properly conscious.

What did Gurdjieff mean when he asserted that “you do not remember yourselves?” How does “self-remembering” relate to “self-observing?” Ouspensky explained that, whereas self-remembering involves attempting to be aware of oneself—to sense and feel and be aware that *I am here*—self-observation always involves directing one’s attention at a definite function in oneself: such as one’s thoughts, emotions, movements or sensations. While self-observation involves focusing on a part of oneself, self-remembering is an attempt to remember the whole by feeling one’s “I.” Thus, self-remembering always involves a division of attention: such that one part is focused on the content of whatever mental, emotional, or physical process or activity in which one is

engaged, while the other part consists of *being aware of oneself being here*.

Viewed from another perspective, the elusive concept of “self-remembering” may be construed as “self-forgetting.” It involves “being present” in such a way that one is removed from and free of the continual stream of thoughts, dreams, images, and concerns by which one is usually carried through the waking hours ... the host of feelings and concerns about oneself and the world in which one is normally invested ... the plurality of interests and the parading legion of changing “i”s with which one is identified ... the habitual physical postures and processes which unconsciously govern the body and determine its states of presence ... in sum, all that in which one’s consciousness and experience of one’s “I” is almost wholly absorbed and embedded. To the extent that one can free oneself of attachment to these usual constituents and configurations of one’s normal self (or, more correctly, selves) one *forgets* one’s usual self. And in that sense, “self-remembering” consists of “self-forgetting.” With time and effort, a radically different “I” emerges and is realized in the novelty and wonder of simply sensing and feeling *I am here*. In such rare instances, one’s experience of oneself and the world is especially vivid and unforgettable. The illuminating and inspiring discovery which the practice of self-remembering reveals is that the experience of oneself and the world—in all of its meaning, mystery, and wonder—is dramatically transformed through the accumulation of those moments in which one awakens, even momentarily, and remembers to *be here, now*.

Nevertheless, the simple fact remains: the act of remembering oneself is much more difficult than it would seem to be. Having repeatedly failed to do so—other than for the most fleeting moments—Ouspensky soon concluded that Gurdjieff was neither exaggerating the extent, nor the importance of people’s inability to remember themselves. In addition, he realized that the concept of “self-remembering” was the key to understanding Gurdjieff’s other comments about consciousness: that one can know it when one has it, and one can know—*when it comes again*—that it has been absent for a long

time. As much as Ouspensky was chagrined by his inability to remember himself, Gurdjieff explained that this was an extremely important realization. As he explained, most people would angrily dismiss the claim: that they cannot and do not remember themselves. But Gurdjieff states that: "If a man really knows that he cannot remember himself, he is already near to the understanding of his being."<sup>13</sup>

The more that one attempts to remember oneself, the more one experiences the singular tension that results from that practice: that is, self-remembering provides a distinct taste of the extraordinary possibilities of what it would mean if this were one's normal waking state, while at the same time, the difficulties in maintaining those moments of self-consciousness are indisputably and alarmingly obvious. In Sufism, the transition from the state of normal waking consciousness to the state of self-consciousness is likened to emerging from underwater and breathing the air; an apt description of the immediate and undeniably exhilarating sense of existing in a fundamentally different medium that self-remembering inspires.

## The Light of Consciousness

In a remarkably succinct and insightful statement about his pupils' fundamental misconception of consciousness, Gurdjieff explained why consciousness must be studied systematically within oneself:

Your principal mistake consists in thinking that you *always have consciousness*, and in general, either that consciousness is *always present* or that it is *never present*. In reality, consciousness is a property which is continually changing. Now it is present, now it is not present. And there are different degrees and different levels of consciousness. Both consciousness and the different degrees of consciousness must be understood in oneself by sensation, by taste. No definitions can help you in this case and no definitions are possible so long as you do not understand *what* you have to define. And science and philosophy cannot define consciousness because they want to define it where it does not exist. It is necessary to distinguish *consciousness* from the *possibil-*

*ity of consciousness*. We have only the possibility of consciousness and rare flashes of it. Therefore we cannot define what consciousness is.<sup>14</sup>

This extraordinary passage identifies that which is, from an esoteric perspective, the fundamental flaw in modern psychologists' and scientists' understanding of and approach to the study of consciousness. They have consistently and repeatedly failed to recognize that consciousness is *a property* which is always changing, and as such, our normal waking state of consciousness does not constitute a single, undifferentiated, and unified state. By working to become conscious, one begins to recognize the variability of consciousness within one's waking state, but one cannot acquire these *experiences of consciousness* by simply *thinking* about consciousness. Modern psychologists think and reason and attempt to know consciousness by studying bits and parts of other beings, but those activities involve searching for consciousness where it does not exist and where it cannot be known and understood. You cannot directly observe consciousness in others. You cannot stain it, put it on a slide, and peer at it through a microscope; you cannot observe it by extrapolating it in analyzing aggregate statistics; you cannot decipher it by examining the results of an EEG, an MRI or a PET scan of the brain or by using any other marvelous scientific instrument. One can only know consciousness by studying it within oneself and by *experiencing it within oneself*. As Gurdjieff says, scientists and philosophers have failed so thoroughly in their attempts to understand consciousness because they do not understand what they are trying to define and, consequently, "they want to define it where it does not exist." Furthermore, his comment about the necessity of distinguishing consciousness from the *possibility* of consciousness can only be properly understood by relating that discrimination to the singular dynamics involved in making concerted, ongoing efforts to self-observe and to self-remember. Disciplined attempts to study consciousness systematically within oneself provide one with an inchoate understanding of the hidden and profoundly mysterious nature of consciousness, while compromising the first tentative

but meaningful steps in its acquisition.

In effect, trying to practice self-remembering represents the introduction of the most revealing and instructive change possible in studying consciousness. As such, self-remembering represents an elegant, important, and practical psychological experiment which is at once illuminating and transforming. Repeated attempts to self-remember document the fact that our normal waking state is a waking sleep, while revealing that *consciousness must systematically be studied within oneself*. In contrasting this esoteric methodology with that of western academic psychology and philosophy, Ouspensky opined that: “Real psychology begins when a man realizes and bears in mind that he does not remember himself, and that nobody remembers, and yet there is a possibility of self-remembering ...”<sup>15</sup>

While Gurdjieff maintains that the proper study of consciousness involves self-study, the profound mysteries regarding the nature of consciousness remain. Whereas modern psychologists have typically assumed that consciousness is reducible to the psychic functions—such as thinking, sensing, feeling, imagining—and/or the brain’s physiological processes, Ouspensky argues that consciousness is *a substantive property which is entirely independent of the psychic functions*:

...consciousness ... is a background upon which thoughts, feelings and sensations reveal themselves. This background can be more or less bright. But as thoughts, feelings and sensations have their own separate life, and can be regarded independently of this background, so can it be regarded and studied independently of them.<sup>16</sup>

Ouspensky adds that our psychic functions may be likened to machines that work better in light than in darkness. By attempting to observe and remember ourselves, we increase the light of consciousness—the background—which enables our psychological functions to be more efficient.

For Gurdjieff, *consciousness is substantive: it is something separate from our psychological functioning*. He likens it to *light*: an equation which is to be understood literally, metaphori-

cally, and alchemically. As consciousness is regarded as manifesting both psychologically and cosmologically on different levels, Gurdjieff describes humans as multi-dimensional beings existing in a multi-dimensional cosmos of varying levels of consciousness.

Within the singular dynamics of studying oneself systematically, Gurdjieff states that the mysterious process of acquiring consciousness begins to suggest how and why consciousness is to be equated with light. He explains that self-observation:

... throws ... a ray of light onto ... [one’s] inner processes which have hitherto worked in complete darkness. And under the influence of this light the processes themselves begin to change. There are a great many chemical processes that take place only in the absence of light. Exactly in the same way many psychic processes take place only in the dark. Even a feeble light of consciousness is enough to change completely the character of the process, while it makes many of them altogether impossible. Our inner psychic processes (our inner alchemy) have much in common with those chemical processes in which light changes the character of the process and they are subject to analogous laws.<sup>17</sup>

Thus, the process of studying oneself systematically at once motivates one to continue to attempt to remember oneself and acts as a catalyst for self-transformation. Moreover, Gurdjieff explains that self-observation, if properly conducted, leads an individual to realize:

... that it is precisely because he is asleep that he lives and works in a small part of himself. It is precisely for this reason that the vast majority of his possibilities remain unrealized, the vast majority of his powers are left unused. ... He sees every function as it now is and as it could or ought to be.<sup>18</sup>

To summarize: modern psychologists long ago rejected any form of self-study as being “unscientific.” Nevertheless, attempts to self-observe systematically and to self-remember may be regarded as experimental procedures: that which Ken Wilber terms “spiritual empiricism.” Systematic self-observation readily dis-



pels modern psychologists' peculiar conviction that consciousness may only legitimately be studied through external observation and that any attempt at self-study will be hopelessly contaminated by subjective variables. Whereas psychologists have equated "scientific objectivity" with eliminating themselves from their studies, esoteric teachings are based on the premise that objectivity is to be realized through the transformation of one's being and the acquisition of higher states of consciousness. For Gurdjieff, the study of consciousness must involve systematic self-study and self-transformation; attempting to study consciousness solely through external observation is absurd. By acquiring the faculties of higher consciousness and being, "the knower" is transformed, as is the quality of her knowledge. The shocking difficulties that one experiences in remembering to self-remember and in maintaining that state, when one does manage to remember oneself, dramatically reveal the hidden complexity of our normal waking consciousness. As such, the idea—that our normal waking state is "a waking sleep"—becomes increasingly plausible and realistic as one accumulates the data gleaned from attempts to self-observe and self-remember. Gurdjieff puts forth the radical idea that consciousness is substantive—that is, it is not simply a term to describe our psychological functions or even the contents of our experience, but rather is *some thing*. Considerations of how and why consciousness should be regarded as being substantive will be elaborated through the exposition of other aspects of Gurdjieff's teaching.

## The Centers

Gurdjieff claims that, in order to be capable of understanding the nature of consciousness and the mind, it is necessary to realize that rather than having one brain or mind, human beings possess seven distinct "brains" or "centers" of intelligence.<sup>19</sup> Each of these "centers" is an independent mind which has its own way of knowing, type of memory, speed of operation, and energies. Although the centers are said to be distributed throughout the entire physical organism, each one has its own locus of concentration or center of gravity within the physical body. According to Gurdjieff, there

are five lower centers that are responsible for the normal psychological functions and, therefore, govern the normal waking state. But, in addition, there are two higher centers that constitute supernormal faculties and are responsible for experiencing higher states of consciousness and reality.

The five lower centers are: the intellectual, the emotional, the moving, the instinctual, and the sexual center. The *intellectual center*, which is located in the brain, governs all mental functions such as thinking, reasoning, comparing, predicting, and abstracting. The *emotional center*, which is localized in the complexes of nerves of the sympathetic nervous system, is responsible for all emotional processes and registers impressions in terms of appetitive dimensions such as one's likes and dislikes, pleasantness and unpleasantness, etc. The *moving center*, which is responsible for all learned movements, is located in the spinal column. The *instinctual center* governs the body's innate functions, such as the metabolic and sensory process. It is located within the lower brain structures and the spinal column, as well as within the body's organs. The *sexual center*, which is located in the sexual organs, is responsible for sexual functioning and procreation. Although the moving, instinctual, and sexual centers are independent minds, they typically work so closely together as to constitute the physical organism's intelligence. For that reason, Gurdjieff spoke of man, in his normal state of consciousness, as "*a three-brained being*" which functions *intellectually, emotionally, and physically*.

In addition to the five lower centers, there are two centers of higher consciousness: the higher emotional and the higher intellectual center. Because of the difficulty of translating the faculties of the higher centers and their operation into the language of the normal centers—Ouspensky compares the task to a blind man attempting to speak of colors—Gurdjieff says very little about them and the realities that they apprehend. Higher knowledge exists, Gurdjieff says, but it can only be acquired through *the conscious functioning of the higher centers*. The critical point which Gurdjieff does stress about the higher centers is that there is no need

to develop them: they already exist within us. However, because of the imbalance and dysfunction that plagues the lower centers, and the lack of harmony and co-operation between them, we are unable to experience the higher centers. Thus, Gurdjieff states that, in order to experience our higher faculties of consciousness, we must purify and refine the functioning of the lower centers. By doing so, he says, we may become fully developed and know ourselves as “seven brained-beings.” And only by doing so, Gurdjieff claims, is it possible to truly acquire objective knowledge; the level of one’s knowledge, he says, is determined by the level of one’s consciousness and being.

Fourth Way pupils observe the operation of the different centers within themselves and learn to discriminate between their proper and improper functioning. Gurdjieff maintains that, because the centers are susceptible to various classes of “wrong work,” they operate mechanically at a very low level of consciousness. Moreover, he maintains that systematic self-observation reveals that each of the centers can function with varying degrees of consciousness for varying durations of time. While self-observation and attempts to self-remember certainly reveal the potential richness of human consciousness, the more immediate and disconcerting realization is the discovery that it is extremely difficult to be conscious in even one center at any time and that, typically, each of the centers functions quite automatically and mechanically.

Self-observation also reveals that one may also be “centered” in different ways: that is, one center is often dominant, depending upon the nature of one’s activity. Thus, when a task requiring abstraction or some form of mental calculation is involved, one would be primarily

active in the intellectual center; whereas when one is involved in an athletic activity or physical labor, one would be primarily centered in the moving/instinctual mind. As you sit reading these pages, you are most likely to be intel-

**One can only know consciousness by studying it within oneself and by experiencing it within oneself. As Gurdjieff says, scientists and philosophers have failed so thoroughly in their attempts to understand consciousness because they do not understand what they are trying to define and, consequently, “they want to define it where it does not exist.”**

lectually centered—as you focus on processing and attempting to interpret the meaning of this presentation. At the same time, you are, in all likelihood, only vaguely aware of your body and your physical state of presence as you sit reading. Further, unless something you have read has evoked or prompted some extremely strong emotional reaction in you, you are not likely to be particularly aware of your emotional state.

Thus, the nature of one’s experience will depend, in part, upon how one is centered. But it will also depend on the degree, the intensity, and the duration of how consciously the center is operating. When one begins to understand, through self-observation, that this variability of consciousness is also applicable to the interaction of the three centers—that is, one might be more or less conscious in one, two, or three centers—the complexity of the possibilities for experiencing consciousness become apparent. In addition, the importance of attempting to bring the centers into balance and harmony in order to increase consciousness begins to become a reality. Gurdjieff explains:

... we must understand that every normal psychic function is a means or instrument of knowledge. With the help of the mind we see one aspect of things and events, with the help of emotions another aspect, with the help of sensations a third aspect. *The most complete knowledge of a given subject possible for us can be obtained if we examine it simultaneously with our mind, feelings, and sensations.* Every man who is striving after right knowledge must aim at the possibility of attaining such per-

ception.<sup>20</sup> [emphasis added]

If we think of consciousness as light, it becomes all too clear that our centers operate, most of the time, in darkness or, at best, in terms of a very low level of illumination. The task of attempting to become more conscious in each of the centers and to bring them into harmony depends, in the Fourth Way, on learning to overcome the different types of “wrong work” which keep each of these independent minds operating at the most unconscious, mechanical level. Gurdjieff’s identification of the various classes of wrong work that impede each of the respective centers from working consciously represents a critical focus of pupils’ efforts to study themselves. In addition to the specific categories of wrong work—which will be examined in detail in an ensuing Fourth Way article—Gurdjieff also states that wrong work consists of the various centers attempting to do another center’s work.

The emotional center’s wrong work consists of “identification,” “self-love,” “vanity,” and “negative emotions.” However, it is *identification* which is perhaps the most subtle and yet influential form of wrong work. Gurdjieff states that people live constantly in an identified state: that is one’s emotional presence always consists of an attachment to or investment in or fusion with whatever one is feeling or thinking. This unconscious, automatic investment of oneself in everything which captures one’s interest and/or attention is particularly insidious because it keeps one’s various “I”s alive and creates the illusion of unity. Because identification comprises the emotional medium in which and through which we exist, it is practically as invisible as the air we breathe. Therefore, it is very difficult to imagine why one would want to dis-identify and how one would do so, if so inclined. However, as Gurdjieff explains, the state of self-conscious awareness, which one seeks to nourish and develop through the process of self-remembering, demands that one not identify:

Identifying is the chief obstacle to self-remembering. A man who identifies with anything is unable to remember himself. In order to remember oneself it is necessary first of all *not to identify*. But in order to

learn not to identify man must first of all *not be identified with himself*, must not call himself ‘I’ always and on all occasions. He must remember that there are two in him, that there is *himself*, that is ‘I’ in him, and there is *another* with whom he must struggle and whom he must conquer if he wishes at any time to attain anything. So long as man identifies or can be identified, he is the slave of everything that can happen to him.<sup>21</sup>

When one begins to recognize identification in oneself and in others, it becomes apparent why one must attempt not to identify and, especially, not to identify with oneself. Observing how people are identified when they argue or when they are driven by some desire or strong emotion, it becomes clear that they *become* their words and desires, as Gurdjieff says, and that “of themselves nothing remains.”<sup>22</sup> In that state of emotional presence, it is impossible to remember oneself. Moreover, because people identify most readily with that which interests them, the danger of identifying with one’s teacher and teaching is particularly fraught with peril for even the most earnest spiritual seeker. It was that danger which led Gurdjieff to both act in ways that frequently caused his pupils to examine their relationship with him and to change the presentation of his teaching in order to preclude his pupils from becoming identified with any particular formulation of it.

Within modern psychology, identifying “the parts of our being” involves, for the most part, dualistic conceptualizations such as the mind and the body, the brain and the body or the functional equivalent of the mind and behavior.<sup>23</sup> Gurdjieff’s model of humans as beings possessing seven brains is nonsense from the perspective of modern science and psychology. However, when it is approached with an open mind and a willingness to accumulate data through the process of self-study, it poses an extremely provocative challenge to conventional contemporary knowledge and, at the very least, serves as a useful heuristic by which many anomalies and enigmas associated with “the mind and the body” may be reconsidered. When considering humans as “three-brained beings,” the complexity of the normal waking

state begins to become apparent. By regarding consciousness as separate from the psychological functions and positing that it may manifest with varying degrees of intensity, frequency, and duration, it becomes apparent that describing the quality of the waking state must be undertaken in reference to a matrix of variables—most of which modern psychologists never acknowledge, let alone examine. Moreover, Gurdjieff's claims regarding the significance of “wrong work,” as being pathological factors that limit the consciousness with which each center functions, identifies sources of psychological dysfunction that, for the most part, are not acknowledged within modern psychology.

### A Microcosm of the Macrocosm

Gurdjieff's cosmological ideas are so complex and demand such extensive study and contemplation that the ensuing presentation is admittedly superficial. Nevertheless, by touching on some key elements of his cosmology, the author's aim is to elucidate the framework in which the critical concept of “a substantive consciousness” may be placed and, in doing so, provide the basis to understand why Gurdjieff contended that self-study involved both psychology and cosmology and, consequently, his psychological teachings informed his cosmology, and vice-versa.

According to Gurdjieff, modern science's conceptualization of a Universe composed of non-sentient matter, which is governed by the operation of blind and purposeless “natural” laws, is entirely erroneous. Instead, he claims that we live in an animate, intelligent, multi-dimensional Universe: one in which a hierarchy of discrete world orders—each of which is distinguished by distinct gradations of materiality and consciousness—descends or devolves from the Absolute or the supreme source of all Creation. Through this involutionary process, a succession of seven worlds or planes is created; each of which consists of progressively denser levels of materiality and lower levels of consciousness, and transmits energy and intelligence to the level below it. Moreover, because the materiality of the higher worlds is more rarefied than the worlds below them,

they interpenetrate the matter of the lower worlds, while informing and sustaining them.

*Everything in the Universe is material*, Gurdjieff claims. Therefore, his teaching is, in a sense, more materialistic than contemporary philosophical materialism. However, that assessment must be qualified by the explanation that Gurdjieff *attributes cosmic and psychic properties to matter* quite unlike anything which modern science recognizes. In addition, he distinguishes between matter and materiality: that is, while matter is everywhere the same, there exist different gradients of materiality depending upon the qualities and properties of energy being manifested. And because Gurdjieff depicts *everything* in Creation as existing in a state of vibration, he says that the level of consciousness of anything is given by the density of its materiality and the frequency of its vibrations. Hence, consciousness varies directly with the frequency of vibration and inversely with the density of materiality: that is, a higher level of consciousness is associated with a more refined level of materiality and higher frequency of vibration. Gurdjieff asserts that the Universe—rather than being the manifestation of the dualities of matter and energy, within time and space—is the product of the interaction of triads of forces and influences. Therefore, he states that the complementarity of matter and energy must be extended to include the third property of consciousness. For Gurdjieff, then, matter possesses consciousness and consciousness is material.

Gurdjieff asserts that there exist two “fundamental cosmic laws”—*the Law of Three* and *the Law of Seven*—which are responsible for the manifestation of everything in Creation. The Law of Three<sup>24</sup> states that *everything*—every phenomenon, on every level of scale, in every world—is the result of the interaction of three forces. Gurdjieff refers to them as “active,” “passive,” and “neutralizing” force or, alternatively, “Holy Affirming,” “Holy Denying,” and “Holy Reconciling.” However, he qualifies these terms by explaining that these names apply only in describing their properties *at a particular point of interaction*. In reality, each force is equally active. The essential point to be realized is that these forces are omnipres-

ent and underlie all manifestations in all worlds. And, while the first two forces are recognizable in the state of normal waking consciousness and, thus, give us the dualities that pervade modern science, the third force is not readily observed or understood. In some cases, the third force consists of the medium in which the first two forces are interacting; in others, it exists at the point of their application. However, more commonly, Gurdjieff states that, although the third force is a property of objective reality, it is not observable at all in the normal subjective state of consciousness. For this reason, he describes humans, in the state of waking sleep, as being “third force blind.”

*The Law of Seven*<sup>25</sup> describes the lawful progression of seven notes or seven “steps” in the fulfillment or realization of any process on any level of scale. The law is also known as the Law of the Octave because the completion of any pattern results in its realization on a different level which comprises the eighth note. The major musical scale, which Gurdjieff said ancient esoteric sources devised as a vehicle to preserve the Law of Seven, provides the names of the seven notes or steps—*do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, si*—and the eighth note, *do*, which exists on a different level of scale. The Law of Seven embodies *the principle of the discontinuity of vibrations*: that is, the rate of development between the notes, in the progression of any octave, is not uniform but, rather, consists of accelerations and decelerations. This principle contradicts the assumption, within modern science, of *the continuity of vibrations*: whereby vibrations, in any process, are assumed to be continuous as long as the original impulse, with which they originate, is stronger than the resistance imposed by the medium in which they are progressing.<sup>26</sup> Thus, the Law of Seven stipulates that an octave will not develop or unfold in a continuous, unobstructed fashion. Instead, there are accelerations and decelerations in the process of an octave’s fulfillment. Furthermore, there are two points or “intervals” in the octave—between *mi-fa* and *si-do*—in which an external force or “shock” is necessary in order to further the process. (Within Fourth Way nomenclature, a “shock” identifies any stimulus which serves to awaken one, even momentarily. With respect to octave

progressions, shocks provide the impetus for the process to bridge the *mi-fa* and *si-do* intervals.) If the shocks are not provided, the octave ceases to develop and remains incomplete, or it is deflected and begins to proceed in a direction quite unlike that of its original course.

According to Gurdjieff, *everything* in the Universe is the manifestation of octave processes in various states of progression: either *ascending* (that is, increasing in refinement and consciousness) or *descending* (increasing in density and mechanicalness). The Earth, he says, is created and sustained as part of a descending octave, which he calls *The Ray of Creation*. From the Absolute—the supreme source, prime mover, or God—a hierarchy of world orders emanates. As the octave descends, each note or step is associated with a successive world order or plane, each of which constitutes a distinct level of increasingly dense materiality and lower consciousness, which is governed by an increasing number of categories of laws. (Our Ray of Creation involves but one of perhaps an infinite number of world orders emanating from the supreme source.) The names of the planes that comprise the Ray of Creation are: *do* (the Absolute); *si* (All Worlds); *la* (All Suns); *sol* (our Sun); *fa* (All Planets); *mi* (The Earth); *re* (The Moon); and *do* (The Absolute). In this model, the Absolute is governed by one law, All Worlds are under the rule of a trinity of forces, and each successive world is subject to an increasing number of categories or classes of laws. The Earth is said to be governed by forty-eight classes of laws; while the moon, which is the last note or step from the bottom, is under the influence of ninety-six classes of laws.

In addition to this involutionary current, by which worlds are created from Above (or the state of perfect unity), there also exists an evolutionary current. At lower levels of Creation, matter-energies can begin, by chance or a combination of favourable circumstances, to evolve and become more refined, intelligent, and unified. However, such evolutionary transformations can only proceed so far without what Gurdjieff calls “Help from Above.” According to J.G. Bennett, Gurdjieff taught that a “high level of energy is generated at an uncon-



ditioned level of being, as a corrective to the process of entropy, and this energy makes evolution possible.”<sup>27</sup> However, in terms of individual human beings, Gurdjieff emphasized that evolution is restricted to the evolution of consciousness, adding that consciousness cannot evolve mechanically, but only as a consequence of willful effort. And because of the power of the forces opposing that transformation of consciousness, he told Ouspensky that, in a sense, this work—the awakening of human consciousness—is “against nature and against God.”

Gurdjieff claims that human beings should be considered to be miniature Universes or, more correctly, unfinished worlds. Because the higher dimensions are composed of more refined matter and penetrate the lower, coarser worlds, Gurdjieff explained that it is possible to know the Universe by knowing oneself. In a statement which has profound implications for comprehending the integral relation between psychology and cosmology, he claimed that:

All the matter of the world that surrounds us, the food that we eat, the water that we drink, the air that we breathe, the stones that our houses are built of, our own bodies—everything is permeated by all the matters that exist in the universe. There is no need to study or investigate the sun in order to discover the matter of the solar world: this matter exists in ourselves and is the result of the division of our atoms. In the same way we have in us the matter of all other worlds. Man is, in the full sense of the term, a “miniature universe”; in him are all the matters of which the universe consists; the same forces, the same laws that govern the life of the universe, operate in him; therefore in studying man we can study the whole world, just as in studying the world we can study man.”<sup>28</sup>

To his extraordinary claims that man is a “miniature universe” and that, therefore, it was possible to study the world in man and vice versa, Gurdjieff added one essential qualification:

... a complete parallel between man and the world can only be drawn if we take “man” in the full sense of the word, that is, one

whose inherent powers are developed. An undeveloped man, a man who has not completed the course of his evolution, cannot be taken as a complete picture or plan of the universe—he is an unfinished world.”<sup>29</sup>

Although the Fourth Way describes the existence of higher being-bodies—the astral, mental, and causal—Gurdjieff asserted that there is nothing permanent about these subtle bodies and that they are entirely unnecessary for one who lives in a state of waking sleep. Nevertheless, he maintained that the acquisition of higher states of consciousness depended upon the accumulation of the more refined energies that compose the subtle bodies. By “coating” the subtle bodies through the process of awakening and acquiring consciousness, it is possible to realize the realities of the more subtle planes than the material world which we apprehend in our normal waking sleep. Thus, by being in the astral body, one exists at the level of the Ray of Creation above that of the Earth in the planetary world. In the same way, the crystallization of the mental body involves the materiality of the level of the sun, and that of the causal body is composed of the same substances of the solar system or All Suns. To possess these higher being-bodies would be to complete oneself, to have developed all of one’s inherent powers, and to know oneself as a miniature Universe or “a microcosm of the macrocosm.” In essence, Gurdjieff said, one must transform the materiality of one’s being in order *to be* and *to matter* at these higher levels of consciousness and reality.

Thus, the esoteric maxim—that “man is a microcosm of the macrocosm”—means that, within each human being, there exists a “cosmos” or “inner Universe,” which mirrors the essential principles and structure of the external cosmos. The key to understanding the meaning of this seemingly absurd claim depends upon the study and direct realization of the hidden dimensions of our inner being. That aim is consistent with the original meaning of the term “esotericism”: that is, “*further in*,” from the Greek, *esotero*. By developing higher states of consciousness and being, an individual’s apprehension and understanding of the inner cosmos progresses “further in” and, by

deepening his self-knowledge knows himself as a multidimensional being. Furthermore, esoteric teachings assert that, in doing so, he will know his higher spiritual nature and essential Self, by existing in and apprehending the higher dimensions of Creation. To be conscious of oneself in higher states is to “know oneself” by penetrating the illusions of normal waking consciousness, to apprehend that one is a “microcosm of the macrocosm,” and to be at one with the Universe.

## Concluding Remarks

Clearly, the psychology of consciousness which Gurdjieff proffers is radically different from that which modern science puts forth. Rather than viewing consciousness as being the end product of the brain’s neurological processes and, thus, as being nothing but a term to describe our psychological functions, Gurdjieff regards it as a substantive, universal property which manifests differentially through both a hierarchy of world orders and through a human being’s seven brains. In keeping with the collapse of the Great Nest of Being into the flatland of materialism, modern scientists do not recognize the involutory current, nor do they recognize the existence of higher dimensions of consciousness and being. And although they do recognize the evolutionary current—they do so only insofar as it is understood as a blind process which manifests through changes in the material realm. Consequently, contemporary science is limited to evolutionary explanations in which complexity must be accounted for as emerging from lower, more elementary and mechanical levels of matter. Of course, this process is represented as being entirely random and purposeless. In that limited perspective, there is no consideration of the existence of higher dimensions as causal sources which inform and illuminate manifestations in the material realm through involutory processes. By contrast, within the Fourth Way and all esoteric teachings, recognizing the existence of an involutory current and trying to understand its dynamics constitutes the beginning of conceptualizing and apprehending radically different psychological and cosmological systems. Moreover, by conceptualizing the evolution of consciousness as

being a matter of intentional and willful effort, as Gurdjieff does, virtually all and everything is cast in an entirely new light.

In an ensuing article, the Fourth Way teaching will be elaborated by examining several additional critical psychological concepts. A more detailed examination of the fundamental cosmic laws will also be undertaken in order to explicate the integral relationship between Gurdjieff’s cosmology and psychology.

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- <sup>1</sup> Befitting a man of mystery, the year of Gurdjieff’s birth is uncertain and his biographers have adduced evidence for various dates ranging from 1866 to 1877. In a recent work, Paul Beekman Taylor examines the evidence for the various dates in great detail. He concludes that: “... I find it difficult to ignore Gurdjieff’s consistent indication of 1866 as his birth year.” [*Gurdjieff: A New Life*, (London: Eureka Editions, 2008), 17-18]. On the other hand, in *Struggle of the Magicians: Exploring the Teacher-Student Relationship*, (Fairfax, CA: Arete Communications, 1996), William Patrick Patterson agrees with J.G. Bennett’s conclusion (in *Gurdjieff: Making a New World*, [London: Turnstone Books, 1973]) that Gurdjieff was born in 1872.
  - <sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, it is the author’s opinion that addressing questions regarding Gurdjieff’s status as a master is of the utmost importance in considering and elucidating fundamental questions regarding the origins and nature of human consciousness. In the next article in this series, the issue of the relationship between knowledge and being will be examined in terms of the Fourth Way. That discussion will involve an assessment of Gurdjieff’s status as ‘a master’; an issue which has significant implications when contrasting the esoteric and modern scientific perspectives on the nature of human consciousness.
  - <sup>3</sup> There are numerous informative and insightful books written by those who knew and studied directly with Gurdjieff. P.D. Ouspensky’s seminal work, *In Search of the Miraculous*, consists of his brilliant reporting of various talks that Gurdjieff gave to his Russian pupils from 1915 to 1917, as well as his own insightful commentaries on the teaching and his recounting of his intriguing relationship with Gurdjieff. *Views from The Real World: Early Talks of Gurdjieff as Recollected by his Pupils*

(New York: E.P. Dutton & Co. Inc., 1973) is an outstanding collection of lectures that Gurdjieff gave, from 1918 to 1924, in various locations. A more recent collection, drawn from the papers of Janet Flanner and Solita Solano—which was translated from French to English by Joseph Azize — is *Transcripts of Gurdjieff's Meetings 1941-1946*, (London: Book Studio, 2009).

There are three major biographies, in English, of Gurdjieff: James Webb, *The Harmonious Circle: An exploration of the lives and work of G.I. Gurdjieff*, P.D. Ouspensky and others, (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1980); James Moore, *Gurdjieff: The Anatomy of a Myth*, (Rockport, MA: Element Inc., 1991); and the aforementioned *G.I. Gurdjieff: A New Life* by Paul Beekman Taylor.

Writings by Gurdjieff's pupils include: Margaret Anderson, *The Unknowable Gurdjieff*, (New York: Samuel Weiser Inc., 1970); J.G. Bennett, *Gurdjieff: Making A New World* (London: Turnstone Books, 1973) and *Witness: The Autobiography of John Bennett*, (London: Turnstone Books, 1975); Thomas and Olga de Hartmann, *Our Life With Mr. Gurdjieff* [Definitive Edition] (Sandpoint, ID: Morning Light Press, 2011); C.S. Nott, *Teachings Of Gurdjieff*, (New York: Samuel Weiser Inc., 1961) and *Journey Through This World: Meetings with Gurdjieff Orage and Ouspensky*, (New York: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1969); Fritz Peters, *Boyhood with Gurdjieff* (New York: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1961) and *Gurdjieff Remembered*, (New York: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1974); Kenneth Walker, *Venture With Ideas*, (Oxford: The Alden Press, 1951).

4 The issue of Gurdjieff's "mission" will be discussed in the next article in this series—as it is integrally related to the questions regarding the nature of his being and the level of his knowledge.

5 *Struggle of the Magicians: Exploring the Teacher-Student Relationship*, xxii-xxiii.

6 *In Search of the Miraculous*, 286.

7 *Ibid.*, 21.

8 *Ibid.*, 59.

9 *Ibid.*, 116.

10 *Ibid.*, 116-117.

11 *Ibid.*, 104-105.

12 *Ibid.*, 117-118.

13 *Ibid.*, 118.

14 *Ibid.*, 117.

15 P.D. Ouspensky, *The Fourth Way* (New York: Vintage Books, 1971), 120.

16 P.D. Ouspensky, *Tertium Organum: A Key to the Enigmas of the World* (New York: Vintage Books, 1970), xiv. Although Ouspensky had argued this position regarding consciousness prior to meeting Gurdjieff, it is entirely congruent with Gurdjieff's conceptualization of consciousness.

17 *In Search Of the Miraculous*, 146.

18 *Ibid.*, 145.

19 While the parallels between Gurdjieff's concept of the seven centers and the chakras are readily apparent, it is neither useful nor appropriate to assume that the centers are simply Gurdjieff's term for the chakras. As the discussion of the centers and their wrong work is elaborated in this article and a subsequent submission devoted to the Fourth Way, it should become clear that the psychological, phenomenological, and epistemological emphasis in Gurdjieff's discussion of the centers is quite distinct from more traditional descriptions and explications of the chakras and their functions.

20 *In Search of the Miraculous*, 107-108.

21 *Ibid.*, 151.

22 *Ibid.*, 151.

23 I am indebted to my friend and colleague, Christopher Holmes, for his insightful analysis of the extent to which modern psychology is pervaded by dualistic conceptions. For an excellent discussion of "The Dualities of Formatory Mind and Formatory Psychology," see Holmes' *Psychological Illusions: Explorations of the G.I. Gurdjieff Fourth Way Teaching*, (Kemptville, ON: Zeropoint Point Publications, 2010), 70-73. Amongst the many Fourth Way books, *Psychological Illusions* is an outstanding work; providing perhaps the most comprehensive discussion of both Gurdjieff's psychological and cosmological ideas since Ouspensky's *In Search of the Miraculous*.

24 In his magnum opus, *Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson*, Gurdjieff refers to the Law of Three as "the sacred law of Triamazikamno." [G.I. Gurdjieff, *All and Everything: Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co. Inc., 1964)].

25 In *Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson*, Gurdjieff calls the Law of Seven: "the Sacred Haptaparashinokh."

26 Basarab Nicolescu, a Romanian physicist and writer, notes that Gurdjieff's presentation of

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the idea of the ‘discontinuity of vibrations’ to his Russian pupils, in 1915, contains allusions to the concurrent revolutionary breakthroughs in physics that were creating quantum mechanics and, thus, the abandonment of the idea of ‘the continuity of vibrations.’ Clearly, the Fourth Way teaching contained the idea of the quantum nature of reality long before modern Physicists discovered it and began to formalize its mathematical properties. For a fascinating and deeply insightful appreciation of

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“Gurdjieff’s Philosophy of Nature,” see Nicolescu’s contribution to Jacob Needleman and George Baker, editors, *Gurdjieff: Essays and Reflections on the Man and His Teaching*, (New York: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1996), 37-69.

<sup>27</sup> *Gurdjieff: Making a New World*, 191.

<sup>28</sup> *In Search of the Miraculous*, 88.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

## Great Esotericists of the Past

### Arthur Edward Waite (1857–1942)



Arthur Edward Waite may best be remembered for the Tarot deck that bears his name. Yet that was only one of numerous accomplishments, and he must be counted among the foremost contributors to esoteric philosophy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Waite was born in Brooklyn, New York. But before he was one year old, his father Charles F. Waite died, and his mother returned to her native England. There she gave birth to a second child, Frederika. Because the two children had been conceived out of wedlock her well-to-do parents abandoned her, and Arthur and Frederika grew up in poverty.

Waite was raised a Roman Catholic and attended St Charles College, a Catholic high school in Bayswater, London. He left school, probably at age sixteen, to work as a clerk. Frederika's untimely death, a year later, precipitated a spiritual crisis in which Waite turned away from institutional religion to seek comfort in spiritualism. But his reverence for religious ritual continued and would influence his later esoteric work.

From his teens onward, Waite wrote poetry and romantic fiction. He published *Ode to Astronomy* (1877) when he was twenty and went on to publish other works in minor literary journals. In his late twenties, Waite married Ada Lakeman, and they had a daughter Sybil.

Waite and his close contemporary, Theosophist Charles Leadbeater, both suffered from deficiencies in formal education that denied them recognition by the academic community. But those deficiencies never impeded their thirst for knowledge and dedication to their studies. Waite spent many hours in the reading room of the British Museum. And it was there that he met Samuel Liddell "Macgregor" Mathers who, along with William Robert Woodman and William Wynn Westcott, founded the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn in 1887.

Waite and Ada were initiated into the Neophyte grade of the Golden Dawn in 1891; she chose the initiatory name "Lucasta" and from then on was generally known by that name. The following year Waite advanced to the grade of Philosophus. But he found himself increasingly at odds with Mathers over the relative priorities given to mysticism and occultism.

Waite favored a mystical path, whereas Mathers and most others in the Golden Dawn favored magical ritual. Waite formally resigned from the order but continued to participate in its activities and was even admitted to the inner order of the Red Rose and Gold Cross. By the turn of the twentieth century, the Golden Dawn was fragmenting into a number of competing—often warring—groups. Individuals allied themselves with one group or another, attracting enemies in the process. Waite's archenemy was Aleister Crowley.

In 1901 Waite became a Freemason and was initiated into the Runymede Lodge at



Wraysbury, Buckinghamshire. Nine years later he became master of the lodge. Although his interest in Freemasonry waned in later years he remained a loyal member until his death. One of his books identifies him as “Past Senior Grand Warden of Iowa, Past Provincial Deputy Grand Director of Ceremonies (Bucks.), Past Great Captain of the Guard, Past Grand Hystographer, etc., etc.” Waite had associations with other Masonic groups, including the Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia, which he joined in 1902. The Societas, an esoteric Christian order that espoused Rosicrucian principles, was formed by Robert Little in 1865.

Waite’s first major esoteric work was *The Mysteries of Magic, a Digest of the Writings of Eliphas Lévi*, published in 1886. His opinion of the author was mixed. He declared: “I do not think that Lévi ever made an independent statement upon any historical fact in which the least confidence could be reposed.” Yet he applauded Lévi’s “peculiar genius of interpretation.”

In the mid-1890s Waite edited a short-lived occult magazine *The Unknown World*. Shortly thereafter, he sought to join the Martinist Order established by the French occultist Gerard Encausse, who wrote under the pseudonym “Papus.” The influential movement of Martinism derived from the work of Portuguese nobleman and Freemason Martinez de Pasquales (1727–1774). Whether Waite was admitted to the order is unclear, since he was not yet a Freemason, and in any event, he soon distanced himself from Papus.

Waite developed an interest in the Christian esotericism of Martinez’ student Louis Claude de Saint-Martin (1743–1803). He published *The Life of Louis Claude de Saint-Martin: The Unknown Philosopher* in 1901. “Unknown Philosopher” was Saint-Martin’s principal nom de plume. An important aspect of Saint-Martin’s teachings was the notion of a Divine Repairer, reminiscent of the *tikkun olam* of the Safed Kabbalists. Saint-Martin’s Repairer, which emerges from the Heart of God, has both a masculine and a feminine expression. The masculine expression is the Word of the Fourth Gospel, while the feminine expression is Love. Waite described the latter thus:

The Supreme Love is . . . the continuous affection which makes the life our soul, wherein innumerable desires originate in unbroken succession, with words analogous to those desires. It is like the azure expanse of heaven, the abode of an incalculable multitude of shining stars, seeming to spring first as a luminous vegetation from a fruitful and translucent earth. We must confess then that this love which has hastened to the help of man is the true mother, of which natural maternity is the emblem. [p. 237]

In 1909 Waite published the English translation of *Die Wolke über dem Heiligtum* (“The Cloud upon the Sanctuary”), by the German mystic and philosopher Karl von Eckartshausen (1752–1803). In his introduction Waite commented on Eckartshausen’s quest for the “Invisible Celestial Church,” a Christian esoteric tradition that preserved the ancient mysteries:

The knowledge of these mysteries has been always preserved by an advanced school, illuminated inwardly by the Savior, and continued from the beginning of things to the present time. This community is the Invisible Celestial Church, founded immediately after the Fall, and receiving a first-hand revelation for the raising of humanity. But the weakness of men as they multiplied necessitated an external society, namely, the Outward Church, which, in the course of time, became separated from the Inner Church, also through human weakness. The external church was originally consecrated in Abraham, but received its highest perfection in the mystery of Jesus Christ. [p. x]

Work on the Tarot deck began in about 1907. Decks prior to that time typically offered decorated Major Arcana and court cards, sometimes of high artistic value, and replete with esoteric symbolism. But the “pip” cards of the Minor Arcana just showed the requisite number of wands, swords, cups or pentacles. Waite wanted to provide symbolic illustrations for the whole deck. Under his direction, Pamela (“Pixie”) Coleman Smith spent two years painting all seventy-eight cards. Smith, an actress as well as an artist, had joined one of Waite’s

esoteric groups as early as 1901, taking the name *Quod Tibi id Aliis* ("To Yourself as to Others"). In addition to Waite's direction, she may also have received guidance from William Butler Yeats and Florence Farr, both of whom were heavily involved in the Golden Dawn. At the end of the project, Smith reportedly remarked: "I just finished a big job for very little cash."

Waite published the new Tarot deck in 1909. The next year he provided an accompanying manual, *The Pictorial Key to the Tarot*. It was an instant success and remains the most popular Tarot deck for divination, meditation and study. Sadly, Smith's contribution was forgotten almost at once, and before long the publisher, William Rider & Son, was referring to it as the Rider-Waite deck, or simply as the "Rider deck."

During World War I Waite established the Fellowship of the Rosy Cross (FRC)—certainly not the first organization to bear that name. Waite's FRC was a Christian co-masonic order: that is, it admitted women and men on equal terms. The fellowship offered a series of grades representing symbolical ascent of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life. The form of its rituals and offices was drawn from both Golden Dawn and Masonic precedents. The first meeting was held in July 1915. Waite's wife Ada/Lucasta died in 1924, whereupon he married Mary Broadbent Schofield, whose apartment had served as a temple for the FRC.

Attempts to establish an American lodge of the FRC in the late 1920s came to nothing. But in the process Waite was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Literature from Atlantic University, Virginia Beach, Virginia. Waite fondly believed that he had finally received academic recognition for his work. But he failed to grasp that Atlantic University, associated with Edgar Cayce's Association for Research and Enlightenment, did not enjoy academic accreditation. Moreover, it operated for a mere two years before succumbing to the Great Depression in 1932; it did not reopen until 1985.

Waite was a prolific author, writing about the Kabbalah, alchemy, Rosicrucianism, ceremo-

nial magic, the Holy Grail, Freemasonry, and many other subjects. Best known are *The Book of Ceremonial Magic* (1911), *A New Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* (1921), *The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross* (1924), and *The Holy Kabbalah* (1929).

The two-volume *A New Encyclopedia of Freemasonry* covered, as would be expected, a broad range of topics. One of them was co-Masonry, which caused—and still causes—consternation in Masonic circles. Waite identified Mlle. Maria Desraimes as the first female Mason. She was initiated in France in 1881, whereupon her lodge was immediately suspended. Georges Martin, a 33rd degree Mason, subsequently emerged as a champion of women's rights and joined with Desraimes to promote the cause. The result was the formation of several lodges in which women played significant roles. Waite concluded his brief study of co-Masonry with a list of principles, presumably applying to the FRC, which included: "(6) the Order is open to all free men and women who are of good report and irreproachable life, 'without distinction of race or religion.'" Interestingly, he criticized the branch of co-Masonry in which Theosophists Annie Besant and Charles Leadbeater were involved!

Waite's study of the Kabbalah addressed its Judaic roots as well as its Christian adaptations. In the preface to his 1929 book he made the following disclosure:

I have been led to consider the Kabbalah, not only as a mystic in the accepted sense, but from the mystical standpoint, and to recur with a certain frequency to the belief in a Secret Doctrine of Religion. . . . [The book] is delivered to the keeping of that scattered and unincorporated brotherhood which is of my kindred in the spirit, as a memorial of its understanding according to the light of an individual Christian mystic and not that of Israel.

Notwithstanding his modesty, Waite made a noble attempt to understand the Judaic Kabbalah, and we should recall that few books had been written on the subject since the Safed era. The Kabbalah was not a popular subject in Jewish circles at that time. The Kabbalistic

revival spearheaded by Gershom Scholem was many decades away.

History has not always been kind to Waite. In his novel *Moonchild*, Aleister Crowley used Waite as the inspiration for his evil character Arthwaite. Kenneth Rexroth, who wrote the introduction to the seventh printing of *The Holy Kabbalah*, described Waite as “an odd fish out of an odder barrel . . . cultish and eccentric,” adding that he “wrote the most dreadful prose conceivable.” Perhaps Waite’s pedantic writing style was an attempt to compensate for his lack of higher education. We should also note, however, that such a style was a popular pretension in late Victorian and Edwardian times. Waite never attained the academic status to which he aspired and, upon his death, was accorded only a brief, three-paragraph obituary in *The Freemasons’ Chronicle*.

On the other hand biographer R.A. Gilbert declared that Waite “was the first to attempt a systematic study of the history of western occultism.” American Freemason J. Ray Shute lauded him as “one of the truly great Christian mystics.” We remember Arthur Waite as a man who overcame the privations of his youth to help bring western esotericism out of the shadows of secrecy and from the excesses of magical ritual—of which Crowley was the worst exemplar. Waite left a legacy of scholarly works whose continued availability in print testifies to their lasting value.

Arthur Edward Waite spent his last years at Bishopsbourne, Kent. He died in 1942, at the

age of eighty-four, and was buried in the parish churchyard.

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Contributed by John F. Nash

## Festival of Easter 2013

## The Full Moon in Aries

John F. Nash

On Wednesday, March 27, 2013, at 5:28 a.m., Eastern Daylight Time, the moon will be at 6° Libra: precisely opposite the Sun, as viewed from Earth. Although the moon will be in Libra, we refer to the event as the Full Moon in Aries, the sign into which the Sun passed at the Vernal Equinox a week earlier.

Full moons have had religious significance since the dawn of history, and the full moon in Aries acquired special significance as the herald of spring. In Judaism the occasion was chosen to celebrate their forebears' deliverance from Egypt. The seven-day Feast of Passover begins on the evening of the Aries Full Moon. Christian tradition places the Crucifixion on a Friday, which may have been the first day of Passover or the previous day.<sup>1</sup> Christ rose from the dead, reportedly on the following Sunday. Easter, bearing vernal associations with rebirth, came to be celebrated on the first Sunday after the Aries Full Moon.

Easter is the high point of the Christian liturgical year. It is the culmination of Holy Week, a week of deep introspection that traditionally begins immediately after the principal service on Palm Sunday. This year the Full Moon occurs in the middle of Holy Week, on Tuesday in the Eastern Hemisphere or early Wednesday in the Americas.

Christianity's sacred story, as it has come down to us, relates that Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem to cheering crowds waving palm branches. But within a few days people were conspiring to kill him. On the Thursday of the first Holy Week, Christ presided over the Last Supper and instituted the Eucharist to be an eternal extension of his Incarnation. Before the supper was over, Judas Iscariot left to betray him into the hands of the authorities.

Following the Agony in the Garden, in which he submitted his will to that of the Father, Jesus was arrested, given a mock trial, and condemned to death. The following day he was crucified between two thieves. As scripture records, from the sixth hour (noon) to the ninth hour "there was darkness over the whole land."<sup>2</sup> His defeat at the hands of callous Roman administrators, resentful Jewish leaders, and the forces of darkness seemed complete.

Yet within three days Christ rose from the dead. Mary Magdalene found the empty tomb and then encountered a figure whom, after some initial confusion, she recognized as her risen Lord. Shortly thereafter he appeared to the other disciples and later to "five hundred brethren at once."<sup>3</sup> Believers came to understand the meaning of Christ's death: he was the Paschal Lamb (the very symbol of Aries), willingly sacrificed on humanity's behalf. Through the resurrection he overcame death and sin and manifested the Glory of God. The risen Christ ushered in a new era, a new dispensation, a new covenant with his people.

The sacred story took shape over the first decades and centuries of the Common Era. In due course it was anointed by the institutional church and passed into the scriptural canon. But other stories also circulated. The Gnostics were reluctant to believe that a divine Christ could suffer and die. One Gnostic writer claimed that the authorities crucified the wrong man, and in so doing condemned themselves. In this account Jesus proclaimed:

Yes, they saw me; they punished me. It was another, their father, who drank the gall and the vinegar; it was not I. They struck me with the reed; it was another, Simon, who bore the cross on his shoulder. I was another upon Whom they placed the crown of

thorns. But I was rejoicing in the height over all the wealth of the archons and the offspring of their error, of their empty glory. And I was laughing at their ignorance.<sup>4</sup>

Another account acknowledged the reality of the crucifixion but provided a description of the resurrection not found in the canonical New Testament:

[I]n the night whereon the Lord's day dawned, as the soldiers were keeping guard ... there came a great sound in the heaven, and they saw the heavens opened and two men descend thence, shining with a great light, and drawing near unto the sepulcher. And that stone which had been set on the door rolled away of itself and went back to the side, and the sepulcher was opened and both of the young men entered in .... [T]hree men come out of the sepulcher, and two of them sustaining the other, and a cross following, after them. And of the two [the soldiers] saw that their heads reached unto heaven, but of him that was led by them that it overpassed the heavens.<sup>5</sup>

The account continued: "And they heard a voice out of the heavens saying: Hast thou (or Thou hast) preached unto them that sleep? And an answer was heard from the cross, saying: Yea."

These accounts were suppressed by the institutional church. Yet alternative interpretations of Easter surfaced from time to time, and they continue today. Traditional Christians believe that the New Testament account is literally true. Moreover, with Paul, they declare that "if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."<sup>6</sup> Liberals are willing to believe that a worthy man named Jesus was crucified, but they reject notions that he was divine or rose from the dead. Great numbers of people are indifferent to the whole issue and regard Easter as a secular holiday.

Esotericists are by no means unanimous in their own responses. Some, following Gnostic precedents, declare that Jesus did not die on the cross but went to live in India. Others regard the crucifixion and resurrection, if they happened at all, merely as symbols of events

unfolding eternally on cosmic realms. Still others find meaning in the traditional Easter story but struggle to reconcile it with esoteric teachings.

Christian esotericists are challenged to reconcile scriptural accounts of the first Holy Week with awareness that the Master Jesus and the Christ were distinct entities. Esotericists, drawing upon teachings stretching back to the first century Gnostic Cerinthus, assert that the Christ is a divine or semi-divine individuality who overshadowed his disciple Jesus during the three-year Palestinian ministry. The precise nature of their relationship may be a mystery beyond our comprehension, but the Christian doctrine of the hypostatic union was certainly not unjustified.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand esotericists assert that the relationship was temporary: it began with the baptism in the Jordan and ended with the crucifixion, after which the Jesus and the Christ took distinct paths. The Christ, whom we also know as the Lord Maitreya or the Bodhisattva, is the World Teacher and head of the vast Second Ray Ashram in the Planetary Hierarchy, with global responsibility for religion and education. The Master Jesus is head of the Sixth Ray Ashram, with special responsibility for Christianity.

Once we accept the distinction between Jesus and the Christ, three questions inevitably arise: who died on the cross; who, if anyone, "rose from the dead"; and who appeared to Mary Magdalene and the other disciples? The Tibetan Master Djwhal Khul answered the first question thus: "It was the Master Jesus who 'died' and entered into the tomb, thus climaxing His long series of incarnations and ending – by destruction – the hold of matter on the spirit."<sup>8</sup>

The second question is an important one, since we regard the physical body and the other vehicles of the lower quaternary as temporary sheaths, and physical death as in no way affecting the life of the "real" human entity. For us the resuscitation of a corpse would serve little purpose. To people whose consciousness was focused on material existence, however, it might have demonstrated the reality of ongoing life.



The Tibetan referred to “the story of the resurrection in which the Master Jesus arose out of the tomb.” But he stated emphatically: “the Christ did not rise out of a rocky sepulcher and reassume His discarded body.” Rather, the Tibetan interpreted resurrection to mean “rising to an original state.” Thus the resurrection was the “far more important event [in which] the Christ passed through the seventh Initiation of Resurrection and returned back to His original state of Being – to remain there throughout all the eternities.”<sup>9</sup> Jesus, by contrast, attained the fourth initiation through his suffering and death on the cross, and went on to attain the fifth initiation as Apollonius of Tyana.<sup>10</sup> Hence we call him the Master Jesus.

Anthroposophist and stigmatic Judith von Halle provided an interesting insight into the third question. Endowed with the ability to view historical events with more than clairvoyant vision, von Halle described the scene when the “gardener” asked Mary Magdalene “Whom seek ye?”:

He asked her this question as a teacher of initiation asks his pupil. With this question He asked her if she was seeking *Jesus* or *Christ*. But initially she was only looking for Jesus of Nazareth, her beloved teacher in his physical body. But as Christ then touched her heart (in the Gospels this is when He called her by her name) she reacted immediately, so filled with love and so overwhelmed ... that she forgot everything ... At the moment of “reunion” everything was forgotten; she believed He was by her again as before. She fell down before Him full of love and wanted to kiss his feet.<sup>11</sup>

**While western Christianity has tended to view Christ’s incarnation in terms of atonement, Eastern Orthodox theologians insist that he came to unlock our latent potential to become divine beings. That doctrine of *theosis*, or “deification,” comes tantalizingly close to esoteric teachings on our divine destiny. We would add that, in addition to his own initiation, the Christ brought about a major initiation for humanity and the planet.**

The Tibetan confirmed that the Jesus was indeed the one who “appeared to Mary, weeping outside the door of the sepulcher.” But “except in this one brief episode” it was “the Christ Who is indicated as appearing after the resurrection.”<sup>12</sup>

Jesus’ appearance to Mary was probably in his astral body, perhaps still bearing material from his etheric body, which formed a wraith. Christ’s appearances to the disciples were more likely in a *mayavirupa*. Fifth—and higher—degree initiates are believed to be capable of manifesting a *mayavirupa*, which has a measure of solidity but is not subject to normal physical laws.<sup>13</sup> It is

worth noting that esoteric teachings on the *mayavirupa* correspond closely to descriptions of the *sōma pneumatikon*, or “spiritual body,” in the writings of Paul.<sup>14</sup>

The distinction between the Master Jesus and the Christ, and the notion that the hypostatic union was only temporary, are stumbling blocks to a synthesis of beliefs among traditional Christians and esotericists. Yet most Christians could affirm with the Tibetan that the Easter Festival “is the festival of the risen, living Christ ... the Expression of the Love of God.”<sup>15</sup> While they and esotericists might have different perceptions of what was entailed, they could agree that Christ’s incarnation changed the world.

Most traditional Christians would not recognize the Christ as “the Teacher of all men and the Head of the Spiritual Hierarchy.”<sup>16</sup> Yet greater awareness of the Planetary Hierarchy, and of the Christ’s central role in it, is urgently needed if a broad-based expansion of human consciousness is to take place. Belief in the

Communion of Saints can provide a starting point for introducing traditional Christians to the concept of the Hierarchy of Masters.

The Master Djwhal Khul prophesied that the Festival of Easter will become one of three major festivals to be celebrated worldwide in the liturgy of a New World Religion. The others are the Buddhist Festival of Wesak, at the Full Moon in Taurus, and a new festival, World Goodwill Day, or Festival of the Christ, at the Full Moon in Gemini.

The Tibetan explained that the establishment of “certain major festivals in relation to the moon, and in a lesser degree to the zodiac, will bring a strengthening of the spirit of invocation and the resultant inflow of responsive influences.” Incorporating the historically separate observances of Easter and the Wesak Festival into a common framework will establish “a certain uniformity in the world religious rituals [which] will aid men everywhere to strengthen each other's work and enhance powerfully the thought currents directed to the waiting Spiritual Lives.”<sup>17</sup> In the New World Religion, the Tibetan continued, “all men of spiritual inclination and intention everywhere will keep the same holy days. This will bring about a pooling of spiritual resources and a united spiritual effort, plus a simultaneous spiritual invocation. The potency of this will be apparent.”<sup>18</sup>

The three festivals extend over the three-month liturgical season we call the Higher Interlude, a time of special opportunity for spiritual growth and service. It is a time when “abstract or divine thought impresses the Soul and is transmitted to the waiting mind.”<sup>19</sup> Esoteric students have been observing the season for sixty years, and participation increases year by year. During the rest of the year, with its lesser Full Moon festivals, we assimilate what has been received. At each full moon the Hierarchy reaches out to humanity in a distinctive way.

Full implementation of the New World Religion will require active intervention by senior members of the Hierarchy and still lies in the future. Yet early signs of its development are already becoming apparent,<sup>20</sup> and there is much we can and should do in the months ahead to facilitate it.

Our immediate focus is on the Full Moon in Aries, which ushers in the Higher Interlude. To this end it will be helpful to examine the astrological significance of the sign. The esoteric ruler of Aries is Mercury, which “leads into the mysteries,”<sup>21</sup> while Uranus, its hierarchical ruler, “is peculiarly active at this time and brings in the energy of the seventh ray” of ceremony.<sup>22</sup> The ceremonial rituals of Easter, the most impressive in the Christian liturgical calendar, may well be absorbed into the restored mysteries. Mars, however, is the exoteric ruler of Aries. Mars is a planet of action, with idealistic Sixth Ray associations, reminding us of the festival's practical implications. Finally, we should not forget that the Sun, with its Second Ray quality, is exalted in Aries. This combination of influences offers something of the potency to which the Tibetan referred.

We can observe the Easter Festival by joining with disciples throughout the world in invoking energies of the First and Second Rays and putting them to work. Second Ray energy flows through the Solar Logos – and we note that this is the second solar system – and through the Christ. First Ray energy, the energy of Aries, flows through Shamballa. Will or Power, mediated by Love-Wisdom, provides a firm basis for effective action. The world's many problems require vigorous action to strengthen the growing powers of Light and to lay to rest the declining—but still all-too-apparent—forces of darkness. The New World Religion, the Externalization of the Hierarchy, the Reappearance of the Christ, and Restoration of the Mysteries cannot occur until significant progress is made toward the establishment of right human relations. It is our responsibility to make that happen.

While we should not miss the opportunity to participate in the worldwide invocation, we can also join with Christians in the traditional celebration of Easter. While western Christianity has tended to view Christ's incarnation in terms of atonement, Eastern Orthodox theologians insist that he came to unlock our latent potential to become divine beings. That doctrine of *theosis*, or “deification,” comes tantalizingly close to esoteric teachings on our divine destiny.<sup>23</sup> We would add that, in addition

to his own initiation, the Christ brought about a major initiation for humanity and the planet.

The Christian Easter is not just a commemorative festival, however. It is also an ongoing celebration of new Light, new Life, and new Love. In the words of an Easter prayer:

Christ, you are risen with the sun; you are light in our darkness, warmth in our cold. You are peace and hope and joy .... You live eternally, and with you live the millions, living and dead, who trust you.<sup>24</sup>

The Easter Festival is a living, vibrant occasion when people of goodwill everywhere can join with the Planetary Hierarchy, whom we trust, in collective resolve to put into practice what the Christ initiated 2,000 years ago. The Tibetan declared: "On this day the Spiritual Hierarchy, which [the Christ] guides and directs, will be recognized, and the nature of God's love will be emphasized."<sup>25</sup> In joy and expectation, let us seize the opportunity to proclaim the risen Christ, the reality of the Hierarchy, and the eternal love of God.

<sup>1</sup> The gospels disagree on which day Jesus was crucified. The synoptic gospels state that the Last Supper was a paschal meal, and that he died the following afternoon. *John* suggests that the Last Supper was held the evening before the beginning of Passover.

<sup>2</sup> *Mark* 15:33.

<sup>3</sup> *1 Corinthians* 15:6.

<sup>4</sup> *Second Treatise of the Great Seth* (trans: R. A. Bullard and J. A. Gibbons), Nag Hammadi Library. : <http://www.gnosis.org/naghamm/2seth.html>. (accessed Jan. 25, 2013).

<sup>5</sup> *Gospel of Peter* 34-41 (trans.: M. R. James), *The Apocryphal New Testament*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924. <http://www.gnosis.org/library/gospete.htm>. (accessed Oct. 23, 2012).

<sup>6</sup> *1 Corinthians* 15:14.

<sup>7</sup> John F. Nash, "Christology: Toward a Synthesis of Christian Doctrine and Esoteric Teachings," *The Esoteric Quarterly* (Winter 2012), 37-61.

<sup>8</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing Co., 1960), 355.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 730. Despite the apparent clarity of this statement, the Tibetan's teachings leave some uncertainty regarding the initiatory level the Christ attained. See *The Rays and the Initiations*, 83, 730; also *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 17.

<sup>10</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation: Human and Solar* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing Co., 1922), 56-57.

<sup>11</sup> Judith von Halle, *And If He Has Not Been Raised* (Forest Row, UK: Temple Lodge 2007), 134. Emphasis and parenthetical clause in original.

<sup>12</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 355.

<sup>13</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing Co., 1957), 697. See also *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 772. *John* 20:20-29 records that the risen Christ could pass through walls.

<sup>14</sup> *1 Corinthians* 15:44.

<sup>15</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing Co., 1957), 420.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing Co., 1957), 419-420.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 420.

<sup>19</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing Co., 1934), 517.

<sup>20</sup> John F. Nash, "The New World Religion: Opportunities and Challenges," *The Esoteric Quarterly* (Summer 2012), 17-38.

<sup>21</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing Co., 1951), 549.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 548.

<sup>23</sup> John F. Nash, "Theosis: A Christian Perspective on Human Destiny," *The Esoteric Quarterly* (Spring 2011), 15-33.

<sup>24</sup> *Book of Common Prayer* (Hastings, NZ: Anglican Church of New Zealand, 1989), 555.

<sup>25</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 420.

## The One Life, the One Humanity

Frank Hilton (written in 1973)

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In thinking about this month's full moon talk, I wondered what note should be sounding forth at this Wesak Festival, what note the Spiritual Hierarchy would have us radiate out into the three worlds of human thinking, feeling and action. The answer that came to me was that it is not a new note, but one that has been sounding down the ages, one not generally recognized and taken up, repeated and implemented except by the Masters, initiates and a few world disciples.

However, this note has been sounding ever more clearly, not just on Hierarchical levels, but on human levels, and is recognized by people of every land, race and creed. And if we look for it, it is amazing how it is being echoed by individuals and groups here, there and everywhere. The Master Djwhal Khul deliberately drew our attention to it in his Wesak message of 1944 when World War II was raging: "I ask you to drop your antagonisms and your antipathies, your hatreds and your racial differences, and attempt to think in terms of the one family, the one Life and the one humanity." (EXT: 468)

Albert Einstein, a great disciple who is no longer with us on the physical plane, but who worked in the scientific field, wrote during his 70<sup>th</sup> year:

A human being is a part of the whole, called by us "Universe," a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest—a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole nature in its beauty. Nobody is able to achieve this

completely, but the striving for such achievement is in itself a part of the liberation and the foundation for inner security.

Arthur C. Clarke, the well-known British space scientist and science fiction writer, in his book *Profiles of the Future*, assured us that, in his view of the future, "communication satellites will end ages of isolation, making us all members of a single family, teaching us to read and speak, however imperfectly, a single language." And he concluded, "ours will be the last century of the savage."

I found this same note echoing through a little booklet put out by a group based in San Diego, California, with connections in many countries. There is no hint in their booklet of the esoteric teachings in the usual sense, yet they sound the note of one humanity and the one life. These people are working toward a worldwide yearly observance of what they call "World Life Day." They affirm, "We are all part of the Earth Organism, the body of life on Earth," and go on to say:

If we were to imagine a transparent Earth revolving in space, the layer of life would be so thin on its surface as to be almost invisible, a fragile living bubble wheeling between a roasting sun and frozen space. And now we know it is in danger at the hands of humans. "World Life Day"—the world community event—is only one of many possible tools to help us all to wake up and get involved in life-saving actions.

Their beautifully written booklet gives a flashback to primitive man eons ago:

So it was when our ancestors gathered the tribe together. They called themselves the people. Not *the* people, the chosen people, but rather the people among the birds, the trees, the grasses, the insects, the fish. From *their* perspective and isolated valleys and

with little transportation and communication, in their ceremonials, virtually all of humanity, almost every person they knew of was there, together, sharing in the dance of life.

But it slid away from us as we scattered about the continents and stood with stony mountain walls between, with wide deserts and endless oceans separating us and obscuring the fact of that other side of us—that we are not only different, but in endless detail the same.

In the last centuries the tools of locomotion and communication that threw us across the globe have brought us back upon ourselves, and as we become ever more closely aware of one another—in a new way—we are beginning again to see the other side, the unity of us all. We are almost ready for world community consciousness. After thousands of years of divergence, it is now possible—and possibly inevitable—that again all of us will gather together about the fire in profound celebration, but this time about the fire of the sun itself, and this time at a point in *time* rather than at a particular location on the planet's surface.

This will become the world community event. It will recur with the steady rhythm of the seasons. It will be different from all past human events in that it will involve virtually the whole family of human beings at a single time, in a single human event. It will once again give us the experience we felt in primitive ceremonials of relation to the whole of humanity and to all of life in the universe.

Many other projects have appeared that are keyed to the same basic idea. For instance, United Nations Day, observed on October 24<sup>th</sup> each year on the anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter—that first major crack in the hitherto ironclad armor of separative nationalism and the first faint, as yet half-hearted, recognition that just as men and women make up a nation, so nations are but parts in the larger whole of human life on this planet.

Speaking generally, the younger generation sees this more readily than the older ones.

Donald M. Fraser, the Chairman of the House Subcommittee on International Organizations and Movements, stated, “most young people do not share our generation's blind allegiance to national sovereignty. They see themselves as citizens of a common community and view exclusive devotion to national boundaries as an outdated concept.”

In line with Congressman Fraser's comment is the movement called the Planetary Citizen Register centered in Ottawa, Canada, which has as its aim the encouraging of people to declare themselves planetary citizens. This is not a rejection of one's own nation, but its inclusion in the larger whole of humanity—the recognition of the need to place *human* interest above national interest, and *human* sovereignty above national sovereignty. They ask people to sign the registry form, which affirms:

I recognize my membership in the human community; I recognize my allegiance to humanity while I reaffirm my allegiance to my own family, community, state or province and nation. As a member of the planetary family of humanity, the good of the world community is my first concern. Therefore, I will work to end divisions and wars; I will work for the realization of human rights – civil and political, economic, social and cultural – for all people; I will work to bring the actions of nations into conformity with the needs of the world community; I will work for the strengthening and improvement of the United Nations.

That this project is Hierarchically inspired would seem obvious from the list of first endorsers of the Human Manifesto and pledge of planetary citizenship. All 87 signers have proved by their lives of service, their vision and dedication to raising human consciousness, that they truly belong with the New Group of World Servers. [Note: we could not find mention of this group on the Internet, but we did find another group called World Government of World Citizens based in Washington DC. They subscribe to similar principles, and more information about them can be found at: <http://www.worldservice.org/index.html?s=1>. This should not be considered an en-



dorsement of this group, but it is something to investigate if you are interested.]

All these movements, ideas and projects are concerned with humanity as a whole and not individuals of a particular race, creed or nation—human beings struggling to grow to the fullness of their potential stature, human souls seeking to discover and express their innate divinity, God immanent, the love-wisdom of the overshadowing Soul.

And while we deplore and are horrified by the dreadful suffering and waste of life and natural resources, the despoliation of a fruitful countryside that occurs during wars being waged in various corners of the globe, has it not, at least, burned into

our consciousness that all this has been happening to *human* beings with their hopes and fears, weaknesses and strengths, hopes and aspirations, just like ourselves? Hasn't it made a mockery of ironbound ideologies and vaunted national pride? It is *humanity* and human evolution that really matters; for the human kingdom has a great destiny yet to be recognized and fulfilled. That destiny is to be the agent of the Will of God to the lower kingdoms of the planetary life, which is yet One Life, the expression of "Him in Whom we live and move and have our being."

At these Wesak Festivals our thoughts are necessarily turned toward the Spiritual Hierarchy—and beyond, to Shamballa, the center where the Will of God is known. They are turned toward the inner higher realms where the divine Plan exists as a living, substantial form whose full expression on Earth is slowly coming about—so slowly, so painfully, but

nevertheless surely. With that higher level of being and those great lives in mind, the Masters of the Wisdom and Lords of Compassion, what are the occult implications of the few examples I have mentioned — examples of the inner note that is sounding and that we must echo and strengthen at this Wesak.

**A human being is a part of the whole, called by us "Universe," a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest—a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole nature in its beauty.**

Apart from the obvious necessity for individual, national and international planning and action to be geared to the needs of *all* people, to the needs of the one humanity, according to the esoteric teachings, there are vitally important long-range planetary implications. The Tibetan often reminds us how limited and self-centered human thinking is, and points out that the human kingdom is but one of many—seen and unseen—within our total plan-

etary life, and that there are vast purposes and plans working out that even the Masters are striving to fully grasp and understand.

We think in lifetimes or, historically, a few thousand years. They think not in terms of years but in terms of the Divine Purpose, of fulfilling the Will of the Planetary Logos in its great redemptive task. They think of the longer cycles of the birth, growth, flowering of peoples and races, of planetary systems and the place and function of Earth within the solar system, and within that yet larger "Life about Whom naught may be said." Yet, in this vast process, what is happening now to humanity has an ordered place, and this "recognition of the one humanity" that we have been considering is a basic prerequisite for planned action by a group of great Chohans of the sixth initiation working in concert with Sanat Kumara in Shamballa. It is linked with what is occultly

described as “the sowing of the seed of the divine Will.” Here is a passage from *The Rays and the Initiations* that we cannot hope to fully comprehend, but that can stretch our minds, enlarge our consciousness and bring a tiny glimpse of the vision that the Masters hold before themselves.

The Tibetan is speaking about the eighth and ninth initiations—those that lie as far ahead of the Masters of the fifth initiation as the fifth initiation lies ahead of us:

The eighth and the ninth initiations ... relate to the initiations of those methods and techniques whereby the “seed of will,” which will later flower into the third solar system, can be nurtured and fostered and its growth promoted. This nurturing and fostering will be the task of a group of Masters (to be developed in the next major race) Who, at the Initiation of Decision, the sixth initiation, will dedicate Themselves, *as a group*, to the Path of Earth Service. They will specifically and with full enlightenment pledge Themselves to the promotion of Sanat Kumara’s project.

Our modern civilization today (under the hammer of the destroyer aspect) is being changed; old things are passing away, having served their purpose. The new thing is not yet noted or appreciated, though already present. The work of preparation for the planting of the germ or seed of the divine Will on Earth is nearly over; when the Hierarchy is externalized, and people as a whole recognize the position on Earth of the Christ and of His church “invisible” (the union of all Souls made perfect, which is a true description of the Hierarchy), then—in a manner unforeseen by humanity—Shamballa will assume control, and from the Council Chamber of Sanat Kumara will issue forth the Sower of the Seed. He will sow it *within the ground prepared by humanity*, and thus the future is assured, not for the planetary Logos alone, but for that greater Whole in which our planet plays its little part. That moment lies ahead in the civilization that shall be, and in the next great race that will emerge out of all our modern races and nations, the sowing

will take place. The next race will be a fusion of the whole, and a worldwide recognition of the One Humanity is an essential prerequisite of the sowing. It is the creation of this universal recognition that will be one of the major tasks of the reappearing Christ and His attendant Hierarchy. When the “little wills of men” are beginning to respond on a measurably large scale to the greater Will of the divine Life, then the major task of Shamballa will become possible. Nevertheless, prior to that, humanity must respond to the light and the love that are the *preparatory* streams of spiritual energy and that are already pouring forth in response to human invocation. [pp. 659-660]

So let us recognize gladly, and as a source of courage, the significance of the note we are sounding, “the recognition of the one humanity.” Let us remember that it is an essential prerequisite of the sowing of the seed of the divine Will, and that our present race has almost completed the preparatory work for that sowing.

In winter or early spring the newly ploughed field bears little resemblance to the richness of verdure, flower and grain that will follow the sowing of the seed, and our present world is in some ways analogous to that ploughed field. Could we say that the basic earth of human nature everywhere needs the magic nutrient, the fertilizer, the recognition that all people are essentially one, with a common destiny of a glory undreamed of – a oneness, which once recognized, releases the energy of goodwill and inevitably builds right human relations? What does it mean to us as individuals in our everyday routine lives, particularly in the face of what seems a recrudescence of evil in the world, and for those of us living in the cities—and yes, even in smaller towns too—who are living with violence every day and, on the surface, a seemingly greater division of humanity?

We cannot hide from responsibility in a cloak of righteous indignation, or escape onto “cloud nine” by affirming our particular individual or group goodness. We have to live and prove the esoteric teachings, to recognize evil, yet fight for good. Above all, we have to recognize

*causes.* We all know about the Law of Cause and Effect, but do we apply it as we should in understanding what is happening in the world? Where lie the causes of present-day violence? One brief trip through any of the great cities of the world—one one brief trip with open eyes—and we know the causes that go back many, many years. And we know that we permitted those causes to arise. What values were presented, or failed to be presented, that either seeded violence or nurtured it? Evil is a face in life, but it cannot thrive unless it has the right soil.

We have talked of love, but do we really love? We have asserted that spiritual values must rule, but how far have we gone along with or acquiesced in material values? When we learn of violence, or experience it first hand, are we content to be swept with indignation and feelings of personal offense, or do we calmly, in the light of the mind and in a spirit of love and compassion, seek the causes and try to change them? If we don't, we are rejecting our spiritual training. How far do we unwittingly aid evil through negative criticism and emotional splurges? How far do we over-emphasize wrong-doing in daily conversations and attitudes and fail to recognize and pay tribute to—and thereby strengthen—the countless acts—big and small—of daily sacrifice, caring and help given within families, between neighbors and communities, and on a national and international level?

When we see the picture whole, and not myopically, we can really mean what we say when we reiterate Private Tim Meadow's affirmation in Christopher Fry's play *The Sleep of Prisoners*: "Thank God our time is now when wrong comes up to face us everywhere ... never to leave us until we take the longest stride of soul men ever took." Let us also never forget – and use with power – the potent formula, the mantra-prayer, the Great Invocation. Let us recall what the Tibetan wrote about the effect of the Great Invocation: "The use of the Invocation

will relate human beings within the ring-pass-not of humanity itself, and will bring the human center en rapport with the Hierarchy, creating a free interplay between the two of them and thus making possible the appearance of the Kingdom of God on Earth." [DINA2:184]

As we all know, the Wesak Festival is a time of rededication for aspirants and disciples, a time of recommitment. The underlying oneness of humanity is a fact to the Hierarchy and to the initiate and world disciple. As yet, for most of us, it is still just an idea on the mental plane, but fortunately it is an increasingly recognized idea and one that, through growing recognition and aspiration to see it fulfilled, is rapidly becoming a human ideal. As we know, an idea on the mental plane remains simply an idea until it is clothed with aspirational substance, when it becomes an ideal ardently sought and worked for in order to bring it into full outer expression on the physical plane.

So we have to bring this idea of the one humanity down from the realm of ideas, to hold it as a strong ideal, and know that it is a practical ideal. And, above all, we have to work for it. What is needed is commitment to the one humanity. Commitment is the keyword. To illustrate that I would like to share something written by W.H. Murray that I found on a greeting card issued by the Sierra Club:

Until one is committed there is hesitance, the chance to draw back. Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation), there is one elementary truth: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. Goethe wrote: "Whatever you can do, or dream you can do, begin it. Boldness has genuine power and magic in it."

Let us bring this thought of "Commitment to the One Humanity" into our meditation at this time.

## Festival of Goodwill 2013

## Goodwill Toward All Life

Dorothy I. Riddle

The Festival of Goodwill offers us a time each year to reflect on the power of goodwill, or the expression of the divine Will-to-Good on this planetary level. The overall focus of the Ageless Wisdom teachings regarding goodwill is on bringing about right *human* relations.

We have the opportunity and responsibility, though, to reflect beyond humanity. After all, the theory of hylozoism, which underlies all esoteric teachings, “posits a living substance, composed of a multiplicity of sentient lives that are continuously swept into expression by the ‘breath of the divine Life.’ This theory ... emphasizes the fact that all forms are built up of infinitesimal lives, which in their totality—great or small—constitute a Life, and that these composite lives, in their turn, are a corporate part of a still greater Life. Thus eventually we have that great scale of lives, manifesting in greater expression and reaching all the way from the tiny life called the atom (with which science deals) up to that vast atomic life that we call a solar system.”<sup>1</sup>

We, the fourth kingdom, are all part of the One Life, along with the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms: “Humans, the brain of nature; the animals, the expression of the heart; the vegetable world, the expression of the creative force or of the throat center; these three kingdoms in nature forming, in a peculiar manner, correspondences to the three higher centers in human beings, as the three kingdoms on the involutionary arc correspond to the three lower centers, and the mineral kingdom ... corresponding to the solar plexus, the great clearinghouse between that which is above and that which is below.”<sup>2</sup>

*The Kingdoms of Earth*

In the esoteric literature, we are told that the One Life is differentiated in relation to our

planet into seven kingdoms, of which the following are the first five: mineral, vegetable, animal, human, Egoic or Soul. Esoteric teachings comment on our relationship with the other three kingdoms: “Humanity’s work for the animal kingdom is to stimulate instinct until individualization is possible. Work for the vegetable kingdom is to foster the perfume-producing faculty and to adapt plant life to the myriad uses of humans and of animals. Work with the mineral kingdom is to work alchemically and magically.”<sup>3</sup>

What we know from cosmology is that these kingdoms are all part of a single interconnected energy field and that the dynamic of interconnectivity and free circulation of energy is as important as each of the individual kingdoms. “The main factor preventing a completely unimpeded sequence of impression from Shamballa straight down into the mineral kingdom, via all the other kingdoms, is the factor of free will, resulting in karmic responsibility.”<sup>4</sup>

So we have a responsibility to deal effectively with the energetic “pollution” that comes primarily from human thoughts and emotions. Energy inflowing from Shamballa is “‘stepped down’ by humanity’s constant reaction to glamour, to emotional or astral conclusions, and to selfish interpretations. It must be remembered that the activity of all these ‘impressing agencies’ is felt in a wide and general sense throughout the entire planet and the planetary aura. No kingdom in nature escapes this impact.”<sup>5</sup>

While esoterically it is clear that each kingdom has its own place and function in the whole, we unconsciously operate in terms of Aristotle’s assertion of the *scala naturae* (the ladder of nature), which places humans at the top of the ranked order of life forms.

### *The Concept of Personhood*

Historically, our practical relationship with members of the first, second, and third kingdoms has been that of ownership and exploitation. Animals, vegetables and minerals have been viewed as resources for our own use without regard to any moral rights that they might have. We may have been benevolently protective, especially in the context of the environmental movement, but we have not necessarily thought of “goodwill” in our interactions with them because we have not thought of them as entities in their own right—or as being “beyond use.”

While in esoteric circles, we may have maintained a paternalistic attitude towards members of these other kingdoms, some environmental and legal organizations have started to raise questions. These include the Center for Earth Jurisprudence,<sup>6</sup> the Nonhuman Rights Project,<sup>7</sup> and Wild Law UK,<sup>8</sup> as well as community action groups such as the Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature.<sup>9</sup>

Personhood is defined as having the following characteristics: self-awareness, with a rich inner life; being intelligent and able to think abstractly; being able to reflect on and choose one’s actions; being emotionally sophisticated and empathic; having complex social relationships; and being able to work cooperatively. Once personhood is acknowledged, there are certain moral or inherent rights that follow. If we reflect on the inherent rights of personhood, we can begin to see that, if entities in the other kingdoms are acknowledged as nonhuman persons, there would be definite changes needed not only in our attitudes and actions but also how we express goodwill to these nonhuman persons.

### *Goodwill Toward the Earth*

In esoteric terms, we know that “the Planetary Logos, the One in Whom we live and move and have our being, is the informing, ensouling life of this planet, the Earth. It is Its life that integrates the planet as a whole, and Its life that pours through all forms—great or small—that, in their aggregate, constitute the planetary form.”<sup>10</sup> Further, scientists have demonstrated that the planet Earth “behaves as a single, self-

regulating system”<sup>11</sup> with the negative consequences of environmental degradation of the biosphere and loss of biodiversity becoming more obvious. In terms of expressing goodwill, it is important to remember that all parts of the biosphere that we call the Earth are inhabited by living organisms, and that both Earth itself and many of the entities living within it meet the criteria of personhood.

In recognition that what we call “nature” is in fact an interrelated series of living ecosystems, Ecuador amended its Constitution to assert the inalienable rights of ecosystems, giving people the right to petition on their behalf.<sup>12</sup> In 2010, Bolivia passed the Law of the Rights of Mother Earth, which includes the right of the Earth to not be polluted, to continue vital cycles unaltered, to be free of genetic alteration, and to be free of imbalance from mega-infrastructure and development projects.<sup>13</sup> The United Nations is formally considering adopting a Universal Declaration of Rights for Mother Earth,<sup>14</sup> modeled on the Bolivian law. In addition, it is considering the enshrining of ecocide (any large-scale destruction of the natural environment or over-consumption of critical non-renewable resources) as an international crime against peace.<sup>15</sup> In September 2012, New Zealand declared the Whangangui River an “integrated, living entity” with legal personhood status.<sup>16</sup>

From the above initiatives we can see the beginning of a shift away from protection of the biosphere in order to ensure abundance for ourselves and toward respect for the environment and its components as living entities in their own right.

### *Goodwill Toward the Animal Kingdom*

We are told that “[domesticated] animals are to their own kingdom what the New Group of World Servers is to humanity. The New Group of World Servers is the linking bridge and the mode of communication between the Hierarchy (the fifth kingdom) and Humanity (the fourth kingdom) under the present divine Plan; the domesticated animals fulfill, therefore, an analogous function between Humanity (the fourth kingdom) and the animal kingdom (the third).”<sup>17</sup>

The Great Ape Project, begun in 1994, was the first to address the issue of legal rights and legal standing or personhood for our closest genetic relatives, the Great Apes (chimpanzees, bonobos, gorillas, and orangutans). It launched the World Declaration on Great Primates that espouses the right to life, the right to individual freedom including protection from commercial exploitation or trading, and a prohibition of torture (including testing in research labs).<sup>18</sup>

In 1999, New Zealand granted basic rights to great apes, making their use in research, testing or teaching illegal. In 2007, the Balearic Islands granted legal personhood rights to all great apes. Meanwhile Switzerland had amended its constitution in 1992 to recognize animals as *beings* rather than as *things* and added a law on respectful treatment of animals.<sup>19</sup> Germany followed in 2002 with a constitutional amendment guaranteeing rights to animals.

The next species to garner attention was the cetaceans (whales and dolphins). Based on scientific evidence that cetaceans are extremely intelligent, insightful and self-aware, capable of a wide range of emotions, compassionate and altruistic, creative with problem solving ability, and cooperative both within and between species, scientists issued a Declaration of Rights for Cetaceans in 2010.<sup>20</sup> Elephants are equally as intelligent as cetaceans and are insightful, self-aware, capable of a range of emotions, compassionate, altruistic, able to use tools and create art, and are organized in a closely knit matriarchal society; however, they have not yet received formal advocacy as nonhuman persons.

As scientists shift away from imposing human assumptions on animals and instead study how they interact amongst themselves in their own environment, we are realizing that we have grossly underestimated both the scope and the scale of animal intelligence.<sup>21</sup>

### *Goodwill Toward the Vegetable Kingdom*

While we may have experience in thinking about mammals like whales or elephants as being intelligent and highly social, we are less likely to view the vegetable kingdom in that manner. In fact, we use the term “vegetative state” to denote a lack of awareness or consciousness. If we think beyond our own use of plant life, we can recognize that “the vegetable kingdom is the transmitter

and the transformer of the vital pranic fluid to the other forms of life on our planet. That is its divine and unique function.”<sup>22</sup> In esoteric terms, “the angels and devas are to the vegetable kingdom what the spiritual Hierarchy is to humanity.”<sup>23</sup>

In the tabulation of kingdoms, “the vegetable kingdom is the expression of three rays, whereas the others are expressions of two. Through these three, the vegetable kingdom has been brought to its present condition of supreme beauty and its developed symbolism of color. The vegetable kingdom is the outstanding contribution of our Earth to the general solar plan. Each of the planets contributes a unique and specialized quota to the sum total of evolutionary products, and the unique production of our particular planetary system is the vegetable kingdom ... and this is possible because it is the only Kingdom in which three rays have finally succeeded in coalescing, fusing and blending. They are also the three rays

**When aspirants pray in the new Invocation: ‘Let Light descend on Earth’ they are invoking something that humanity will have to learn to handle.... All these planetary developments are attended by risks, and none more so than that of the absorption of light—on a world-wide scale—by humanity, with a subsequent reflex action on the three subhuman kingdoms. Nothing that affects humanity or that stimulates it to a forward-moving activity is without its inevitable effect upon the three lower kingdoms in nature.**



along a major line of forces, 2-4-6 .... Its success is demonstrated in the uniformity of its production of green in the realm of color, throughout the entire planet.”<sup>24</sup>

Science is demonstrating through studies of plant neurobiology that many plants are autonomous, able to differentiate between self and non-self, capable of complex and adaptive behaviors, able to communicate and warn other plants of danger, and are able to enlist allies to aid them. Many forms of plant life, including trees and forests, are entitled to be treated with dignity because they are sensing, highly social organisms that communicate extensively, interact with their surroundings, learn from experience, are able to integrate diverse sources of information and act accordingly, and can distinguish between self and not-self and between kin and non-kin.”<sup>25</sup>

We are only recently appreciating the complex social development of plants and have not yet had public discussions about the implications of practices we impose on this kingdom (e.g., forest clear cutting, genetic modification) in the context of viewing plants as “nonhuman persons.” So far Switzerland is the only country that has created a Bill of Rights for Plants, which states that “living organisms should be considered morally for their own sake because they are alive.”<sup>26</sup>

#### *Goodwill Toward the Mineral Kingdom*

In esoteric teachings, we are reminded that “the mineral kingdom is ... the most concrete expression of the dual unity of power and order. It constitutes the ‘foundation’ of the ordered physical structure or the universe of our planet.”<sup>27</sup> In understanding the spiritual development of the mineral kingdom, “there are three stages in the evolutionary processes [that] are the correspondences in the mineral kingdom to the stages of animal consciousness, of self-consciousness, and of the radiant group consciousness of the soul. There is a fourth stage of potency or of organized expressed power, but this lies ahead and is the analogy in this kingdom to the life of the Monad.”<sup>28</sup>

Further, “fire, intense heat, and pressure ... have already succeeded in bringing about the divisions of the mineral kingdom into three

parts: the baser metals, as they are called, the standard metals (such as silver and gold and platinum), and the semi-precious stones and crystals. The precious jewels are a synthesis of all three—one of the basic syntheses of evolution. In this connection, [there are] some correspondences between the mineral kingdom and the human evolutionary cycles.”<sup>29</sup>

It is probably with the mineral kingdom that we, as humans, feel the least affinity, although we are increasingly appreciative of the energetic communication of crystals and other gem stones. We may not have thought through the implications of the fact that “the mineral kingdom and the kingdom of solar lives (the first and seventh kingdoms) are [both] the result of the activity of the first and the seventh rays.... These two kingdoms are at the point of the greatest tenuity and the greatest density, and are produced by the will and the organizing ability of the solar Deity. They embody the nebulous plan and the concretized plan.”<sup>30</sup>

Bolivia has been the first nation to legally protect the inherent worth of minerals, calling them “blessings.” To date, we have little experience in appreciating the mineral kingdom for its own esoteric role and contribution rather than as resources for human use and exploitation. Ordinances on the rights of nature are now in place in over thirty U.S. municipalities, including Pittsburgh.<sup>31</sup> However, the discussions about the negative impact of processes like fracking or tar sands oil extraction are being framed primarily in terms of impact on humans rather than on the mineral kingdom itself.

#### *Broadening Our Focus of Goodwill*

If we include the Earth and the other kingdoms in our loving determination to bring about right relations, then we have the responsibility to change our assumptions and how we act. We can start with a modification of the Tibetan’s definition of goodwill as being “goodness of heart, kindness in action, consideration for others, and mass action to promote [the] welfare of [all beings, human and nonhuman].”<sup>32</sup>

One component of this change is to reflect on the implications of hylozoism and the fact that we are all equally important parts of the One

Life. The animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms are not subordinate to us—they are not lesser beings aspiring to human status. Rather, they are entities profoundly affected by the choices we make. “When aspirants pray in the new Invocation: ‘Let Light descend on Earth’ they are invoking something that humanity will have to learn to handle.... All these planetary developments are attended by risks, and none more so than that of the absorption of light—on a world-wide scale—by humanity, with a subsequent reflex action on the three subhuman kingdoms. Nothing that affects humanity or that stimulates it to a forward-moving activity is without its inevitable effect upon the three lower kingdoms in nature. Forget not! Humanity is the macrocosm to this threefold lower microcosm.”<sup>33</sup>

Another component is to remember the Tibetan’s admonition that goodwill needs to be “active in expression and *in tangible deed* upon the physical plane.”<sup>34</sup> How do we act on this shift in consciousness? Perhaps we could begin by reflecting on the implications of the following inalienable and fundamental rights of all beings, human and nonhuman:

1. To exist, persist, maintain, regenerate and flourish within their usual environment or community free from imposed disruptions.
2. To be treated with respect as distinct, self-regulating and interrelated beings.
3. To live free from torture, cruel treatment, or servitude.
4. To have clean water as a source of life, clean air, and an absence of contamination, pollution and toxic or radioactive waste.

We, the New Group of World Servers, have the responsibility to channel and direct the energy of the Will-to-Good so that all living entities experience that sense of being appreciated and respected.

<sup>1</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology I* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing, 1936), 149.

<sup>2</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on White Magic* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing, 1934), 360.

<sup>3</sup> *Esoteric Psychology I*, 267.

<sup>4</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing, 1950), 80.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 78.

<sup>6</sup> See <http://earthjuris.org/about/>.

<sup>7</sup> See <http://www.nonhumanrightsproject.org/>.

<sup>8</sup> See <http://www.wildlawuk.org/index.html>.

<sup>9</sup> See <http://therightsofnature.org/>.

<sup>10</sup> *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle*, 182-183.

<sup>11</sup> See the 2001 Amsterdam Declaration on Global Change, signed by 1,500 scientists from over 100 countries (<http://www.essp.org/index.php?id=41>).

<sup>12</sup> Christina L. Madden, “Laws Gone Wild in Ecuador: Indigenous People and Ecosystems Gain Rights,” *Policy Innovations*, 2 October 2008 (<http://www.policyinnovations.org/ideas/briefings/data/000077>).

<sup>13</sup> Cecilia Jamasmie, “New Bolivian Law Poses Serious Challenges for Mining Companies,” *Mining.com*, 29 October 2012 (<http://www.mining.com/new-bolivian-law-poses-serious-challenges-for-mining-companies-34199/>).

<sup>14</sup> See the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth introduced at the United Nations in April 2010 (<http://climateandcapitalism.com/2010/04/27/universal-declaration-of-the-rights-of-mother-earth/>); Thalif Deen, “Global Campaign to Bestow Legal Rights on Mother Earth,” 24 May 2011 (<https://www.commondreams.org/headline/2011/05/24-7>).

<sup>15</sup> Juliette Jowit, “British Campaigner Urges UN to Accept ‘Ecocide’ as International Crime,” *The Guardian*, 9 April 2010 (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/apr/09/ecocide-crime-genocide-un-environmental-damage>); Polly Higgins, “Ecocide Was to Be the 5<sup>th</sup> Crime Against Peace,” *Common Ground*, August 2011 (<http://commonground.ca/2012/08/ecocide-crime-against-peace/>).

<sup>16</sup> “New Zealand’s Whanganui River Gets Personhood Status,” *Environmental News Service*, 13 September 2012 (<http://ensnewswire.com/2012/09/13/new-zealands-whanganui-river-gets-personhood-status/>).

<sup>17</sup> *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle*, 68.

<sup>18</sup> See the World Declaration on Great Primates at <http://www.greatapeproject.org/enUS/-oprojetogap/Declaracao/declaracao-mundial-dos-grandes-primatas>.

<sup>19</sup> Swiss Federal Ethics Committee for Non-Human Biotechnology, *The Dignity of Animals*, February 2001 ([http://www.ekah.admin.ch/fileadmin/ekahdateien/dokumentation/publikationen/EKAH\\_Wuerde\\_des\\_Tieres\\_0.08\\_-](http://www.ekah.admin.ch/fileadmin/ekahdateien/dokumentation/publikationen/EKAH_Wuerde_des_Tieres_0.08_-)

- e\_EV3.pdf). Leo Hickman, "The Lawyer Who Defends Animals," *The Guardian*, 05 March 2010. (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/-world/20-10/mar/05/lawyer-who-defends-animals>); "Life Looks Up for Swiss Animals," 23 April 2008, *Swissinfo.ch*, [http://www.swiss-info.ch/eng-/Home/Archive/Life\\_looks\\_up\\_for-Swiss-\\_animals.html?cid=6608378](http://www.swiss-info.ch/eng-/Home/Archive/Life_looks_up_for-Swiss-_animals.html?cid=6608378)).
- <sup>20</sup> See the Declaration of the Rights of Cetaceans: Whales and Dolphins, agreed in Helsinki on 22 May 2010 (<http://www.cetaceanrights.org>).
- <sup>21</sup> See Frans De Waal, "The Brains of the Animal Kingdom," *The Wall Street Journal*, 22 March 2013; Christine Dell'Amore, "Black Bears Can 'Count' as Well as Primates," *National Geographic Daily News*, 29 August 2012 (<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2012/08/120829-black-bears-cognition-animals-science/>).
- <sup>22</sup> *Esoteric Psychology I*, 241.
- <sup>23</sup> *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle*, 79.
- <sup>24</sup> *Esoteric Psychology I*, 217.
- <sup>25</sup> Swiss Federal Ethics Committee for Non-Human Biotechnology, *The Dignity of Living Beings with Regard to Plants: Moral Consideration of Plants for Their Own Sake*, April 2008. (<http://www.ekah.admin.ch/en/documentation/publications/index.html>); Carol Kae-suk Yoon, "Loyal to Its Roots," *The New York Times*, 10 June 2008; research at the International Laboratory of Plant Neurobiology (LINV) in Italy; Nicole Martinelli, "Smarty Plants: Inside the World's Only Plant Intelligence Lab," *The New Yorker*, 30 October 2007; Florianne Koechlin, "The Dignity of Plants," *Plant Signaling & Behavior*, January 2009, 4(1):78-79; Jane Christmas, "Plants Recognize Their Siblings, Biologists Discover," *Daily News* (<http://dailynews.mcmasters.ca/article-/plants-recognize-their-siblings-biologists-discover/>).
- <sup>26</sup> Swiss Federal Ethics Committee for Non-Human Biotechnology, *The Dignity of Living Beings with Regard to Plants*.
- <sup>27</sup> *Esoteric Psychology I*, 228.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid, 224.
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid, 229-230.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid, 217-218.
- <sup>31</sup> Mari Margil and Ben Price, "Pittsburgh Bans Natural Gas Drilling," *Yes! Magazine*, 16 November 2010 (<http://www.yesmagazine.-org/people-power/-pittsburgh-bans-natural-gas-drilling>); Amy Goodman with Denis Moynihan, "Get the Frack Out of Our Water: Shale-Shocked Citizens Fight Back," *Democracy Now!* 20 September 2012 ([http://www.-democracynow-.org/blog/2012/9/20/shale\\_shocked\\_citizens\\_fight\\_back](http://www.-democracynow-.org/blog/2012/9/20/shale_shocked_citizens_fight_back)).
- <sup>32</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1953), 667.
- <sup>33</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age, II* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing, 1955), 327.
- <sup>34</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing, 1957), 280.

## Book Review

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***Take Your Time: the Wisdom of Slowing Down,*** by Eknath Easwaran. Nilgiri Press, 2012. Paperback, 216 pages. List price US \$12.95.

If ever there was a book for our times, this is it. Who is not suffering from the stress of having too little time and too much to do? Who is not finding it difficult to live in the mindful present due to preoccupations with the past and worries about the future?

In the forward to the second edition of this book, the author's wife reveals that Eknath Easwaran, the founder of the Blue Mountain Center of Meditation, was truly able to live completely in the present. Based on his life experiences, he believed that the ability to live in the moment was a mental skill that could be learned, and he took Mahatma Gandhi as his model of an unhurried life, a man who clearly showed how it was possible to face pressure without losing peace of mind.

Easwaran moved to the United States from India in the 1960s, and began witnessing the seeds of hurry being sown in the American way of life. Then in the 1970s, he saw the first signs of the adverse health effects of this hurried lifestyle in an increase of heart disease and Type A behavior. This tendency to hurry and multitask has only been exacerbated in subsequent years by the proliferation of cell phones, smart phones and computers.

According to Easwaran, in our modern life we don't take enough time for human companionship. We depend too much on electronic forms of communication with others, which is not the sort of full attention and quality time that he says is ideal. The essentials of life are compassion, kindness, goodwill and forgiveness; they are fundamental to living as true human beings. So we are enjoined to make an effort every day to be fully present to the other people in our lives, to see people as people and not objects.

In this book, Easwaran makes use of his life experience to show us how we can ease off this killing pace. In his opinion, the most effective

way to accomplish a lot was to slow down the mind, to do one thing at a time while giving it our full attention and doing it to the best of our ability. He assures us that with a calm and focused mind, we not only accomplish more, but we do a better job.

Easwaran points out that a mind that is constantly pursuing what it likes and trying to avoid what it dislikes can never be at rest. So as we slow down and become mindful, we become more detached from likes and dislikes. He says that food is a good barometer of our state of mind: when the mind is under control we want food that is good. When we speed up, we eat junk. A slowed-down mind looks for nourishing food for each of the five senses.

Some of the techniques he gives for slowing down are to get up earlier and start the day with a calm, unhurried pace, thus setting the tone for the day. Next, establish priorities and don't try to do too much in one day. Easwaran observes that a truly creative mind has a long attention span, so we should try to read slowly and not consume books and periodicals like junk food. He also advises that we take time for relationships and meditation, and cultivate patience in all of life's circumstances. Everything becomes possible if we learn to slow down the mind, according to the author. Easwaran says that the mind is the key to everything, and in this regard he shares a quote from Meher Baba: "A fast mind is sick, a slow mind is sound, a still mind is divine."

The most practical tool for slowing the mind, according to Easwaran's experience, is using a particular mantra at various times during the day. Besides putting a brake on runaway thoughts, a mantra also detaches the mind from problems and fills the consciousness with a higher thoughtform.

Another tool recommended for mastering the thinking process is meditation. Since we are what we think, Easwaran says, we become what we meditate on. Seed thoughts dive deep into

our consciousness through repetition and, gradually, the ideals expressed in these seed thoughts become part of our character and conduct.

Easwaran frequently uses the world of cars and highways as analogies for the mind and thought process. In one such analogy he says that the speed bumps of life can't be managed safely at 70 miles per hour; we have to slow down to avoid injury.

As we learn to slow our thinking process, Easwaran claims that we will be able to see the mind and its thoughts with detachment and learn to adjust the speed of the mind just as we adjust the speed of a car. So when anger rises and begins to rev up the mind, we can put on the brakes and slow it down, thereby turning anger into compassion. If we observe the mind when it isn't speeding, Easwaran affirms that we will observe an interval between thoughts — a moment of "no mind." Learning to extend that interval is the secret of an unhurried mind, he says.

He suggests inserting a mantra between angry thoughts as a tool to apply the brakes and slow the mind down. In between the emotional/physical urge to flee or fight, he assures us that there is an opportunity to choose calm compassion.

In an appendix to this edition of the book, we are given Easwaran's Eight-Point Program for slowing the mind, as well as instructions on how to meditate, and how to use a mantra.

Easwaran assures us that by using these tools we will be able to see life as more connected and experience the life-changing properties of a heart at peace. In addition, he says that we will want to use our new resources—those of practical wisdom, passionate love and untiring energy—for the benefit of all.

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