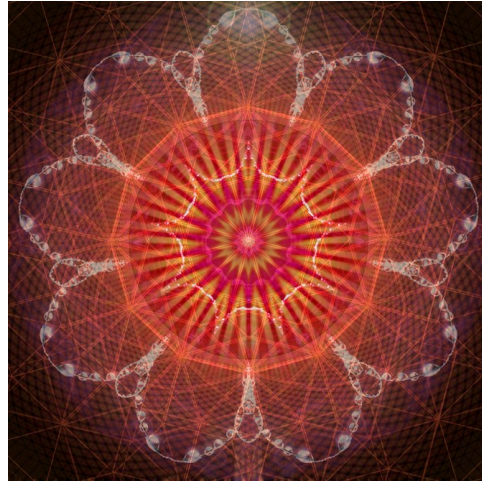


Summer 2017, Volume 13, Number 1



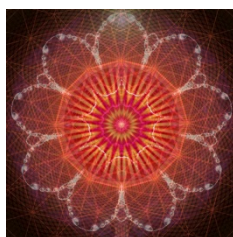
The Esoteric Quarterly

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

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



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

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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.

Esotericism: a Global Phenomenon and a Global Solution

The study of esotericism is generally organized under the separate rubrics of Western and Eastern esotericism. While such categorizations have value, it is necessary to recognize that esotericism is not only ahistorical; it is a cross-cultural, global phenomenon having its roots in deep antiquity. Almost every civilization, both past and present, possesses a timeless wisdom tradition; and virtually every religion or sect is syncretistic in some measure. One of the articles in this issue discusses a small syncretic Mid-Eastern esoteric sect whose influence is thought to have extended to Europe. Another article deals with the psychological applications of Djhwal Khul's teachings. Because the underlying features of esotericism are universal, it follows that the study and practice of esotericism can be part of a large-scale or global solution to humanity's problems as one of the articles in this issue seeks to demonstrate.

Our first offering from Zachary Lansdowne is part of a series on the seven ray causes of inharmony and disease. Lansdowne's focus in this article is on the Sixth Ray. He provides a practical elucidation of the abstruse Sixth Ray Stanza as given in *Esoteric Healing* in an effort to isolate the psychological roots of disease. The author begins by explaining that the great informing Lives of the planets within our solar system are relatively limited and imperfect. Hence, all that comes within the range of their influence must necessarily share in this imperfection, with inharmony and disease being the inevitable result. In individuals who are conditioned by the Sixth Ray, this limitation primarily expresses as the glamour of devotion, selfish desire, the problem of unconscious projection, fantasies, wrong relationships, and lack of true love. The article concludes by explaining how these deficiencies, once recognized, can lead to

the expression of compassion, right human relations and universal love.

Our next offering is from David Borsos who contributes the final article in a two-part series addressing the present global crisis and the disciple's response to the great challenge confronting the world today. The first article explored the "need" and represented an urgent "call to action." The second article presents a "practical plan of action," which necessitates the building of a bridge between the esoteric philosophy of Alice A. Bailey and academia in an effort to educate the wider public about the deep wisdom it contains. The article begins with an examination of the various terminology applied to Bailey's writings as a means of distinguishing her work from other esoteric traditions and worldviews. Borsos then explores several fields, including religious studies, philosophy and science, which might serve as possible "construction sites" for building bridges between Bailey's ideas and current academic research. The possible challenges that such an effort might face are also discussed.

The final full-length article in this issue examines the Druze, a secretive esoteric sect, first brought to the attention of the esoteric community by Helena Blavatsky, who studied with them and A. L. Rawson, a Druze initiate. The article begins by exploring both generally accepted and alternative views on the complex origins of the Druze people and their highly eclectic faith. The fundamental pillars of Druze philosophy, which include the pivotal concept of *Tawhīd*—a term that "combines absolute oneness of God and the unity of all creatures in the oneness of the One and only God" are considered, along with the Druze conceptions of creation, cycles of manifestation and revelation, the all-important role of the mind and reincarnation. A discussion on the relationship between the Druze, the Templars

and Masonry is included, along with a section on the Druze system of initiation.

In addition to the featured articles, we are pleased to offer a short article by John Nash on Harriette and Homer Curtis—two *Great Esotericists of the Past*—who created the “Order of Christian Mystics” and a system of spiritual alchemy that combined theosophy with traditional Christian doctrine.

This issue also contains a review for a new book from Kenneth Sørensen titled *The Soul of Psychosynthesis: The Seven Core Concepts*. The book is certain to be of interest to students of esoteric philosophy and professionals in the psychological field.

As is our custom, the *Quarterly* highlights the works of various artists and poets. This issue includes two spiritual poems—*Seekers* and *Cloth of Pure Gold*—from Dorothy Walters. Dr. Walters spent most of her early professional life as a professor of English literature and women’s studies. She underwent a major Kundalini awakening in 1981 (a phenomenon totally unfamiliar to her as well as to most of her contemporaries at the time). Since then she has devoted her life to researching and writing about this subject and to witnessing the unfolding of this process within herself as well as assisting others on a similar path. Her latest book of poetry is called “Some Kiss We Want.” Walters is currently completing a volume called “Kundalini Splendor: The Future as Ecstasy.” She writes a blog at “Kundalinisplendor.blogspot.com,” and is also on Facebook.

Our *Pictures of the Quarter* are from the 27 year-old Swedish artist, Emma Lindström. The artist describes her transcendent, celestially themed work as “continuously inspired by life itself and the energies that push everything forward and at the same time keep everything together. “Lindström sees the energy that flows through her “and on to the canvas as part of that grand force.” The creative process, says Lindström, “is like life itself, a balance between control and chance.” I don’t make too much planning ahead, but instead let the process itself guide me. This is as much a therapeutic process as it is a creative one.”

Lindström’s goal is to evoke an emotion that speaks to the viewers “inner self, to the light that resides within.” For more information on the artist and her exquisitely ethereal work visit: emmalindstrom.com, and her Facebook page: www.facebook.com/emmalindstromart/.

Donna M. Brown
Editor-in-Chief

Publication Policies

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

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

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

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

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

Poems of the Quarter by Dorothy Walters

Seekers

Each of us is searching for
a wise man or woman
to lead us
to present us
a scroll heavy with answers.

Some of us have climbed the mountain,
tracked the glacier's crust,
lain down in snow for days, years,
burning away to essence,
preparing.

Others have clung
to the underside of overhanging rock
until their fingers turned
to stone,
until they are riveted
like lead
to this thin edge of certainty.

And others wander, drifting like mist
Through valleys.

What is it we are seeking?
What will be do if we are brushed
By the lion's mane?

A Cloth of Fine Gold

You may think
that first lit flame
was the ultimate blaze,
the holy fire revealed.

What do you know
about furnaces?
this is a sun that returns
again and again, refining, igniting,
pouring your spirit
through a cloth of delicate gold
Until all dross is taken
and you are sweet as
clarified butter
in the god/goddesses' mouth.

Pictures of the Quarter by Emma Lindström



Louvaah 6 | by Emma Lindström | 2016



Louvaah I | by Emma Lindström | 2016



Akaleyi | by Emma Lindström | 2015

Quotes of the Quarter

Group work in dissipating world glamour must be handled . . . by those who are working at the dissipation of glamour in their own lives. . . . The majority of those so working are sixth ray aspirants—those who have sixth ray personalities or whose soul ray is the sixth, plus those on all rays who have powerful sixth ray astral vehicles. These make the most effective workers in the group but are subject to one major difficulty. In spite of aspiration and good intention, they are seldom aware of the glammers which control them. It is exceedingly hard to induce the sixth ray aspirant to admit that he is held by a glamour, particularly when it is glamour of spiritual connotation and of a very high order. In their case, the glamour is enhanced by the energy of devotion which stiffens it and brings in a quality which makes it most difficult to penetrate. Their complete assurance proves a serious obstacle to clear-sighted work because that has all to go before the work of dissipation can be carried forward successfully.

Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem* (reprint 1978; New York: Lucis Trust, 1950), 221-222.

Projections change the world into the replica of one's own unknown face.... The best political, social, and spiritual work we can do is to withdraw the projection of our shadow on to others.

Carl G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* (reprint 1969; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1934).

The alchemists said the magic formula for enlightenment was *Visita Inferiora Terrae Rectificando Invenies Occultum Lapidem*, or "Seek out the lower reaches of the earth, perfect them, and you will find the hidden stone"—the treasured philosopher's stone. Jungian psychologists might describe the process this way: Engage in a relationship with

the blind and sickly parts of yourself, perfect them, and you will awaken your hidden divinity.

As quoted in Robert Brezny's
Astrological Newsletter,
<http://www.freewillastrology.com/horoscopes/20150723.html>.

The unconscious sends all sorts of vapors, odd beings, terrors, and deluding images up into the mind; for the human kingdom, beneath the floor of the comparatively neat little dwelling that we call our consciousness, goes down into unsuspected Aladdin caves. There not only jewels but also dangerous jinn abide: the inconvenient or resisted psychological powers that we have not thought or dared to integrate into our lives.

Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (Novato, CA: New World Library, 2008), 74.

The present fluid situation in the world is partly the result of our inability to achieve a balanced development between the unique scientific and technological breakthrough of the twentieth and the growth of human consciousness. Consequently, the human species has been brought to the verge of self-destruction, and it is now an open question as to whether or not man will be able to survive his own technological ingenuity. In such a situation, nothing is more important than the search for viable alternatives for the human race to live in global harmony, with norms of its own, based on a holistic and evolutionary worldview. It is only through actualizing the total potentiality of the human mind and enlarging our areas of awareness that we will be able to contain societal and psychological conflict, which threaten to explode as we move toward the twenty-first century.

Kishore Gandhi, *The Evolution of Consciousness* (New York, Paragon House, 1983), ix.

The realization that there may in fact be a relevance to the study of western esotericism has recently been gaining ground in academic circles. The very idea of studying esotericism seriously and from a neutral perspective would have sounded bizarre and potentially dangerous to most academics no more than a few decades ago, and such reactions are still not uncommon today. It has become more and more apparent, however, that the traditional neglect of western esotericism as a domain of historical inquiry has led to serious gaps in our knowledge, with predictably negative effects upon the understanding of our own cultural heritage. The same point may obviously be formulated in a positive manner as well: it has become clear that serious research into western esoteric currents may often throw a fresh new light on old questions, and may occasionally turn out to be the “missing link” which makes a solution possible at last.

Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *Some Remarks on the Study of Western Esotericism*,
www.esoteric.msu.edu/Hanegraaff.html.

Our task together is to envision a whole new place, a whole new space and role for spirituality in higher education, not as an isolated enterprise on the margins of the academy, nor as a new form of institutional social control, but as an essential element of the larger task of reorienting our institutions of higher learning to respond more adequately to the challenges the world presents us now.

Diana Chapman Walsh, Opening remarks to the *Education as Transformation National Gathering*, Wellesley College, Sept. 1998.

Tawhid [the Oneness of God] itself, according to the Druze, is a process of acquisition of knowledge and growth in wisdom through which human beings evolve spiritually, ever closer to the Divine. The process began in the dim twilight of existence and will continue to the end of time. Tawhid is ahistorical in that it is not subject to a definite

beginning in time as we know it nor limited to a finite end. It does not follow a linear trajectory such as starting with birth and ending with death. The course is rather curved such that the beginning and the end are coordinates of one continuous process of cyclical manifestations. Death is no longer the end of one's life but a simple transition and renewal. Evolution and progress are obligatory features of this cyclic process; otherwise, it becomes nothing more than repetition within a closed circle.

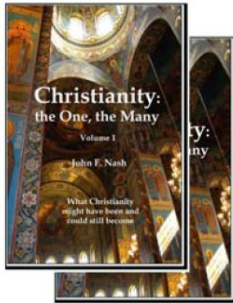
Anis Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid* (Syracuse: NY: Syracuse University Press, 2006), synopsis.

In the Druze system there is no room for a personal deity, unless a portion of the divine impersonal and abstract wisdom incarnated itself into a mortal man. The deific principle with them is the essence of all Life, the All, and as impersonal as the Parabrahm of the Vedântins, or the Nirvana State of the Buddhist, ever invisible, all pervading and incomprehensible, to be known through occasional incarnations of its spirit in human form. These ten incarnations or human avatars... are called the Temples of al-Tamîmî (Universal Spirit.)

Helena Blavatsky, *The Lamas and the Druze*, Collected Writings Vol. 3 (Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1966) 175.

The Druze discredit the fable of Adam and Eve, and say that those who first ate of the forbidden fruit and thus became “Elohim” were Enoch or Hermes (the supposed father or Masonry), and Seth or Sat-an, the father or secret wisdom and learning, whose abode, they say, is now in the planet Mercury, and whom the Christians were kind enough to convert into a chief devil (the fallen Angel). Their evil one is an abstract principle, and called the “Rival.”

Great Theosophists, “The Druzes of Mount Lebanon” *Theosophy* Vol. 26, No. 1, (November 1937), 187.



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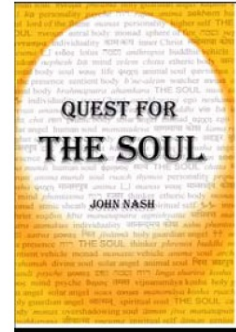
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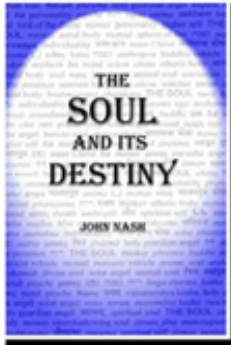
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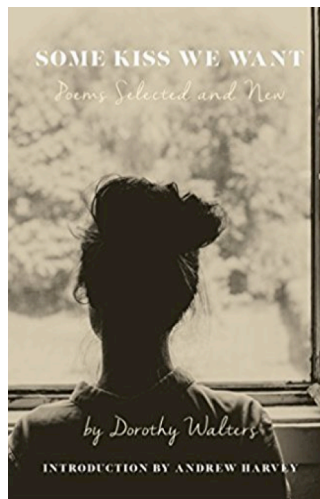


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The Sixth-Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease

Zachary F. Lansdowne

Abstract

The *seven rays* denote seven primary differentiations of energy, and doctrines on the seven rays have been expounded by various theosophical writers. Alice Bailey, in her book *Esoteric Healing*, presents seven symbolic stanzas that portray “The Seven Ray Causes of Inharmony and Disease,” but with very little explanation. She acknowledges that these stanzas are “abstruse and difficult,” but says that their comprehension leads to “the isolation of the seven psychological causes of disease, inherent in the substance of all forms in this world cycle.” This series of articles elucidates the practical significance of these seven stanzas. The present article, which is the second in the series, elucidates the significance of the stanza that portrays the sixth-ray cause of inharmony and disease. In Bailey’s words, “this sixth ray force ... is responsible for much of the ills and diseases of humanity which are based upon the misuse of the mission and function of sex.”

The Seven Rays

The *seven rays* are mentioned in both the ancient Hindu *Rig Veda* and modern Theosophy,¹ and the following definition is often used: “A ray is but a name for a particular force or type of energy, with the emphasis upon the quality which that force exhibits and not upon the form aspect which it creates.”² Alice Bailey (1880 – 1949), a member of the Theosophical Society before leaving it to pursue her own activities, says, “Every unit of the human race is on some one of the seven rays,”³ so the seven rays provide a way of characterizing human beings according to the qualities that they exhibit. She also says, “We must bear in mind that the ... synthetic characteristic of each of the rays is denoted by the ray name,”⁴ and gives the following ray names:

Ray I—Will or Power

Ray II—Love-Wisdom

Ray III—Active Intelligence or Adaptability

Ray IV—Harmony, Beauty, Art

Ray V—Concrete Knowledge or Science

Ray VI—Devotion or Idealism

Ray VII—Ceremonial Order or Magic.⁵

Bailey provides this definition, “When we speak of ray energy we are in reality considering the quality and the will-purpose aspect of a certain great Life to Whom we give the name ‘Lord of a Ray.’”⁶ She considers the Lords of the Seven Rays to be “The seven Spirits which are before his throne,” as rendered in Revelation 1:4,⁷ and gives this analysis:

The seven Spirits, we are told in the Scriptures of the world, are “before the Throne of God”; this signifies that They are not yet in a position to mount the Throne, symbolically speaking, owing to the fact that They have not yet achieved complete divine expression.⁸

Bailey concludes that the seven rays, which are the emanations from the Lords of the Seven Rays, must be imperfect:

It will be apparent to you that these streams of force, emanating from the Lords of the Seven Rays, are coloured, therefore, and “tainted”—if I may use such a word—by

About the Author

Zachary F. Lansdowne, Ph.D., who served as President of the Theosophical Society in Boston, has been a frequent contributor to *The Esoteric Quarterly*. His book *The Revelation of Saint John*, which provides a verse-by-verse analysis of the entire *Revelation*, was reviewed in the Fall 2006 issue. He can be reached at: zflansdowne@gmail.com.

the limitations of these same great Beings; They are Gods, from our point of view, but in reality, Gods in the making, even though much nearer solar divinity than the most advanced human being is near to planetary divinity. They are the “imperfect Gods” spoken of in *The Secret Doctrine* and are the planetary Logoi of the sacred and non-sacred planets.⁹

Helena Blavatsky (1831 – 1891), founder of the Theosophical Society, expresses a similar notion:

The millions upon millions of imperfect works found in Nature testify loudly that they are the products of finite, conditioned beings—though the latter were and are Dhyan-Chohans, Archangels, or whatever else they may be named. In short, these imperfect works are the unfinished production of evolution, under the guidance of the imperfect Gods.¹⁰

Blavatsky also writes, “There are seven chief groups of such Dhyan Chohans, which groups will be found and recognised in every religion, for they are the primeval SEVEN Rays,”¹¹ so her preceding quotation has this implication: the millions of imperfect works found in nature testify loudly to the imperfection of the seven rays. Therefore every human being also shares in that imperfection by being on some one of the seven rays.

The Seven Stanzas

Bailey’s book *Esoteric Healing*, which appears as the fourth volume in a five-volume series entitled *A Treatise on the Seven Rays*, addresses the various ways that the topic of healing is related to the seven rays. In particular, this book gives seven symbolic stanzas, one for each ray, that portray “The Seven Ray Causes of Inharmony and Disease.”¹² Bailey introduces these stanzas with the following comment:

If the great informing Lives of the planets within our solar system are imperfect, the effect of this imperfection must inevitably affect Their planetary creations, Their bodies of manifestation, and thus introduce a karmic condition over which the

individual human being has absolutely no control, but within which he moves and which he shares. It is obviously impossible for me to elucidate this theme. All I can do or am permitted to do is to give you seven stanzas from one of the most ancient volumes in the world; it deals with the seven ray causes of imperfections in our planetary manifestations.¹³

She also describes the comprehension that students might obtain from studying these stanzas:

The comprehension of the seven stanzas which I now propose to give you will lead eventually to the isolation of the seven psychological causes of disease, inherent in the substance of all forms in this world cycle, because all forms are infused with the life energy of the “imperfect Gods.”¹⁴

The purpose of this series of articles is to explain these stanzas. Even though *Esoteric Healing* was first published in 1953, and even though its seven stanzas are said to embody revelatory information, no publicized effort seems to have been made, prior to this series of articles, to explain any of these stanzas. A reason for this absence is that each stanza consists of very enigmatic sentences. Bailey herself acknowledges, “These are abstruse and difficult concepts, but they should be pondered upon, and deep reflection will lead to understanding.”¹⁵

The Sixth-Ray Stanza

The preceding article in this series explains how the third-ray stanza portrays the imperfections of that ray.¹⁶ The present article considers the sixth-ray stanza:

The Great One loved Himself in others and in all forms. On every hand, He saw objects of His devotion and ever they proved to be Himself. Into these others He ever poured Himself, asking response and never getting it. Surely and with certainty the outlines of the forms so loved were lost, grew dim and disappeared. The objects of His love slowly faded out. Only a world of shadows, of mist and fog remain. And as He looked upon Himself, He said: Lord of

Glamour, that am I, and the Angel of Bewilderment. Naught is clear to me. I love yet all seems wrong! I know that love is right and the spirit of the universe. What then is wrong?¹⁷

Bailey's entire commentary on the sixth-ray stanza is as follows:

Curiously enough, it is the potency of this sixth ray force (as it feeds desire) which is responsible for much of the ills and diseases of humanity which are based upon the misuse of the mission and function of sex. Desire, bewilderment, weakness, perversions and the one-pointed development of sexual and other satisfactions grow out of the misuse of this energy. The bewilderment growing out of desire leads to a violently demanded satisfaction and the taking of those steps—some right and some wrong—which lead to satisfaction. The results cover a wide field, all the way from sadistic cruelty and lust to those marriages which are based on physical desire and to those conditions which lead to the many forms of sexual disease. A clue to this whole world-wide problem lies in the words of an ancient writing which says that “the imperfection of the Lord of the Sixth Ray opened the door to an erroneous marriage between the poles.”¹⁸

The sixth-ray stanza consists of eleven symbolic sentences, and the purpose of this article is to elucidate their practical significance. Each sentence is considered separately and is repeated in bold print.

1. The Great One loved Himself in others and in all forms.

Bailey comments, “the stanzas ... indicate the quality of the descending energies and the taints which these energies carry and convey to all forms which are vitalised by the life of our planetary Logos.”¹⁹ Although this comment suggests that the stanzas are applicable to “all forms” on the planet, our commentary is concerned only with the application to human beings. In the first sentence of the sixth-ray stanza, we identify “The Great One” as *people who are on the sixth ray*, because our commentary

shows that this identification yields significances that are consistent across all sentences of the stanza.

Who are the people on the sixth ray? Bailey lists them as follows, “Many Christian people. Fanatics. Numbers of earnest Churchmen of all the world religions,”²⁰ and comments,

This is called the ray of devotion. The man who is on this ray is full of religious instincts and impulses, and of intense personal feeling; nothing is taken equably. Everything, in his eyes, is either perfect or intolerable; his friends are angels, his enemies are very much the reverse; his view, in both cases, is formed not on the intrinsic merits of either class, but on the way the persons appeal to him, or on the sympathy or lack of sympathy which they shew to his favourite idols, whether these be concrete or abstract, for he is full of devotion, it may be to a person, or it may be to a cause.²¹

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 – 1882), a popular American essayist and poet, describes the general principle that the first sentence seems to convey: “Since everything in nature answers to a moral power, if any phenomenon remains brute and dark, it is that the corresponding faculty in the observer is not yet active.”²²

Bailey clarifies the same principle:

We see what we are ourselves; we become aware of that in other forms which is developed in ourselves. We fail to see aspects of life because as yet in ourselves, those aspects are undeveloped and latent. To illustrate: we fail to see the divine in our brother because as yet the divine in ourselves is uncontacted and unknown; the form aspect and its limitations are developed in us and the soul is so hidden that we only become aware of the form of our brother, and fail to see his soul. The moment we contact our own soul and live by its light we see the soul of our brother, become aware of his light and our entire approach to him is changed.²³

The above quotation mentions both “form,” which is used as a synonym for personality,²⁴ and “soul.” The *personality*, which is regarded

as the lower self, consists of the physical body, emotional body, and mental body.²⁵ In contrast, the *soul*, which is regarded as the higher self,²⁶ denotes “the inner divinity” in a human being.²⁷ The quotation’s last sentence mentions the ability to “see the soul of our brother.” Here, the word “see” denotes intuitive perception.²⁸ According to Emerson’s and Bailey’s quotations, given above, one could intuitively perceive the soul in other people, only if one were sensitive to it in oneself.

Elsewhere Bailey mentions the ability to contact the soul within all forms:

The spiritual man sees behind the forms of all aspects of divine expression. He becomes aware of the light of the world, and contacts the soul within all forms.²⁹

In the stanza’s first sentence, let us suppose that “Himself” denotes the soul, because it is a person’s higher self. Moreover, this denotation satisfies the rest of the sentence, because the preceding quotations indicate that the soul can be contacted “in others and in all forms.” Thus the sentence has this preliminary meaning: Sixth-ray people love to perceive intuitively the soul, which is their higher self, in other people and in all forms.

A Course in Miracles (ACIM), a modern system of spiritual psychology, has gained wide acceptance in the esoteric community since its publication in 1976. For example, Richard Smoley, who is the editor of *Quest*, which is the journal of the Theosophical Society in America, mentions, “*A Course in Miracles*, that great monument of contemporary esoteric Christianity”;³⁰ and Brad Olsen, the author of *Modern Esoteric*, considers “the modern metaphysical thought system *A Course in Miracles*” to be “among the best sources of esoteric personal growth material available.”³¹ This article shows that *ACIM* matches well with various sentences in the sixth-ray stanza, thereby indicating that *ACIM* embodies sixth-ray teaching.

The verb *love* can mean, “To like or desire enthusiastically.”³² Why would one like to perceive intuitively the soul in other people and in all forms? *ACIM* speaks of “the fundamental law of sharing, by which you give what you value in order to keep it in your mind.”³³ Con-

sequently, the first sentence appears to have this meaning: *Sixth-ray people like to perceive intuitively the soul, which is their higher self, in other people and in all forms, because that is how they keep their sensitivity to the soul in their minds.* This meaning illustrates the sixth-ray characteristic that Bailey calls, “the capacity to see the ideal reality lying behind the form.”³⁴

2. On every hand, He saw objects of His devotion and ever they proved to be Himself.

The first sentence portrays sixth-ray people as looking past outer forms and seeing only the soul. The second sentence, however, seems to portray these people as looking at outer forms, because they are seeing objects “on every hand,” which means “on all sides” or “in all directions.”³⁵ Thus a shift in consciousness appears to have taken place between the first and second sentences: a shift from seeing the soul to seeing outer forms.

Lucille Cedercrans (1921 – 1984), who presented a teaching called the “New Thought-form Presentation of the Wisdom,” seems to describe the two stages portrayed by the first and second sentences:

In order for the Overshadowing Spiritual Soul to communicate love to the incarnate consciousness, it must move as the consciousness of love down that thread, keeping itself free of form, and into the consciousness within the brain. After the consciousness within the brain has been impressed by that consciousness of love, then it will put such love into form in order to express it in the world of the personality.

At one time, both in the overshadowing and the incarnate sense, you have all had this love and have expressed it. Since that time you have become so involved with form and established so many barriers that on the most part you have lost the sensitivity, insofar as the incarnate consciousness is concerned, to this love.³⁶

Accordingly, at one time sixth-ray people were sensitive to the soul, as portrayed in the first sentence; but they lost their sensitivity through their involvement with form, as portrayed in

the second sentence. Yet the second sentence indicates that they still perceive themselves in other people. What, then, do they perceive?

Our analysis of the second sentence uses the psychological concept of *projection*, which Todd Feinberg defines as follows:

In psychoanalytic terms, projection is an unconscious process wherein unacceptable thoughts, feelings, or motivations are *rejected* and *projected* outside of the self, typically onto other persons. In this fashion, one's own thoughts and feelings do not become conscious self-attributes, but are experienced as aspects of the external world.³⁷

Bailey indicates that projection is a problem faced by disciples: "An individual disciple ... knows too that at present they [other disciples] cannot help but see in him and even in their Master the very qualities which are dominating them. For, my brother, we see in others what is in us, even when it is not there at all or to the same extent."³⁸

Thus, in the second sentence, "objects of His devotion" are one's own negative thoughts, feelings, or motivations that one projects onto other people. Accordingly, the phrase, "He saw objects of His devotion and ever they proved to be Himself," is given this meaning: they see negative qualities in other people, and those qualities always prove to be their own.

The noun *devotion* can mean "profound dedication."³⁹ Why would one have profound dedication to seeing one's negative qualities in other people? Carl Jung (1875 – 1961), founder of analytic psychology, gives this answer: "When he projects negative qualities and therefore hates and loathes the object, he has to discover that he is projecting his own inferior side, his shadow, as it were, because he prefers to have an optimistic and one-sided image of himself."⁴⁰ In other words, one uses projection to get rid of negative qualities from one's mind.

When using projection in this way, however, one is involved in self-deception, as *ACIM* explains:

The ... error is the idea that you can get rid of something you do not want by giving it

away. Giving it is how you *keep* it. The belief that by seeing it outside you have excluded it from within is a complete distortion of the power of extension. That is why those who project are vigilant for their own safety. They are afraid that their projections will return and hurt them. Believing they have blotted their projections from their own minds, they also believe their projections are trying to creep back in. Since the projections have not left their minds, they are forced to engage in constant activity in order not to recognize this.⁴¹

Consequently, the second sentence is given this meaning: *After losing their sensitivity to the soul, they are dedicated to seeing negative qualities in other people, and those qualities always prove to be their own, because that is how they get rid of what they do not want from their minds.* This meaning is illustrated by the sixth-ray characteristic that Bailey calls, "Suspicion of people's motives."⁴²

Bailey's earlier commentary on the sixth-ray stanza seems to point to the progression from the first sentence to the second sentence:

A clue to this whole world-wide problem lies in the words of an ancient writing which says that "the imperfection of the Lord of the Sixth Ray opened the door to an erroneous marriage between the poles."⁴³

In other words, because of the imperfection of the Lord of the Sixth Ray, a sixth-ray person loses his or her sensitivity to the soul; this loss opens the door to his or her projecting something unwanted onto someone else, thereby yielding an erroneous relationship, or marriage, between the two persons, or poles.

3. Into these others He ever poured Himself, asking response and never getting it.

In the stage portrayed by the second sentence, sixth-ray people use erroneous relationships to get rid of what they do not want from their minds. In the stage portrayed by the third sentence, these people use a second kind of erroneous relationship to gain what they do want. *ACIM* employs the term *special relationship* to denote this second kind of relationship: "the special relationship, born of the hidden wish

for special love from God, ... is the renunciation of the Love of God, and the attempt to secure for the self the specialness that He denied.”⁴⁴

As *ACIM* explains, the special relationship presupposes identification with the physical body and has a ritualistic nature:

The special relationship is totally meaningless without a body. If you value it, you must also value the body. And what you value you will keep. The special relationship is a device for limiting your self to a body, and for limiting your perception of others to theirs.⁴⁵

Whenever any form of special relationship tempts you to seek for love in ritual, remember love is content, and not form of any kind. The special relationship is a ritual of form, aimed at raising the form to take the place of God at the expense of content. There is no meaning in the form, and there will never be.⁴⁶

Given its identification with the physical body and its ritualistic nature, the special relationship places emphasis on physical activities that follow a prescribed pattern and order.

What is the meaning of “these others” in the third sentence? The second sentence mentions “objects of His devotion” that are projections of negative qualities. Consequently, “these others” must be other objects of devotion, but objects of a different kind. The preceding quotation says that the “special relationship tempts you to seek for love in ritual,” so “these others” are taken to be the rituals of special love that one is tempted to seek.

Let us introduce some additional terminology before considering the rest of the third sentence. According to various esoteric traditions, the physical body of a human being has both

dense and subtle portions. The *dense physical body* contains the muscles, bones, and glands. The *subtle physical body* is called the vital or etheric body in Theosophy;⁴⁷ “golden bowl” in the Bible (Ecclesiastes 12:6);⁴⁸ and *prana mayakosha*, a Sanskrit name, in Hinduism.⁴⁹

If the great informing Lives of our solar system are imperfect, the effect of this imperfection must inevitably affect Their planetary creations, Their bodies of manifestation, and thus introduce a karmic condition over which the individual human being has absolutely no control, but within which he moves and which he shares.

What is the meaning of “He ever poured Himself”? To *pour* means, “to cause (a liquid) to flow in a steady stream.”⁵⁰ Bailey mentions “the waters of desire,”⁵¹ thereby indicating that desire acts like liquid, and also mentions “desire which ... pours into the vital body,”⁵² thereby indicating that desire can act like liquid being poured. Accordingly, “He ever poured Him-

self” is construed as the pouring of desire, but how is that done?

Bailey says, “The use of the imagination ... brings in the realm of desire.”⁵³ Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895 – 1986), an Indian speaker and writer on philosophical and spiritual subjects, describes how the imagination gives rise to desire:

We are asking: what is the source of desire? We must be very truthful in this, very honest, for desire is very, very deceptive, very subtle, unless we understand the root of it ... When you see something, the seeing brings about a response. You see a green shirt, or a green dress, the seeing awakens the response. Then contact takes place. Then from contact thought creates the image of you in that shirt or dress, then the desire arises. Or you see a car in the road, it has nice lines, it is highly polished and there is plenty of power behind it. Then you go around it, examine the engine. Then thought creates the image of you getting into the car and starting the engine, putting your foot down and driving it. So does desire begin and the source of desire is thought creating the image, up to that point

there is no desire. There are the sensory responses, which are normal, but then thought creates the image and from that moment desire begins.⁵⁴

A *fantasy* is “a series of pleasing mental images, usually serving to fulfill a need not gratified in reality,”⁵⁵ so the first part of the third sentence could be rendered in this way: Sixth-ray people create fantasies of themselves being involved with their selected rituals of special love and thereby attach their desires to these rituals. Bailey describes the result: “Sixth ray people need handling with care, for they are too one pointed and too full of personal desire.”⁵⁶

What is the meaning of the phrase, “asking response”? Bailey sometimes uses related words—*asked* and *responded*—in the context of asking someone to respond, such as in this example:

I have often asked for your cooperation and your help in world service. Some have responded and given help.⁵⁷

Consequently, the phrase, “asking response,” indicates that the portrayed people are asking for responses from their partners in their special relationships. In particular, they are asking their partners to follow their desired rituals of special love.

The third sentence’s final phrase is, “and never getting it.” As *ACIM* explains, by seeking special love from a special partner, one always brings guilt, or self-condemnation, into the relationship:

If you seek to separate out certain aspects of the totality and look to them to meet your imagined needs, you are attempting to use separation to save you. How, then, could guilt not enter? For separation is the source of guilt, and to appeal to it for salvation is to believe you are alone. To be alone is to be guilty.⁵⁸

ACIM concludes,

There is no dream of specialness, however hidden or disguised the form, however lovely it may seem to be, however much it

delicately offers the hope of peace and the escape from pain, in which you suffer not your condemnation.⁵⁹

Thus the third sentence is given this meaning: *They create fantasies of themselves being involved with their selected rituals of special love and thereby attach their desires to these rituals; they then ask their partners to follow their desired rituals, expecting that these rituals provide salvation from pain but getting instead their own self-condemnation.* This meaning illustrates the sixth-ray characteristic that Bailey calls, “Emotional devotion and bewildered idealism.”⁶⁰

Bailey’s earlier commentary on the sixth-ray stanza provides this result of the third sentence:

Curiously enough, it is the potency of this sixth ray force (as it feeds desire) which is responsible for much of the ills and diseases of humanity which are based upon the misuse of the mission and function of sex. Desire, bewilderment, weakness, perversions and the one-pointed development of sexual and other satisfactions grow out of the misuse of this energy.

According to the third sentence, sixth-ray people create fantasies that attach their desires to their selected rituals of special love, so they are responsible for what the above quotation calls, “Desire, bewilderment, weakness, perversions and the one-pointed development of sexual and other satisfactions.” Let us consider that list: one creates *sexual desire* by attaching one’s desire to sexual rituals of special love; one becomes *bewildered* when one expects salvation from pain, via rituals of special love, but never getting it; one reinforces one’s sense of *weakness* by seeking salvation via these rituals, because one is looking for salvation from outside one’s self; one creates *perversions* by attaching one’s desire to perverted rituals of special love; and one engages in *one-pointed development of sexual satisfaction* when one compensates for habituation, which is the decline in responsiveness to a stimulus due to repeated exposure,⁶¹ by attaching one’s desire to increasingly more extravagant sexual rituals of special love.

4. Surely and with certainty the outlines of the forms so loved were lost, grew dim and disappeared.

What is the meaning of “outlines” in the fourth sentence? Elsewhere Bailey writes, “The clear cut outlines cannot be perceived, and wraiths and shadows, gloomy spaces and areas full of darkness as yet confuse his vision.”⁶² In this quotation, seeing “outlines” signifies clear perception. Given that “the forms so loved” denote the partners discussed previously, a preliminary meaning of the fourth sentence is as follows: Surely and with certainty their clear perception of their partners is lost, grows dim, and disappears.

In the fourth sentence, the partners are designated as “the forms so loved,” which indicates that the sixth-ray people are at the stage in which they think of their partners as acting like forms, or figures, in a pattern of thought. In particular, they are building thought-forms of their partners following their rituals of special love. Bailey describes two ways by which these thought-forms can distort perception:

1. By growing so potent on the mental plane that the man falls a victim to the thing he has created. This is the “*idée fixe*” of the psychiatrist; the obsession which drives to lunacy; the one-pointed line of thought which eventually terrorises its creator.
2. By multiplying so fast that the mental aura of the man becomes like unto a thick and dense cloud, through which the light of the soul must fail to penetrate, and through which the love of human beings, the lovely and beautiful and comforting activities of nature and of life in the three worlds equally fail to pierce. The man is smothered, is suffocated by his own thought-forms, and succumbs to the miasma which he himself has engendered.⁶³

ACIM describes how such thought-forms distort the perception of the partners:

No one is seen complete. The body is emphasized, with special emphasis on certain parts, and used as the standard for comparison of acceptance or rejection for acting out a special form of fear.⁶⁴

By creating fantasies of being involved with the previously mentioned thought-forms, the portrayed people engender desires for them. Bailey characterizes the distorting effect: “This glamorous desire is like a dense widely distributed fog, cutting off the vision of truth, and distorting a very large number of human values.”⁶⁵

Bailey defines her use of the Sanskrit term *maya*,

The forces ... under the term *maya* are those uncontrolled energies, those undirected impulses which ... sweep a man into wrong activity and surround him with a whirlpool of effects and of conditions in which he is entirely helpless,⁶⁶

and describes the process by which desire creates *maya*:

Average man is impulsed by desire which is an energy, emanating from world desire and which—developing or organising the astral body—generates desire-energy. It pours into the vital body and galvanises physical man into those activities which will lead to the satisfaction of desire.⁶⁷

Here, “astral” is used as a synonym for emotional.⁶⁸ She also describes how *maya* upholds the rightness of one’s controlling mental and emotional forces but without consideration of the needs of anyone else:

When a man is under the control of physical, astral and mental forces, he is convinced at the time that they are, for him, right forces. Herein lies the problem of *maya*.⁶⁹

If, in the fourth sentence, “were lost,” “grew dim,” and “disappeared” signified the distorting effects of thought-forms, desires, and *maya*, respectively, the sentence would have this meaning: *Surely and with certainty their clear perception of their partners becomes distorted in three ways: a) such perception is lost as they build thought-forms of their partners following their rituals of special love, which emphasize certain bodily parts rather than the complete individual; b) such perception grows dim as they create fantasies of being involved with these thought-*

forms, which engender desires that act like a dense widely distributed fog; and c) such perception disappears as their desires galvanize vital forces that compulsively act out their fantasies, but without consideration of their partners' needs. This meaning illustrates the sixth-ray characteristic that Bailey calls, "Short sighted blindness."⁷⁰

Bailey's earlier commentary on the sixth-ray stanza provides this result of the fourth sentence:

The bewilderment growing out of desire leads to a violently demanded satisfaction and the taking of those steps—some right and some wrong—which lead to satisfaction. The results cover a wide field, all the way from sadistic cruelty and lust to those marriages which are based on physical desire and to those conditions which lead to the many forms of sexual disease.

In contrast, the third sentence portrays people who are asking rather than demanding: "they then ask their partners to follow their desired rituals." When these people move from the stage depicted in the third sentence, during which they show respect for the partners, to that depicted in the fourth sentence, their so-called love no longer considers the needs of their partners.

5. *The objects of His love slowly faded out.*

The fourth sentence portrays how one's thought-forms, desires, and maya distort one's clear perception of one's partners in special relationships. The fifth sentence seems to extrapolate that theme: given that "the objects of His love" refer to one's partners, "slowly faded out" seems to portray the slow fading out of one's *entire* perception of them, not just one's clear perception. But why would one lose one's entire perception of one's partners? The answer is that one slowly builds an obscuring barrier between oneself and one's partners: this barrier is what *ACIM* calls "the darkness of the past."⁷¹

ACIM describes how the darkness of the past obscures the sight of the present:

You consider it "natural" to use your past experience as the reference point from

which to judge the present. Yet this is *unnatural* because it is delusional. When you have learned to look on everyone with no reference at all to the past, either his or yours as you perceived it, you will be able to learn from what you see *now*. For the past can cast no shadow to darken the present, *unless you are afraid of light*. And only if you are would you choose to bring darkness with you, and by holding it in your mind, see it as a dark cloud that shrouds your brothers and conceals their reality from your sight.⁷²

Why do people become preoccupied with the past? As *ACIM* explains, every special relationship is based on the past:

It is impossible to let the past go without relinquishing the special relationship. For the special relationship is an attempt to re-enact the past and change it. Imagined slights, remembered pain, past disappointments, perceived injustices and deprivations all enter into the special relationship, which becomes a way in which you seek to restore your wounded self-esteem. What basis would you have for choosing a special partner without the past? Every such choice is made because of something "evil" in the past to which you cling, and for which must someone else atone.⁷³

Moreover, *ACIM* says,

There is no fantasy that does not contain the dream of retribution for the past. Would you act out the dream, or let it go?⁷⁴

As *ACIM* also explains, each fantasy of special love leads to a more extravagant one, thereby increasing the preoccupation with the past:

You who have spent your life in bringing truth to illusion, reality to fantasy, have walked the way of dreams. For you have gone from waking to sleeping, and on and on to a yet deeper sleep. Each dream has led to other dreams, and every fantasy that seemed to bring a light into the darkness but made the darkness deeper. Your goal was darkness, in which no ray of light could enter. And you sought a blackness so

complete that you could hide from truth forever, in complete insanity.⁷⁵

The above quotation mentions “insanity.” In psychology, a *negative hallucination* is “the experience of being unable to visualize or see a person or object when directly looking at it.”⁷⁶ According to this definition, the portrayed people are slowly becoming insane, in the sense of having negative hallucinations, because they are increasingly looking at the darkness of the past rather than the reality of the present.

Consequently, the fifth sentence seems to have this meaning: *They increasingly use past experience as the reference point from which to judge the present, so the present realities of their partners slowly fade out of their awareness.* This meaning illustrates the sixth-ray characteristic that Bailey calls, “The power to see no point except one’s own.”⁷⁷

6. Only a world of shadows, of mist and fog remain.

What is the significance of “a world” in the sixth sentence? Modern psychology has the notion of a *private world* and associates it with insanity. For example, Karen Wegela, a psychologist, mentions “the extreme pathology of psychosis when people become lost in a private world and are not able to connect very much at all with others.”⁷⁸ *ACIM* has the same notion: “Your private world is filled with figures of fear you have invited into it, and all the love your brothers offer you, you do not see ... It is given you to learn how to deny insanity, and come forth from your private world in peace.”⁷⁹ The opposite of a private world is sometimes called the “shared objective reality” or “outer, public world.”⁸⁰ In the sixth sentence, “a world” is assumed to be a private world, so the words “only” and “remain” indicate that only a private world remains. In other words, just as in Wegela’s description, the portrayed people have become lost in their own private worlds.

ACIM gives this account of being lost in a private world:

As you look with open eyes upon your world, it must occur to you that you have

withdrawn into insanity. You see what is not there, and you hear what makes no sound. Your manifestations of emotions are the opposite of what the emotions are. You communicate with no one, and you are as isolated from reality as if you were alone in all the universe. In your madness you overlook reality completely, and you see only your own split mind everywhere you look. God calls you and you do not hear, for you are preoccupied with your own voice.⁸¹

What do “shadows” signify in the sixth sentence? A *shadow* is a dark area or shape made by an object that is blocking rays of light. A shadow cannot be touched or grasped, because it is unreal, but it resembles the real object that is blocking the light. Consequently, the metaphor of a shadow can be used to denote something that is unreal but resembles something else that is real. For example, shadow boxing is not real boxing, but it resembles real boxing.

ACIM introduces the notion of “shadowy figures” from the past:

Each one peoples his world with figures from his individual past, and it is because of this that private worlds do differ. Yet the figures that he sees were never real, for they are made up only of his reactions to his brothers, and do not include their reactions to him. Therefore, he does not see he made them, and that they are not whole. For these figures have no witnesses, being perceived in one separate mind only.

It is through these strange and shadowy figures that the insane relate to their insane world. For they see only those who remind them of these images, and it is to them that they relate. Thus do they communicate with those who are not there, and it is they who answer them. And no one hears their answer save him who called upon them, and he alone believes they answered him. Projection makes perception, and you cannot see beyond it. Again and again have you attacked your brother, because you saw in him a shadow figure in your private world.⁸²

The metaphor of shadows can be used to denote a person's "shadowy figures," because "the figures that he sees were never real," according to the above quotation, but these figures do resemble real people. Moreover, the phrase "a world of shadows" in the sixth sentence would be similar to "a shadow figure in your private world" in the above quotation, if "a world" denoted a private world, which is our preceding assumption, and if "shadows" denoted shadowy figures. Consequently, the "shadows" in the sixth sentence are taken to be the "shadowy figures" from the past.

In psychology, a *hallucination* is "the alleged perception of an object when no object is present."⁸³ The portrayed people have withdrawn deeper into insanity, in the sense of having hallucinations, because they perceive shadowy figures that are not actually present. In the words of the above quotation from *ACIM*, "For these figures have no witnesses, being perceived in one separate mind only."

What is the meaning of "mist and fog" in the sixth sentence? *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of Synonyms* provides these definitions: "Mist applies to a condition where water is held in suspension in fine particles in the air, floating or slowly falling in minute drops. A fog differs from a mist only in its greater density and its greater power to cut off the vision."⁸⁴ Accordingly, mist is less substantial than fog, but both have the power to distort vision.

An *illusion* is a misunderstood thought-form,⁸⁵ and a *glamour* is an emotional reaction that veils and hides truth.⁸⁶ Bailey writes, "thought-forms are substantial things but (and here is a point of importance) of a less substantial nature than the forms of glamour found upon the astral plane."⁸⁷ Accordingly, illusion is less substantial than glamour, but both have the power to distort one's point of view. Consequently, mist can be used as a metaphor for illusion, and fog for glamour. Bailey uses the same metaphors:

The spiritual man is now veiled by a mental or by a fire sheath. He is clothed "in a watery mist", which is an ancient way of referring to the great illusion.⁸⁸

This fog, this glamour which envelops humanity at this time must be realised as a definite substantial thing, and must be dealt with as such.⁸⁹

What is an example of mist, or illusion, in the context of the sixth sentence? *ACIM* considers the "spots of pain," which are carried by the shadowy figures from the past, to be illusions:

The shadowy figures from the past are precisely what you must escape. They are not real, and have no hold over you unless you bring them with you. They carry the spots of pain in your mind, directing you to attack in the present in retaliation for a past that is no more. And this decision is one of future pain. Unless you learn that past pain is an illusion, you are choosing a future of illusions and losing the many opportunities you could find for release in the present.⁹⁰

What is an example of fog, or glamour, in the context of the sixth sentence? Bailey says, "*the glamour of separateness* ... may express itself as hatred,"⁹¹ so hatred is an example of a glamour. *ACIM* says that the special (love) relationship is undertaken solely to offset, or bury, hatred:

Be not afraid to look upon the special hate relationship, for freedom lies in looking at it. It would be impossible not to know the meaning of love, except for this. For the special love relationship, in which the meaning of love is hidden, is undertaken solely to offset the hate, but not to let it go. Your salvation will rise clearly before your open eyes as you look on this. You cannot limit hate. The special love relationship will not offset it, but will merely drive it underground and out of sight. It is essential to bring it into sight, and to make no attempt to hide it. For it is the attempt to balance hate with love that makes love meaningless to you.⁹²

ACIM uses the expression, "The shadow of an ancient hate,"⁹³ to denote the present effect of hatred that one has buried in the ancient past, showing that such hate can still affect one's current emotions.

Thus the sixth sentence is given this meaning: *They have become lost in their own private worlds, in which they see shadowy figures from their past who carry illusion, such as spots of pain, in their minds, and who carry glamour, such as their ancient hate for those figures, in their emotions.* This meaning illustrates the sixth-ray characteristic that Bailey calls, “Rapid reaction to glamour and illusion.”⁹⁴

Frank Sheed (1897 – 1982), a prominent Catholic author, writes,

After all, the man who uses his intellect in religion is using it to see what is there. But the alternative to seeing what is there is either, not seeing what is there, and this is darkness; or seeing what is not there, and this is error, derangement, a kind of double darkness. And it is unthinkable that darkness, whether single or double should be preferred to light.⁹⁵

The fifth sentence depicts, in the words of the above quotation, “not seeing what is there, and this is darkness”; whereas the sixth sentence depicts, “seeing what is not there, and this is error, derangement, a kind of double darkness.” The portrayed people pass into the first and then into the second kind of darkness, because they prefer illusion to reality.

7. And as He looked upon Himself, He said: Lord of Glamour, that am I, and the Angel of Bewilderment.

Because of their pain, people eventually come to a turning point, as *ACIM* explains:

An imprisoned will engenders a situation which, in the extreme, becomes altogether intolerable. Tolerance for pain may be high, but it is not without limit. Eventually everyone begins to recognize, however dimly, that there *must* be a better way. As this recognition becomes more firmly established, it becomes a turning point.⁹⁶

Bailey describes the turning point for sixth-ray people: “The problem, therefore, of the sixth ray aspirant is to divorce himself from the thralldom of form (though not from form) and to stand quietly at the centre.”⁹⁷ In this context, to *divorce* seems synonymous with to *detach*,

because to divorce can mean to separate.⁹⁸ Bailey says that the “power to detach oneself” is a sixth-ray “quality,”⁹⁹ so sixth-ray people have the power to bring about their turning point, whenever they so choose, by detaching themselves from their form or personality life.

The seventh sentence depicts the sixth-ray turning point. Its first part, “And as He looked upon Himself,” depicts the goal of detached self-observation. In Bailey’s words, “the task of the disciple is to become consciously aware—like a detached onlooking Observer—of these energies and their expressing qualities as they function within himself.”¹⁰⁰

The remainder of the seventh sentence refers to both the *mental body* and *causal body*, so let us distinguish between them. The mental body is that which is usually regarded as the mind, because it is the instrument of analysis and discrimination. Several esoteric traditions, however, have the notion of a higher mind that is sometimes called the “causal body.” The Bible refers to this higher mind as the “house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (2 Corinthians 5:1),¹⁰¹ and Hinduism calls it by its Sanskrit name, *karana sarira*: *karana* means “cause” and *sarira* means “body.”¹⁰² Theosophy divides the mental plane into seven levels, or subplanes: four concrete, or lower, levels; and three abstract, or higher, levels.¹⁰³ The mental body is said to reside on the concrete levels of the mental plane, and the causal body on the abstract levels of the mental plane.¹⁰⁴ I. K. Taimni (1898 – 1978), a theosophical writer, refers to the mental body as “the vehicle of concrete thoughts,” and says, “The first function of the Causal body is that it serves as the organ of abstract thought.”¹⁰⁵

What does “Lord of Glamour” mean? A *Lord* signifies a master or ruler.¹⁰⁶ Bailey writes, “I begin with the mental body as it is for the student of meditation the one that is the centre of his effort and the one that controls the two lower bodies,”¹⁰⁷ so “Lord of Glamour” signifies the mental body, because it can be the master of glamour, which lies within the emotional body. Accordingly, “Lord of Glamour, that am I” affirms that one has *become* the mental body, in the sense of being

polarized in it. Bailey provides this explanation:

In meditation the emotional body should be controlled from the mental plane, and when the polarisation has been transferred into the mental body through forms of meditation and intensity of purpose and of will, then the emotional becomes quiescent and receptive.¹⁰⁸

In particular, by observing their emotional body from the superior position of the mental body, sixth-ray people can recognize their glammers. Bailey describes such recognition:

One of the problems which confronts the aspirant is the problem of duly recognising glamour when it arises, and of being aware of the glammers which beset his path and the illusions which build a wall between him and the light. It is much that you have recognised that glamour and illusion exist. The majority of people are unaware of their presence.¹⁰⁹

Bailey tells a student her meaning of *bewilderment*, which is a word that appears in the last part of the seventh sentence:

Perhaps I could express what I have to say best by remarking that the main part of your difficulties has been *a wrestling with bewilderment*—a bewilderment which is not a glamour but which could easily become one if your soul were not so constantly and definitely guiding, controlling and leading you away from the more pronounced glammers of which it could be the tiny seed. Bewilderment is a state of incipient glamour.¹¹⁰

In other words, bewildered thoughts are illusions that are incipient glammers. To dispel illusions, it is necessary to recognize them as illusions, but how can that be done? Bailey says, “it is the soul itself which dispels illusion, through the use of the faculty of the intuition.”¹¹¹

In Theology, an *Angel* signifies “a typically benevolent celestial being,”¹¹² and a “divine messenger from God.”¹¹³ Here, the word *celestial* indicates that an Angel is at a higher level than human beings, and the word *messenger* indicates the role of an intermediary. Bailey

mentions “the causal body, the *karana sarira*, the spiritual body of the soul, standing as the intermediary between Spirit and matter.”¹¹⁴ Accordingly, when the causal body acts as an intermediary, it can be regarded as “the Angel of Bewilderment,” because the causal body is at a higher level than bewildered thoughts and connects the soul to those thoughts.

The seventh sentence has an implied parallel structure. If that structure were made explicit, then the last part of the sentence would appear as, “the Angel of Bewilderment, that am I.” This extended phrase affirms that one has *become* the causal body, in the sense of being polarized in it, and also affirms that one has *become* a messenger of the soul, in the sense of being a conveyor of intuitions from the soul to the mental body. Bailey provides the following explanation:

He [the disciple] must learn to contact the lower mind simply as an instrument whereby he can reach the higher, and thus transcend it, until he becomes polarised in the causal body. Then, through the medium of the causal body, he links up with the abstract levels.¹¹⁵

According to this quotation, after becoming polarized in the causal body, one “links up with the abstract levels”—namely, with the soul—which enables one to become a messenger of the soul.

In summary, the seventh sentence is given this overall meaning: *Because of their pain, they learn to look with detachment upon themselves: by observing the emotional body from the superior position of the mental body, they can recognize their glammers; and by observing the mental body from the superior position of the causal body and linking up with the soul, they can recognize their illusions that are incipient glammers.* This meaning illustrates the sixth-ray characteristic that Bailey calls, “Steadiness of perception through the expansion of consciousness.”¹¹⁶

Wikipedia provides this definition: “*Transpersonal psychology* is a sub-field or ‘school’ of psychology that integrates the spiritual and transcendent aspects of the human experience with the framework of modern psychology.”¹¹⁷

Amir Levy and Uri Merry describe what transpersonal psychology holds to be true:

Transpersonal psychology holds that consciousness is a central dimension that provides the basis and context for all experience. It views our usual consciousness as a defensively contracted state. This usual state is filled to a remarkable and unrecognized extent with a continuous flow of largely uncontrollable thoughts and fantasies that exert an extraordinarily powerful, though unappreciated, influence on perception, cognition, and behavior. Skillful self-observation inevitably reveals that our usual experience is perceptually distorted by the continuous, automatic, and unconscious blending of input from reality and fantasy in accordance with our needs and defenses.¹¹⁸

The above quotation mentions “a continuous flow of largely uncontrollable thoughts and fantasies that exert an extraordinarily powerful, though unappreciated, influence on perception, cognition, and behavior,” which is the message of the second through sixth sentences. The quotation also says, “Skillful self-observation inevitably reveals that our usual experience is perceptually distorted,” which is the message of the seventh sentence. Thus transpersonal psychology is in agreement with much of the sixth-ray stanza.

8. Naught is clear to me.

Because of the preceding self-observation, the portrayed people enter a period of confusion in which they have many unanswered questions, such as the following ones listed by Bailey:

1. Which is right, this or that?

2. How can I distinguish where my duty or my responsibility lies?

3. How can I find my way out of this bewildering situation?

4. How can I bring in the control of the Warrior so that the two groups of forces which I love may be resolved into a unity?

5. How can I find my way out of this impasse?

6. Why must I hurt that which I love and through which I have expressed myself for ages?

7. How can I become aware of that mental illumination which will reveal the “middle way” between the pairs of opposites?¹¹⁹

In the fourth question, “the Warrior” denotes the

soul,¹²⁰ and “the two groups of forces which I love” denote what are sometimes called “good or bad desire.”¹²¹ For example, if a person has a “good desire” to fulfill the rituals demanded by other people, it may conflict with a “bad desire” to resist those demands. In the seventh question, “mental illumination” denotes the illumination of the mind by the soul, and the “middle way” refers to the path revealed by this illumination rather than by following either the good or bad desire.

Bailey gives this explanation for these questions:

Many such questions arise in the mind of the aspirant. They indicate dilemma, bewilderment, a realisation of surrounding glamour, a stage of illusion and a condition of impotency. Against the disciple are fighting all the forces of his own nature, and also those of humanity as a whole and of the planetary state. He feels helpless, inert, feeble and hopeless. He cannot even see the way out.¹²²

Thus the eighth sentence, “Naught is clear to me,” has this preliminary meaning: Sixth-ray people realize that they are confused and do not know the way out of their confusion. This sentence, however, has a deeper, or more esoteric, meaning.

The American Heritage Dictionary defines the *intellect* as “The ability to learn and reason; the capacity for knowledge and understanding.”¹²³ Bailey mentions “the intellect (concrete and abstract, lower and higher),”¹²⁴ so her use of the term incorporates the functions of both the mental and causal bodies. She also describes the condition that the intellect must be in before the divine intuition can function:

Illusion is the mode whereby limited understanding and material knowledge interpret truth, veiling and hiding it behind a cloud of thoughtforms. Those thoughtforms become then more real than the truth they veil, and consequently control man’s approach to Reality. Through illusion, he becomes aware of the apparatus of thought, of its activity, expressed in thoughtform building, and of that which he succeeds in constructing and which he views as the creation of his intellect. He has, however, created a barrier between himself and that which *is* and, until he has exhausted the resources of his intellect or has deliberately refused to utilise it, his divine intuition cannot function.¹²⁵

The deeper meaning of the eighth sentence is that it depicts a person’s condition when, using the words of the above quotation, “he has exhausted the resources of his intellect or has deliberately refused to utilise it.” Other writers call this condition “a state of not knowing.” For example, Krishnamurti describes this state:

So, can the mind be in a state of not-knowing? Because only then can the mind inquire, not when it says, “I know.” Only the mind which is capable of being in a state of not-knowing—not merely a verbal assertion, but as an actual fact—is free to discover reality. But to be in that state is difficult, for we are ashamed of not-knowing.¹²⁶

Peter Ralston also describes this state:

Consider for a moment the experience of not-knowing as a state in itself, rather than as the absence of something we value ... Held in this way, it becomes easier to see how such a state would provide a wider perspective. Without the clutter of opinions and beliefs, we are free of bias, and free to look in any direction. We are no longer stuck in beliefs or conventions, or limited by our cultural histories or individual past experiences. We might even approach real wisdom, since rather than the usual sophisticated juggling of facts and opinions that frequently passes for intelligence, we are now receptive to genuine insight.¹²⁷

As John Rowan explains, a state of not knowing plays a key role in transpersonal psychotherapy:

I believe that the transpersonal way of doing therapy is the most creative. Instead of saying that the therapist owns a toolchest full of techniques, it says that the therapist can go into a place of not-knowing, and wait for inspiration.¹²⁸

Thus the eighth sentence is given this meaning: *They enter a state of not knowing: they realize that they are confused and do not know the way out of their confusion.* This meaning illustrates the sixth-ray characteristic that Bailey calls, “The choosing of the middle way.”¹²⁹

9. *I love yet all seems wrong!*

Krishnamurti says, “The very state of not knowing is the beginning of quietness,”¹³⁰ and Bailey says, “Revelation will come through quiet thought and daily brooding,”¹³¹ so we might infer that a state of not knowing will yield revelation. The eighth and ninth sentences support this inference, because the eighth sentence depicts a state of not knowing, and the ninth sentence depicts what is called “the lesser revelation.”

Bailey explains “the lesser revelation”:

One who treads the way of what is called “the lesser revelation” ... is concerned with the revelation of that which must be done in the personality life; it is not the way of the higher revelation of divinity and its nature. It is the revelation of that which is already

manifested and not of what must be manifested. Ponder on this. The searchlight of the soul reveals faults in character, limitations in expression and inadequacies in conduct. These must be intelligently corrected.¹³²

In particular, the ninth sentence, “I love yet all seems wrong,” indicates that the lesser revelation for sixth-ray people is that they love wrongly. Bailey describes the content of this revelation:

But man, being divine in nature, has to love, and the trouble has been that he has loved wrongly. In the early stages of his development he places his love in the wrong direction, and turning his back on the love of God, which is of the very nature of his own soul, he loves that which is connected with the form side of life, and not with the life side of form.¹³³

After receiving this revelation, the portrayed people know that their task is simply to stop expressing what they see as wrong love. After knowing the task to be done, they have the responsibility of carrying it out, as Bailey explains to a student:

You have reached the age of sixty (or is it a little more, my brother?) and ... your soul purpose has not yet been fulfilled. The differences between your attitude now and your attitude thirty years ago is that then you did not realise what it was all about and now you do. Then you had, in reality, no responsibility for you did not know the nature of the task to be done. But, *through soul contact*, you do know now what the problem is and your responsibility to do something definite is, consequently, heavy.¹³⁴

Thus the ninth sentence appears to have this meaning: *They receive the lesser revelation—that they love wrongly—so they have the responsibility to stop expressing what they see as wrong love.* This meaning is illustrated by the sixth-ray characteristic that Bailey calls, “Willingness to see the work of other people progress along their chosen lines.”¹³⁵

10. I know that love is right and the spirit of the universe.

Bailey describes the condition of a sixth-ray person after he or she has made progress on the way of the lesser revelation:

His fanaticism, his devotion, his furious driving of himself and others, his wasted efforts, and his lack of understanding of the point of view of others have all gone, but as yet nothing has taken their place. He is swept by futility and his world rocks under him.¹³⁶

After making this progress, the person is ready to discover what Bailey calls “a greater revelation”:

If we can believe that God is inclusive of all forms and of that which the forms reveal, surely as our equipment develops and our mechanism of contact improves we shall be able to see more of divinity than at present and be deemed worthy, at a later date, of a greater revelation. It is only our limitations as human beings which prevent our seeing all that there is to be seen.¹³⁷

In particular, the tenth sentence indicates that the greater, or higher, revelation for sixth-ray people has two parts. The first part is “love is right.” Bailey explains this part in the following way:

Pure reason ... will ever express itself in right action and right human relations, and that will manifest—when present—what love in reality is. Pure love is a quality or effect of pure reason.¹³⁸

Consequently, “love is right” in the sense that love is manifested by right action and right human relations. The second part of the greater revelation is “love is ... the spirit of the universe.” Bailey explains this part in the following way:

Intuition is a comprehensive grip of the principle of universality, and when it is functioning there is, momentarily at least, a complete loss of the sense of separateness. At its highest point, it is known as that Universal Love which has no relation to sentiment or to the affectional reaction but is,

predominantly, in the nature of an identification with all beings.¹³⁹

Consequently, the tenth sentence appears to have this meaning: *After making progress on the way of the lesser revelation, they discover the greater revelation—that love is manifested by right action and right human relations, and is an intuitive identification with all beings—so they have the responsibility to manifest this universal love.* The foregoing meaning illustrates the sixth-ray characteristic that Bailey calls, “Peace and not war. The good of the *Whole* and not the part.”¹⁴⁰

11. What then is wrong?

The eleventh sentence, “What then is wrong?” indicates the stage of being determined to manifest universal love, by having received the greater revelation portrayed in the tenth sentence, coupled to the realization of lacking such love. Bailey characterizes a person who has reached this stage:

Where there is a determination to be loving, certain attitudes—either natural and belonging to a developed personality or forced through attention to soul behest—emerge. The disciple knows that he lacks love, because he is constantly finding himself isolated from and not identified with others; he is irritated by others: he is critical of his brothers, either feeling superior to them or looking at them and saying: “Here they are wrong and I am right; here they do not understand and I do; I know them but they don’t know me; I must be patient with them,” etc., etc. Throughout this phase, the attitude is definitely that of the will-to-love, coupled to a deep realisation of the handicaps to the expression of love presented by those others and presented also by one’s own habits of thought.¹⁴¹

Eventually one learns the true way to love, of which Bailey gives this description:

The true way to love is to reflect and meditate deeply and constantly upon the significance and the meaning of love, its origin, its expression through the soul, its qualities, goals and objectives. Most of the reflection carried on by the aspirant is based upon his

innate realisation that he does not really love in the spontaneous, free way of the spirit.¹⁴²

The eleventh sentence seems to be a terse abbreviation of the preceding quotation, so it is given this meaning: *They learn the true way to love: to reflect and meditate deeply and constantly upon the significance and meaning of love, based upon their innate realization that they do not really love in the spontaneous, free way of the spirit.* This meaning illustrates the sixth-ray characteristic that Bailey calls, “Directed, inclusive idealism.”¹⁴³

Conclusions

Bailey’s sixth-ray stanza, which we call the “Sixth-Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease,” consists of eleven symbolic sentences that can be interpreted as follows:

1. Sixth-ray people like to perceive intuitively the soul, which is their higher self, in other people and in all forms, because that is how they keep their sensitivity to the soul in their minds.
2. After losing their sensitivity to the soul, they are dedicated to seeing negative qualities in other people, and those qualities always prove to be their own, because that is how they get rid of what they do not want from their minds.
3. They create fantasies of themselves being involved with their selected rituals of special love and thereby attach their desires to these rituals; they then ask their partners to follow their desired rituals, expecting that these rituals provide salvation from pain but getting instead their own self-condemnation.
4. Surely and with certainty their clear perception of their partners becomes distorted in three ways: a) such perception is lost as they build thought-forms of their partners following their rituals of special love, which emphasize certain bodily parts rather than the complete individual; b) such perception grows dim as they create fantasies of being involved with these thought-forms, which engender desires that act like a dense widely distributed fog; and

c) such perception disappears as their desires galvanize vital forces that compulsively act out their fantasies, but without consideration of their partners' needs.

5. They increasingly use past experience as the reference point from which to judge the present, so the present realities of their partners slowly fade out of their awareness.

6. They have become lost in their own private worlds, in which they see shadowy figures from their past who carry illusion, such as spots of pain, in their minds, and who carry glamour, such as their ancient hate for those figures, in their emotions.

7. Because of their pain, they learn to look with detachment upon themselves: by observing the emotional body from the superior position of the mental body, they can recognize their glammers; and by observing the mental body from the superior position of the causal body and linking up with the soul, they can recognize their illusions that are incipient glammers.

8. They enter a state of not knowing: they realize that they are confused and do not know the way out of their confusion.

9. They receive the lesser revelation—that they love wrongly—so they have the responsibility to stop expressing what they see as wrong love.

10. After making progress on the way of the lesser revelation, they discover the greater revelation—that love is manifested by right action and right human relations, and is an intuitive identification with all beings—so they have the responsibility to manifest this universal love.

11. They learn the true way to love: to reflect and meditate deeply and constantly upon the significance and meaning of love, based upon their innate realization that they do not really love in the spontaneous, free way of the spirit.

Bailey writes, “The sixth Ray of devotion and the sixth law of love have a close alliance, and on the sixth plane comes the powerful working out in the lower Triad, the Personality, of the

Law of Love.”¹⁴⁴ Here, the emotional plane is counted as the sixth plane,¹⁴⁵ and *ACIM* defines the Law of Love in this way: “Today I learn the law of love; that what I give my brother is my gift to me.”¹⁴⁶ The first sentence in the sixth-ray stanza depicts the fulfillment of the Law of Love; the second through fifth sentences depict the progressive violation of this law; the sixth sentence depicts the emotional pain brought about by this violation; the seventh sentence depicts the turning point; and the eighth through eleventh sentences depict the progressive effort to fulfill the Law of Love.

The eleventh sentence portrays the stage of reflection on the meaning of love. When sixth-ray people complete this stage, they will realize the truth of Bailey’s statement: “Love is never worked up, if I might put it so, in the lower nature; it is a free unimpeded inflow from the higher.”¹⁴⁷ Accordingly, these people will have returned to the stage of the first sentence, which portrays love on the higher level of the soul. Thus the sixth-ray stanza depicts a cycle of activity: both the descent away from the first sentence into erroneous involvement with form, and what Bailey calls “right activity upon the Path of Return,”¹⁴⁸ which leads back to the first sentence.

By understanding the cyclic nature of the sixth-ray stanza, we can have a compassionate attitude toward people at any stage in the cycle. For example, if we encounter people involved with what Bailey’s earlier commentary calls “violently demanded satisfaction,” we might be critical of them. Such people, however, are involved in the activity portrayed by the fourth sentence, so their aggressive behavior actually reflects the imperfection of the sixth ray. Moreover, such people are working through the eleven stages portrayed by the sixth-ray stanza, so they are actually proceeding along the cyclic path that is appropriate for them.

Bailey states, “The sixth ray influence produced the appearance of the modern science of psychology, and that science has been its consummating glory.”¹⁴⁹ The preceding commentary on the sixth-ray stanza is consistent with this statement, because it

includes many topics found in the modern science of psychology: projection, fantasy, desire, guilt, perversion, obsession, sadism, insanity, negative hallucination, private world, hallucination, self-observation, and state of not knowing.

Romans 8:28 states, “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.” *ACIM* makes an even stronger statement: “All things work together for good. There are no exceptions.”¹⁵⁰ The sixth-ray stanza illustrates these statements. Even though sixth-ray people are portrayed as making bad choices in the second through sixth sentences, because these choices increase their suffering, they are actually working along their cyclic path that leads to a good outcome, because they eventually return to the first sentence in which there is no suffering. Even though traversing a path that returns to its origin seems to be an unnecessary outlay of effort, the depicted path is worthwhile, because it develops potential virtues into active characteristics, as Bailey explains:

On the path of return, renunciation is the rule ... but the divine virtues persist, stable now and enduringly of use by reason of experience. Not potential are these attributes divine, but developed into powers for use. Inherent faculty has become active characteristics carried to the *n*th power.¹⁵¹

In particular, Bailey lists the virtues that sixth-ray people develop on the path of return: “Strength, self-sacrifice, purity, truth, tolerance, serenity, balance and common sense.”¹⁵²

¹ Zachary F. Lansdowne, “Vedic Teachings on the Seven Rays,” *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Spring 2010.

² Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I (1936; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1979), 316.

³ *Ibid.*, 126-127.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 69.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 63-83.

⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* (1960; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1976), 568.

⁷ All biblical references are taken from the King James Version. This version is still the most widely read biblical text in the English language, even though it is more than four hundred years old.

⁸ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing* (1953; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1978), 298.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 292-293.

¹⁰ Helena P. Blavatsky, *Collected Writings* (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Society in America, 2002), vol. XIV, 217.

¹¹ Helena P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* (1888; reprint; Pasadena, CA: Theosophical University Press, 1977), vol. I, 573.

¹² Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 298-304.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 293.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 297.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 304.

¹⁶ Zachary F. Lansdowne, “The Third-Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease,” *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Spring 2017.

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¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 303.

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- 34 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I, 52.
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- 36 Lucille Cedercrans, *Applied Wisdom* (Roseville, MN: Wisdom Impressions, 2007), vol. II, 993.
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Cosmic Fire Studies and Academia – A Manifesto

Part II: The Work

David C. Borsos

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to suggest a practical plan of action that has the potential to mobilize intelligent goodwill sufficient to transform our global crises and inaugurate a new age of solidarity, cooperation, and right human relations. This plan entails the building of a bridge between the wisdom expressed in the esoteric writings of Alice A. Bailey (Cosmic Fire Studies) and academia. Part II of this article begins by making the argument that Bailey's published writings should serve as a singular body of teaching for illuminating academic work. The concept of the *antahkarana* (Skt.) as a bridge of lighted substance constructed on the mental plane is briefly introduced. Several possible "construction sites" are then suggested for building bridges between Bailey's ideas and current academic research in the areas of religious studies, philosophy, and science. Practical ideas for undertaking this work are then provided and a few of the many challenges it will face are addressed.

It is essential that disciples in all Ashrams consider these days what humanity's problems are, what they mean and what their solution entails; they must know what the Masters of Wisdom want done and then they must talk and write, act and live so that others too may understand.¹

Above all, there must be the elimination of fear

...

Will you not, with determination and because the world cries out for help, cast away fear and go forward with joy and courage into the future?²

A Necessary Focus on Bailey's Esoteric Philosophy

Before offering some practical suggestions regarding how we might build a bridge between the Tibetan's ideas expressed in the writings of Alice Bailey and the world of academia I would like to address the importance of honoring the distinctive nature of her writings. To be clear, I am restricting the focus of this article and the proposed project of building a bridge to academia to Bailey's writings, as distinct from other categories of spiritual teachings such as "the Trans-Himalayan tradition," "the perennial philosophy," "esoteric studies," or "transpersonal studies." Bailey's corpus constitutes a specific, modern, comprehensive, and coherent model that can make powerful contributions to many areas of academic thinking. While students of Bailey's writings should of course be open to dialogue and collaboration with other traditions and schools of thought, her esoteric philosophy contains distinctive features and a coherency that needs to be clearly recognized in order to prevent misunderstandings and to precipitate clearly the Tibetan's ideas as expressed in these writings. In the following remarks I

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discuss potential problems and confusions that could result from not recognizing the distinctive nature of Bailey's work and from conflating it with other traditions.

The Trans-Himalayan Tradition

The phrase, "the Trans-Himalayan tradition," has been used for some time now in *The Esoteric Quarterly* and elsewhere by Bailey students. I agree there is merit in acknowledging a degree of cohesiveness among the writings of H. P. Blavatsky, Helena Roerich, Rudolf Steiner, Bailey, and others who are considered, at least among many Bailey students, to be offering related and complementary teachings within a greater unified movement of spiritual revelation. Indeed, Bailey emphasizes that all students who "recognise the influence of the trans-Himalayan Lodge" and the "Masters of the Wisdom" need to understand that they are a part of one school and that attitudes of separateness and intolerance constitute a major hindrance.³ Despite this underlying unity, however, using the phrase "the Trans-Himalayan tradition" invites the erroneous assumption that there exists some clear unanimity among various, sometimes ill-defined teachings, or that they constitute a coherent tradition. To my knowledge Bailey never used the phrase "Trans-Himalayan tradition" or "Trans-Himalayan teachings" in her published writings. She used the description "Trans-Himalayan" in only a few instances to refer specifically to: *one* of four branches of "the one true fundamental School" of occultism—"The Trans-Himalayan Branch" that comprises the "department" and "faculty" of adepts most familiar to Bailey students;⁴ and to the "Trans-Himalayan Lodge" of adepts.⁵

Despite this claimed underlying unity and Bailey's repeated calls for cooperation amongst modern esoteric schools, the fact remains that there are serious differences between the teachers of these various schools and among their respective followers. Perhaps the most obvious instance is found in the recognition that many students of Blavatsky's theosophy do not find Bailey's writings to be a legitimate expression or extension of Blavatsky's esoteric philosophy. While the origins of the phrase "Trans-Himalayan" are not clear, theosophists

Alice Leighton Cleather and Basil Crump use the term "Trans-Himalayan Brotherhood" in their attacks on what they perceive to be Bailey's "pseudo-occultism." Cleather is also described in the introduction to these combined works as "one of the first members of the Branch of the Trans-Himalayan Esoteric School established in England by Madame H.P. Blavatsky in 1888."⁶ Therefore, the term "Trans-Himalayan" would seem to originate at least as early as the modern theosophical movement if not before, and its all-inclusive use for both Blavatsky and Bailey's writings is highly questionable in light of the criticisms noted above.

What may be less well known regarding serious differences among esoteric groups is Helena Roerich's personal antipathy toward Bailey and her contention that "a cooperation of Arcane School with Agni-Yoga Society is absolutely impossible."⁷ In light of only these two examples, therefore, the use of the term "Trans-Himalayan tradition" may appear to force a unity amongst students, many of whom would not want to be identified with some other groups, teachers, and teachings. In addition to the problem of outer cleavages existing between various groups within an idealized "Trans-Himalayan tradition," this descriptive phrase is quite ambiguous given that some recent authors claim to be writing in collaboration with the Tibetan or other members of the Hierarchy. Thus, vague references to "the Trans-Himalayan tradition" may include dubious or glamoured presentations with which many Bailey students would not want to be identified.⁸ This in itself is sufficient reason to avoid using the term, or to do so only by referencing specific teachings. I believe the phrase is being used by Bailey students with sincere intent but without realizing the complex and endless problems associated with using such an idealized term.

The Perennial Philosophy

Another terminological problem could arise if Bailey's writings were to be identified indiscriminately as an expression of the perennial philosophy. While Bailey describes her work as representing the Ageless Wisdom tradition,⁹ within academia and amongst the intelligentsia

the term “perennial philosophy” is associated typically with a specific school of thought known as “Traditionalism,” represented most notably in the writings of René Guénon, Frithjof Schuon, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, and Huston Smith. It may be surprising for some Bailey students to discover that these “perennialist philosophers” and their followers are highly critical of Blavatsky, Steiner, and many others. In 1921 Guénon published an attack on Blavatsky and the Theosophical Society in a book later translated as *Theosophy: History of a Pseudo-Religion*.¹⁰ Although Bailey was presumably aware of this critique, she quoted Guénon favorably at some length in a book she wrote herself for the general public several years later.¹¹ Given the many valuable contributions to religious studies made by members of the Traditionalist School, this acknowledgment on Bailey’s part may portend the possibility of future dialogue between Bailey students and open-minded Traditionalists. However such dialogue will not necessarily be easy and it is likely that the only reason Bailey’s esoteric philosophy has yet escaped severe criticism from “perennialist philosophers” is due to Bailey’s writings being virtually unknown in the academic world.¹²

Esoteric Studies

During his thirty-year collaboration with Bailey the Tibetan often uses the terms “esoteric,” “esotericism,” and “esotericists” and he endeavors to outline an “esoteric science” that will be capable of integrating science, philosophy, and religion. This esoteric science develops within the individual the ability to work in both the world of phenomenal forms and the underlying world of qualifying energies through the use of the creative will.¹³ Bailey students therefore use the terms “esoteric philosophy,” “esoteric psychology,” “esotericism,” etc., quite freely and deliberately within this framework. It should be noted that Blavatsky used the term “Esoteric Philosophy” before Bailey and that “Traditionalists” or “Perennialists” generally choose the shortened terms “esoterist” and “esoterism” specifically to distinguish their works and worldview from other traditions.

However, in wider contexts and in the academic world in particular the terms “esotericism” and “esoteric studies” have a much broader connotation. Like the terms “theosophy” and *philosophia perennis*, “esotericism” denotes a tradition that antedates the writings of both Bailey and Blavatsky. As an academic field, esotericism generally includes studies of “alchemy, astrology, Gnosticism, Hermeticism, Kabbalah, magic, mysticism, Neoplatonism, new religious movements connected with these currents, nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first century occult movements, Rosicrucianism, secret societies, and Christian theosophy.”¹⁴ With regard to this academic field, Maureen Temple Richmond serves as a rare example of someone who has introduced Bailey’s esoteric philosophy in an academic context. In 1999 she presented a paper at the Convention of the American Academy of Religion—Western Esotericism Consultation (Boston, MA) demonstrating that Bailey’s writings conform to the six definitional criteria of Western esotericism as set forth by Antoine Faivre.¹⁵ Her paper contains an admirable synopsis of Bailey’s esoteric philosophy and she notes the academic prejudice that precludes scholarly recognition of Blavatsky and Bailey’s work. She argues vigorously “that the Bailey corpus should be included in any substantive discussion of western esotericism in modern times.”¹⁶ A beginning has been made in this effort by Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke (1953–2012), the former director of the Exeter Centre for the Study of Esotericism.¹⁷ Regrettably, however, Bailey’s work was nowhere mentioned in the schedule of talks for the 2016 Association for the Study of Esotericism Conference, *Cartographies of the Soul*, although there were presentations on both Blavatsky and Steiner.¹⁸ Regarding a similar omission, Richmond decries the lack of any mention of Bailey in the text *Modern Esoteric Spirituality* while specific chapters are devoted to both Blavatsky and Steiner.¹⁹ I suggest, however, that this omission is due primarily to the failure of Bailey students to bring the Tibetan’s teachings to public attention rather than being an oversight on the part of the editors of the text.

Transpersonal Psychology

Students of her work might think that Bailey's writings constitute an important part of the transpersonal psychology movement²⁰ as her two volumes titled *Esoteric Psychology* (1936, 1942) provide a comprehensive foundation for a modern understanding of the body, emotions, mind, soul, and spirit of the individual and of their complex interrelationships. These volumes also provide understandings of interpersonal, social, planetary, and cosmic relationships, as well as extended esoteric teachings regarding the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms—teachings that might be viewed as establishing a foundation for what is now variously called “transpersonal ecology,” “Integral Ecology,” and “Eco-psychology.” Preceding the modern transpersonal psychology movement by some thirty years, in several places Bailey asserted the need for a new direction in the study of psychology and stated, “the new psychology . . . will then become the basic and fundamental science of . . . the Aquarian age.”²¹

The Italian psychiatrist Roberto Assagioli (1888–1974), one of the few personal students of the Tibetan²² and a colleague of Freud, Jung, and Bailey, is widely regarded as one of the founders of the transpersonal psychology movement because of his lifelong work, which culminated in the book *Psychosynthesis*.²³ Yet Bailey and her work are almost never mentioned by transpersonal scholars²⁴ and her writings have been excluded from consideration by *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*. The editors of this journal are committed to taking a scientific approach to transpersonal studies in the attempt to gain recognition within academia. Therefore, they find “difficulties” with “the Bailey-Blavatsky system,” a fact I discovered many years ago when I received some editorial remarks provided on a paper I had submitted. The editors find the “Bailey-Blavatsky system” to be:

. . . quite abstract and philosophical. Many of its key concepts allow for variable interpretations, untestable arguments, highly speculative energy dynamics that can't be

independently observed, beliefs about multiple lifetimes and cosmogenesis [sic] that can only be accepted or not accepted . . . It is abstract to such a degree that it can explain, without any way to refute it, almost anything in human experience or culture. In short, it is a metaphysical system that may be useful and helpful as a belief and interpretative [sic] system, but it is not subject to disconfirmation . . . It can be interpreted to resolve almost anything, as long as one accepts such foundational concepts such as reincarnation, cosmogenesis [sic], and various other metaphysical ideas. The supporting evidence for such ideas has not yet been convincingly shown to be independent of the framing belief system, or so far is equivocal or limited to rhetorical argument. In short, such ideas are formulated so that they cannot be found to be incorrect. Such a closed system can appear to resolve almost any conflict in ideas, when in fact, there is no way it can be wrong . . .²⁵

Despite the many questionable assertions in this review it provides valuable insight into some of the many challenges that will confront Bailey students as they endeavor to make the Tibetan's teachings better known and it indicates that her writings should not, as of yet at least, be identified as part of the transpersonal psychology movement.

I have endeavored to distinguish the esoteric philosophy of Alice Bailey, what I refer to in an abbreviated and impersonal form as “Cosmic Fire Studies,” from other spiritual and academic traditions. I believe these teachings are a gift from the Hierarchy, intended to benefit all of humanity, and that they constitute both a subject area worthy of academic study and a powerful framework for interpreting, analyzing, and extending many ideas within academic thinking. In the following section I suggest several specific areas, or potential construction sites, where Bailey's framework can be applied in religious studies, philosophy, and science to help build a bridge between esoteric ideas and academic thought.

Weaving the Bridge of Light



"Agni Yoga"
1929
Nicholas Roerich

The Antahkarana

The idea of building a bridge to unite Bailey's teachings and academic thinking is not merely an abstract concept or metaphorical image. This endeavor will literally assist in building a bridge of lighted substance on the plane of mind between the worlds of spiritual being and the worlds of human experience.²⁶ The Tibetan provides much information regarding this "bridge of electrified mental substance,"²⁷ what he terms the "thread of consciousness," or *antahkarana* (Skt.).²⁸ It is constructed especially through the process of "*meditation . . . [and] a definitely directed life-tendency.*"²⁹ The completed antahkarana eventually unites the personality, soul, and spirit of the disciple/initiate, primarily through the various subplanes of the mental plane. However, the Tibetan also states that there is in fact only *one* antahkarana, the human or group antahkarana.³⁰ He emphasizes that the building of this bridge is the immediate task ahead for aspirants and disciples and that its "*conscious building*" is beginning to be made by the united efforts of those individuals and groups working in the areas of scientific, religious, and philosophic thinking.³¹ Some academics may recog-

nize this constructive work on the mental plane in other terms, for example, in the concepts "the linguistification of the sacred" and "the rationalization of the lifeworld" provided by philosopher Jürgen Habermas.³²

Three Primary Areas for Bridging Cosmic Fire Studies and Academia

Introduction

In the years of hope and optimism following the First World War, Bailey courageously and tirelessly offered public lectures on religious and esoteric themes to audiences interested in new ideas and new directions for spiritual unfoldment and social progress. In the following decades, however, through the world-wide economic depression and another world war, the public's interest, leisure time, and access to new ideas from diverse and independent sources waned. Academic thinking took firmer root and intellectual discourse became more institutionalized, "professionalized," and bureaucratized. An increasingly rational, scientific, and mechanistic worldview, most notably manifested in logical positivism

and behaviorism, displaced religious and metaphysical thinking thereby creating many obstacles that hindered the possibility of bridging esoteric ideas and academia.³³

Bailey and Assagioli first met and together endeavored to develop new approaches to spiritual understanding on an international stage during the first three years of the Ascona conferences (Switzerland, 1931–1933), a gathering that would later develop into the more academic Eranos meetings which over time attracted such eminent scholars such as Carl Jung, Martin Buber, Erwin Schrödinger, Gershom Scholem, D. T. Suzuki, Paul Tillich, James Hillman, and Mircea Eliade.³⁴ After three years Bailey withdrew from the conference citing the changed “. . . tone and quality of the place . . . [as it] was overrun by German professors . . .” during the rise of National Socialism.³⁵ As a leader in the developing field of psychoanalysis, Assagioli, in stark contrast to Bailey, was careful to maintain a “wall of silence” between his professional work and any Hierarchical influence. Al Mankoff argues that if the “esoteric underpinnings” of his work were made public,

. . . Assagioli and his breakthrough ideas would have been subject to ridicule by his academic colleagues and he would have been denounced and ostracized from the exclusive fraternity of psychologists and psychotherapists . . . Well aware of this threat, Assagioli wisely instituted what became known to his disciples as “The Wall of Silence . . .” The “Wall” stood for all these many years, until now, in a more enlightened time, the true esoteric nature of Assagioli’s pioneering work may be revealed.”³⁶

In this article I am arguing that we now live in “more enlightened times” and that there is no good reason for Bailey students to remain fearful and to isolate themselves from (or within) the academic world. John Francis Nash, founder of the *Esoteric Quarterly* and now Editor Emeritus, is the author of numerous scholarly books and articles on religious and esoteric themes.³⁷ He sets high academic standards for publishing within the esoteric community and he carries the Tibetan’s teach-

ings to the threshold of academic recognition. In essence, I am arguing that as a group we now need to cross that threshold.

In addition to the Tibetan’s implicit and explicit injunctions for beginning this work which I outlined in Part I, there is another reason to undertake this project of working with academia: as shown in the following subsections, academics are already engaging in conversations on esoteric subjects and are carrying out esoteric research programs with virtually no assistance or input from Bailey students. The historical and continuing choice of Bailey students to remain in their “ivory towers” or hidden behind an artificial “wall of silence” has created a void in the public sphere. This choice stands in sharp contrast to the Tibetan’s insistence that his students take responsibility for demonstrating leadership amongst the public in the dissemination of new ideas.

Following Assagioli’s death in 1974 this void was filled in the nascent field of transpersonal psychology by theorists intent on surpassing outdated “universal wisdom traditions” and “structural-hierarchical models of human development.”³⁸ The unwillingness of Bailey students to participate in the public sphere has arguably delayed and distorted the development of the new psychology proposed in her writings. As only one example, the doctrine of reincarnation is not supported by leading theorists in transpersonal psychology.³⁹ This void has also allowed Bailey’s model to be casually appropriated and then discarded by a scholar in the field of Consciousness Studies. Apparently unfamiliar with the depths of Bailey’s esoteric philosophy, Imants Barušs has used her writings to develop a model that can help explain anomalies in science and purported transcendent events.⁴⁰ I believe strongly that students more familiar with Bailey’s writings need to demonstrate leadership and contribute to these dialogues by representing the intelligence, wisdom, and power of her writings as clearly and effectively as possible in the public sphere.

Before exploring the following suggested areas of study and cooperative engagement I think the reader should be aware that they are offered from the perspective of essentially a layperson who has no formal training or expertise

in religious studies, philosophy, or science. I selected a PhD program in Transformational Learning because of its focus on collaborative group work and the fact that it was offered at an institution dedicated to the integration of Eastern and Western thinking. I undertook my dissertation research on Jürgen Habermas entirely as an independent study with no academic background in philosophy. Almost all of the ideas suggested below have been gathered in only the past four years from reading in my

spare time. I say this to prevent the misunderstanding that I am a traditional academic and to help preclude the idea amongst Bailey students that one must have a specialized academic degree to help in the construction of building a bridge between the two communities. Hopefully these ideas will inspire some Bailey students to commit themselves to more rigorous intellectual study and a more inclusive, exoteric, and academic approach.



“Fiat Lux” – Let There be Light
Sather Gate – University of California Berkeley
 photo credit -- author

Religious Studies

For several reasons one of the first objectives of this work may well be to clarify understanding of the term “New Age.” First, the theme of the New Age underlies much of Bailey’s corpus and is found in the titles of three of her books. Second, within academia Bailey is credited for introducing the term and for having a pervasive influence on the “new age movement.”⁴¹ Third, the Tibetan states that explicating the ideals that will govern the New Age is the major task of the New Group of World Servers.⁴² Finally, this task of explication is urgent given that the concept of the

New Age has been so ridiculed and deprecated over the past several decades that it has been reduced to a caricature of flaky ideas, personal fulfillment, and commercialized spirituality marketed for a gullible public. This regrettable understanding is exemplified by Edward Dale, the latest scholar to propose a theoretical framework for transpersonal studies, who adheres to “a scientifically palatable approach” that avoids consideration of the theory of reincarnation since it “encroach[es] on the New Age fringe of academic psychology.”⁴³

More prominently, the Roman Catholic Church has researched the New Age

movement in a six-year study and found that it: is opposed to Christianity; focuses on the individual and the celebration of self instead of God; is in most cases “completely fatalistic;” offers “no distinction between good and evil;” and “consciously and deliberately blur[s] real differences . . . [and] thrives on confusion.”⁴⁴ The study references other investigations that find New Age thinking to be “based on totalitarian unity” and that its search for an “easy ‘relationship’ with God” reflects “the selfishness at the heart of this *New Age*.” In related interviews Alessandro Olivieri Pennesi, lecturer at the Lateran Pontifical University, repeats the simplistic and false claim that satanism is at the root of the New Age movement since, in part, he incorrectly states that the original name of the Lucis Trust which Bailey founded with her husband Foster was Lucifer Trust.⁴⁵

The authors of the study offer it as “an invitation to understand the *New Age* and to engage in a genuine dialogue with those who are influenced by *New Age* thought.” I believe that Bailey students should accept this invitation to dialogue and to thereby clarify the meaning of “the New Age” as the Tibetan presents it. This can be done through many possible forms such as an academic journal article, a chapter in a book on the new world religion, or as the theme of an entire book in itself that might include analyses of other published studies of the new age movement. Genuine dialogue with Catholic theologians will be difficult given the position of the Roman Catholic Church noted above and the Tibetan’s many criticisms of the Church, including his remark that its policies contribute to “. . . the reactionary and conservative forces which are so powerfully at work resisting the new age . . .”⁴⁶ Regardless, I believe it is imperative that Bailey students provide for the public a comprehensive analysis of the meaning of “the New Age” as the Tibetan presents it.

Another major theme underlying Bailey’s work regards the nature and influence of the soul, a topic that is being explored today in academia not only in religious studies but in the areas of philosophy and science as well.⁴⁷ This theme can be seen as inextricably related to the Three Recognitions discussed in Part I

of this article, and therefore the hypothesis of the soul *must* be presented to the public and the intelligentsia by Bailey students before 2025. The Tibetan states that the next step for science is the discovery of the soul and he goes to great length explicating how this may soon eventuate.⁴⁸ He emphasizes the importance of gathering evidence within what will soon be a legitimate and respectable field of investigation, and of presenting the evidence so scientifically that the fact of the soul will be justified and “engross the attention of our finest minds,” that is, academics.⁴⁹ As noted, this is already happening within academia and there are an unlimited number of approaches through which Bailey students can contribute to this discourse by utilizing especially Bailey’s *A Treatise on White Magic*, both volumes of *Esoteric Psychology*, the section on “The Egoic Ray and Solar Fire” in *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, and the two volumes on the soul written by Nash previously referenced.

Such approaches will raise immediate objections from many intellectuals, however, including a perceived contradiction with Buddhist teachings regarding the *anātman* (Skt.), or “no-soul,” doctrine of Buddhism.⁵⁰ Fortunately, this exceedingly complex issue has already been addressed in two separate papers by students of Blavatsky and Bailey, Nancy Reigle and Leoni Hodgson.⁵¹ The issue regarding an apparent conflict between the concept of a soul or self and the no-self doctrine of Buddhism is being addressed widely in academia, such as in the journal *Buddhist-Christian Studies*,⁵² one of many sites for ongoing interfaith dialogue to which Bailey students could be contributing, and in an anthology titled *Self, No Self?*⁵³

These studies of the *anātman* doctrine serve as examples of work that can be done by Bailey students to relate Bailey’s esoteric philosophy to more traditional Buddhist studies within academia. Donna Mitchell-Moniak has identified Buddhist concepts that are implicit in Bailey’s writings,⁵⁴ writings which on the surface may appear to be informed more by concepts deriving from Hinduism.⁵⁵ The work of furthering such an analysis, explicating the nature of the *anātman* doctrine, and incorporating and building on other work such as David Reigle’s

exceptional scholarship⁵⁶ could be published as separate articles or as one or more anthologies introducing Bailey's work to academia. It should be noted that Buddhist meditation and Christian contemplative practices are penetrating rapidly throughout academia today⁵⁷ and voices within academia are calling for the needed integration of religion, philosophy (including non-Western philosophies), and contemplative practices.⁵⁸

Most academic work in the philosophy of religion has focused on the Judeo-Christian tradition and to some extent Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, but this narrow approach has been changing rapidly in recent decades as Feminist Theology in its multiple presentations, Confucianism, Daoism, African religions, Shamanism, and various forms of Ethnic and Indigenous religions have been drawn into the focus of research and debate. These diverse traditions represent rich areas for comparative study by Bailey students. In her study of "the religious impulse" esoteric scholar Katherine Hendon observes:

Bailey's vision for a global religion took shape during the advent of the study of comparative religion as an academic discipline . . . [and she] definitely sees the object of such study to be the search for unity among religions. In fact, she considered the comparative study of religions during the 100 years preceding her era to have laid the groundwork for the formulation of the essential common truths meant to constitute a coming universal religion.⁵⁹

If we are to help introduce to the public the New World Religion as presented by the Tibetan⁶⁰ it seems imperative that we become familiar with current understandings and debates within modern theology and religious studies, participate in dialogues with various religious groups, and share Bailey's worldview with others via academic publications and presentations.⁶¹

I offer two examples where esoteric ideas have been introduced into academia to indicate how Bailey students could make similar contributions. First, Koo Dong Yun helps to unite Eastern and Western traditions by explicating

the field of pneumatology (the study of the Holy Spirit in Christian systematic theology) in terms of "ch'i," the teachings of the *I Ching* (*The Book of Change*) and its inherent trinitarian principle, and analyses of historical East Asian philosophers and modern theologians.⁶² For those who view Section One of *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* as Bailey's pneumatology (the elucidation of Fire by Friction or the Brahma aspect of manifestation, i.e., the Holy Spirit of Christian theology), comparisons might be obvious given the centrality of *prana* (Skt.) (in comparison to ch'i) and the etheric body in Bailey's presentation. Second, the impact of Alfred North Whitehead's "process philosophy" on religious studies has been enormous. It has established a new field of "process theology" and has contributed to a great deal of interreligious dialogue and discussion of "panentheism," the idea that God is present in all things.⁶³

Philosophy

Whitehead's work has of course also influenced a great deal of discussion within the field of philosophy and it has contributed to the growing interest in theories of *panpsychism* and *panexperientialism* which, for the most part, leave aside theological concerns inherent in "panentheism" [sic] and explore the possibility that mind, consciousness, or experience is present in all things.⁶⁴ The distinctions between these terms and approaches, and the ensuing debates between numerous scholars are important for Bailey students to understand given that the interpenetrating aspects Life-Quality-Appearance or Spirit-Consciousness-Form is fundamental in her work. Bailey's use of the term *hylozoism* as a description of "the basic theory of *The Secret Doctrine*,"⁶⁵ as the fundamental concept underlying all esoteric teaching regarding manifestation,⁶⁶ and as "the doctrine that all matter is endowed with life,"⁶⁷ requires that we use the term with care because academics today associate "life" with *biological* life, and the term *hylozoism* in general is considered to be outdated, often associated with theories of the pre-Socratic philosophers.

Whitehead's philosophy has helped redirect a great deal of philosophic thinking away from mechanistic models towards models that un-

derstand reality as being composed of “processes” rather than “matter.” Regarding this shift away from a strictly materialist view, the study of ontology and the larger field of metaphysics have regained prominent roles in modern philosophy with the demise of logical positivism and behaviorism since the 1950s. Bailey’s extensive writings on matter and substance, on the physical/etheric subplanes, and on the seven planes of the cosmic *physical* plane, provide a wealth of ideas that can be applied to current academic debates in these areas.⁶⁸

In addition to ontology and metaphysics, a new field of “consciousness studies” has developed in recent decades.⁶⁹ Given that Bailey has published perhaps the most important single book on consciousness and the philosophy of mind of the 20th century,⁷⁰ it is surprising that few students of her work have contributed to serious academic research and debate in these areas and have in general rarely addressed the work of modern philosophers.⁷¹ There is an enormous amount of work that can be done to relate Bailey’s esoteric philosophy to contemporary philosophic understanding in categories such as ontology, epistemology, metaphysics, the mind-body problem, theories of the self, free will, and ethics. Many scholars are already undertaking such “esoteric” work, for example by engaging traditional Western theories of the philosophy of mind from the perspective of Hinduism and Buddhism,⁷² and by expanding the field within the Western tradition by exploring topics such as “psychophysiological influences,” “near-death experiences,” “genius,” “mystical experience,” “paranormal psychology,” and “telepathy.”⁷³ Just as the explication of Bailey’s understanding of “the New Age” and of the “soul” is imperative in the field of religious studies, I suggest that explicating her understandings of “mind” and “consciousness” not only can be done in the field of academic philosophy but must be done if the “three recognitions” are to receive thoughtful

consideration by the intelligentsia and the wider public.

As one example of the necessity for this work, Bailey states that our main objective is to live and work in the world of ideas and concepts. The Tibetan states that this is a major form of service and will help destroy world glamour and illusion.⁷⁴ However, while the nature of

In this article I am arguing that we now live in “more enlightened times” and that there is no good reason for Bailey students to remain fearful and isolate themselves from (or within) the academic world.

ideas and their “descent” on the mental plane and transformation into guiding *ideals* are central aspects of Bailey’s esoteric philosophy, today these concepts may appear to reflect outdated notions from an earlier era, “the heyday of ideas” of the 17th and 18th centuries, an era that has been overtaken

by theories of meaning and the philosophy of language that now dominate academic philosophy following “the linguistic turn.”⁷⁵ It would seem that for our work to be effective in reaching the public, the intelligentsia, and academics, and therefore to be most effective in destroying glamour and illusion, we need to clarify, and perhaps reconstruct, Bailey’s theory of mind and “ideas” within the context of current academic understanding (but not necessarily within the philosophy of language or any other particular approach).

Science

Impressive work relating Blavatsky and Bailey’s writings to modern cosmology is being done by Mintze van der Velde, Laurence Newey, Christopher Holmes, and others.⁷⁶ At the microcosmic level, José Becerra sketches a model of the human being by drawing on quantum physics⁷⁷ and he references the work of Stephen M. Phillips, a theoretical physicist and theosophist, who has provided mathematical formulations to support the extraordinary clairvoyant research of Annie Besant and Charles Leadbeater as presented in their book *Occult Chemistry*.⁷⁸ Francisco J. Varela, Evan Thompson, and Eleanor Rosch have utilized the teachings of Buddhism to expand the horizons of cognitive science, the broad approach

to the study of mind that incorporates work from the domains of philosophy, linguistics, artificial intelligence, neuroscience, and cognitive psychology. In their book, *The Embodied Mind*, they state that the rediscovery of Asian philosophy has the potential to create a second renaissance in the West, particularly in science and cognitive science.⁷⁹ Although many of their hypotheses, such as the understanding of evolution as “natural drift,” may conflict with Bailey’s model, their work deserves thoughtful study and I believe that Bailey students can and should contribute to this renaissance in science and cognitive science as well.

Bailey has offered perhaps the most extensive modern teachings on the *chakras* (Skt.) and the etheric body, and students of her work are therefore in a unique position of being able to provide a new approach in many fields of research. Malvin Artley has explored the correlations between the head centers and the brain and he thereby helps to provide a foundation for esoteric research in neuroscience.⁸⁰ This work of explicating and correlating Bailey’s writings on the etheric body can also contribute, for example, to the new field of *neurotheology*, a subject that relates neuroscience and theology as it explores connections between the brain and experiences of God.⁸¹ It is important to note that there are approximately 250 references to the brain in the Master Index of Bailey’s writings. These ideas, offered by the Tibetan in an era before modern brain research was well established, may provide a wealth of information for academic work in neuroscience, in consciousness studies, and especially in the turbulent debates swirling around the “mind/body problem” that attempt to understand how the immaterial “mind” could possibly interact with the physical brain.

Another possibility for correlating, or perhaps integrating, Bailey’s model of the etheric body with modern science is found in the area of ethnology, a branch of anthropology focusing on human characteristics and a field of study listed by the Tibetan as a necessary component in the curriculum of future esoteric schools. Ethnology may also be considered as a science that investigates the divisions of human races, their origins, and distribution. Bailey’s conten-

tion that human consciousness evolves through distinct stages over enormous time cycles is explicit in the esoteric teachings concerning interrelated schemes, chains, rounds, globes, and root-races, a comprehensive doctrine presented earlier in Blavatsky’s teachings. These ideas will likely be challenged, especially by anthropologists, as much has changed in academia since the Tibetan mentioned “ethnology” without elaborating on his intended meaning of the term. Building on the work of authors who have explicated these teachings of planetary and racial evolution,⁸² Bailey students have an important opportunity to relate these ideas to current understandings in academia.

A specific example for possibly introducing Bailey’s model within ethnology relates to the recent scientific discovery of the *enteric nervous system*, which provides support for Bailey’s ideas regarding human evolution and the etheric body. Bailey states that the solar plexus center (chakra) governs the psychic nature,⁸³ directs and controls certain aspects of the nervous system, “is in large part the instinctual or animal brain,”⁸⁴ and was active during the Atlantean root-race when human consciousness was largely psychic and emotionally focused.⁸⁵ These ideas now have greater credence given that the enteric nervous system, which is embedded in the lining of the gastrointestinal system, “. . . is now recognized as a complex, integrative brain in its own right” and is commonly referred to as the “second brain.”⁸⁶ From the perspective of Bailey’s model of evolutionary development it may be more accurate to speak of the enteric nervous system as the “*first* brain.”

If Bailey’s writings on the etheric body (macrocosmic and microcosmic) and etheric matter and substance in general⁸⁷ are to contribute to the advance of science⁸⁸ we will need to correlate these teachings with the current explorations of scientists who are entering new frontiers in the understanding of matter, explorations such as those found in *plasma physics*, plasma being recognized by science as the fourth state of matter,⁸⁹ and in the study of *dark energy* and *dark matter* which make up 96% of the matter density of the universe.⁹⁰ An

example of the possible correlation between etheric matter or substance and neurophysiology on the quantum level is found in Bailey's explication of the *nadis* (Skt.) and the model of Orchestrated Objective Reduction proposed by theoretical physicist Sir Roger Penrose and anesthesiologist Stuart Hameroff. Bailey states that the human etheric body externalizes itself through the nadis, the lines of force that underlie the physical system of nerves.

[The four types of etheric substance] . . . create a network of channels; they produce fine tubes (if I may use so inappropriate a word) which take the general form of the dense material or tangible form with which they may be associated. This form underlies every part of the physical body . . . The mass of the smaller channels or the channeling tubes of energy eventually create in all forms that layer of corresponding nerves which are not yet recognized by medical science but which are like an intermediary web or network . . . It is this system underlying the nerves which is the true response apparatus and which—via the brain—telegraphs information to the mind or, via the brain and the mind, keeps the soul informed.⁹¹

Recognition of the nadis by medical science may have been achieved by Hameroff and Penrose who suggest that *microtubules* (Bailey's "channeling tubes"), an important component of the cytoskeleton, which provides an internal supportive structure for neurons, may play a role in the phenomenon of consciousness. Penrose states, "On the view that I am tentatively putting forward, consciousness would be some manifestation of this quantum-entangled internal cytoskeletal state and of its involvement in the interplay (OR [Orchestrated Reduction]) between quantum and classical levels of activity."⁹²

The Tibetan asserts that testifying to the fact of the etheric body is "one of the main obligations of occult students."⁹³ His teachings on the etheric body will likely have much to contribute to fields of scientific research in biology, including *morphogenesis*, *morphogenetic field theory*, and *evolutionary developmental biology*, as well as to debates surrounding the hy-

pothesis of morphic resonance or causative formation proposed by Rupert Sheldrake.⁹⁴ The Tibetan further claims that scientific knowledge of the fourth ether, the lowest grade of etheric substance (counting "downward" from the first, or atomic subplane of the physical plane), will be achieved in the "immediate future" and it will be understood as "the electrical manifestation of energy within definite limits."⁹⁵ He goes on to state that this is indicated in the discoveries of radium and radioactivity and is therefore related to "the eastern conception of Vishnu-Brahma, or the Rays of Light vibrating through matter."⁹⁶ Physicist Richard Feynman (1918–1988) notes that the theory of the interaction of light and matter, or quantum electrodynamics, is "the jewel" of modern physics despite the fact that it is a "strange theory" that nobody understands and that describes "Nature as absurd."⁹⁷ The merging of this theoretical science and the esoteric sciences may promote new understandings in many areas, especially in the philosophy of mind, cognitive science, studies of the mind/brain relationship, and the building of the antahkarana—"the bridge of electrified mental substance" as described by Newey.

Perhaps the most important and practical work Bailey students can do with respect to the etheric levels of the physical plane will be to elucidate the psychological causes of disease and the requirements for healing, and to demonstrate the efficacy of the Laws of Healing in collaborative work with the medical profession.⁹⁸ Although the Tibetan emphasizes that the work of the ideal healing group lies far in the future he also states that a beginning can now be made. It seems obvious that Bailey students can contribute a great deal to the new directions being explored today within medical science, many of them foretold by the Tibetan.⁹⁹ His teachings regarding elemental and devic beings and their responsiveness to mental influence and control may also have a great deal to contribute to addiction studies which are currently addressed primarily at the levels of chemistry and neurophysiology. These ideas may contribute to related areas such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) as well. The Tibetan states that knowledge of etheric substance will "revolutionise the life of man" in-

cluding the development of new forms of healing.¹⁰⁰

Developing such knowledge will be facilitated by the effects of the incoming fourth ray and corresponding activity on the fourth etheric subplane. The Tibetan asserts that scientists will comprehend this level of substance as “force” within matter, or as “the electrical manifestation of energy.”¹⁰¹ It should be recalled that a primary purpose of *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* is “to direct the attention of the scientific and philosophic students to the study of force or energy in man and in groups, and to interpret man and the human family in terms of electrical phenomena . . .”¹⁰² As one example, in discussing the disruption of the circulatory flow between the etheric body, the nadis, the nervous system, and the physical body following the surgical removal of an organ, the Tibetan states that little is yet known of this topic and that it is not even being researched in medical science. However, he also predicts that the science of electricity will advance rapidly in the 21st century.¹⁰³ Notably, research in this area has begun, despite tremendous opposition, by Robert O. Becker (1923–2008) and others as they have pioneered experiments in the field of bioelectric regeneration.¹⁰⁴ As suggested by the Tibetan, a new “biofield” science is emerging.¹⁰⁵

There has also been considerable interest and academic research regarding the nature of death in recent decades and Bailey’s extensive writings on the subject as an aspect of healing can contribute greatly to these investigations.¹⁰⁶ The study of near-death experiences and numerous other paranormal topics have been the focus of academic study for decades.¹⁰⁷ The Tibetan places enormous emphasis on the Law of Rebirth not only with respect to the process of death but as a foundational aspect of new approaches to education, psychology, and religion. Regarding this law he makes numerous claims including: its recognition is one of three *immediate* steps ahead for the educational systems of the world; it will serve as the foundation for the new psychology and as “a major releasing agent in any moment of crisis;”¹⁰⁸ it is one of two momentous facts that must be established by the New Group of World Servers;¹⁰⁹ it will be one of the keynotes

of the new world religion; it is inherent in the work of establishing right human relations; and in its recognition the problems of humanity will be resolved.¹¹⁰ Theosophist Sylvia Cranston has done an enormous amount of work in bringing the theory of reincarnation to widespread public attention through her writings and presentations, including a lecture at Columbia University’s College of Physicians and Surgeons in 1979.¹¹¹ Given the great emphasis that the Tibetan places on educating the public regarding the Law of Rebirth and its central role in new forms of education, psychology, and religion, one might ask, “What have Bailey students done in the past seventy years to inform the public of the Law of Rebirth?” More importantly we must ask, “What *can* Bailey students do to inform the public of this Law?”

Quantum theory is taking an increasingly prominent role in current academic theories of consciousness and religion. The Tibetan chose not to engage directly with the theory of quantum mechanics, which was emerging during the time of his work with Bailey, for several likely reasons. These include his acknowledgement of Bailey’s and his own limitations, the factor of safety and the need to withhold information, and the fact that he was not interested in usurping the prerogatives of science.¹¹² He did, however, address the subject of atomic physics through his teachings on *transmutation* and the esoteric significance of radiation, radium, and radioactivity, which he applied via the Law of Analogy on cosmic, planetary, and human scales as well as the atomic.¹¹³ John Polkinghorne provides an example of the important and creative work that can be done in relating quantum theory and religion. Trained as a theoretical physicist, at age forty-seven he resigned his position at Cambridge to become an ordained Anglican priest and has since contributed numerous works that contribute to the integration of science and religion.¹¹⁴ He is one of many Christian scholars, including for example, T. F. Torrance, Ian Barbour and Arthur Peacocke, characterized as *theological critical realists* whose concern is to explore the relations between science and religion.

In addition to learning some of the fundamental concepts from quantum physics that guide

and shape much of the current discussion within religion, philosophy, and consciousness studies,¹¹⁵ Bailey students may also need to come to terms with the sciences of complexity that have emerged in the latter half of the 20th century, sciences such as nonlinear systems theory, chaos theory, nonequilibrium thermodynamics, and autopoietic systems theory. These sciences and related ideas, such as “emergence,” and “self-organization,” have penetrated the public imagination and influence scholars in diverse fields. They contribute to the current orthodoxy of “scientific naturalism,” its widespread acceptance in philosophy, and to the growing “naturalization” of religion and theology—an approach that finds no need for revealed theology, miracles, or supernatural entities such as gods, angels, demons, or the soul. Stuart Kauffman is a leading member of the Santa Fe Institute and founding director of the Institute for Biocomplexity and Informatics. He reflects this dominant perspective by suggesting:

We appear to be living in an emergent universe in which life and agency arose with

no need for a Creator God . . . The radical implication is that we live in an emergent universe in which ceaseless unforeseeable creativity arises and surrounds us . . . This emergent universe, the ceaseless creativity in this universe, is the bedrock of the sacred that I believe we must reinvent.¹¹⁶

If Bailey’s writings are to receive respectful consideration within academia they will need to be presented in ways that are cognizant of such current orthodox views. And if we are to present esoteric teachings in a way that spiritual realities will be factual and proven as the Tibetan states they must be, we will also need to reflect on appropriate research methodologies and possibly create new ones. In this regard I think it is notable that Dean Radin, senior scientist at the Institute of Noetic Sciences, presented his research at the 2016 University of the Seven Rays Conference. There is also much that can be learned from the work of those in transpersonal psychology who have endeavored for decades to present transpersonal research in scientifically acceptable ways.¹¹⁷



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photo credit – author

Practical Suggestions for Building a Bridge to Academia

In order for the Tibetan's teachings to reach the wider public, the intelligentsia, and academics, it is important for Bailey students to address, critique, and incorporate ideas that are circulating today in the public sphere rather than focusing exclusively on dated esoteric writings. As the Tibetan insisted, we need to come down from our ivory towers and labor in "the hard arena of daily and public life." He was distressed to note, however, that accepted disciples ("chelas") typically possess aspiration and devotion but only "occasionally fair mental equipment" and, in general, they lack "the needed prerequisites to intensive intelligent work."¹¹⁸ In this time of great crises I suggest that Bailey students need to undertake such intensive work and immerse themselves in academic knowledge, as well as esoteric knowledge, to bring the light of the Soul into the realm of public understanding more effectively.

This work does not necessarily require an advanced university degree because many academics are working across disciplinary boundaries (e.g., science, religion, philosophy, consciousness studies) and are seeking holistic approaches to numerous topics. Much of academic discourse is therefore undertaken at a generalized level of understanding to which any dedicated student or motivated layperson can contribute if they are willing to undertake the necessary "intensive intelligent work." Academic resources for this work are easily available as public and university libraries often provide free access to academic journals, most of which are available online. With a flash or thumb drive it is possible to download unlimited journal articles for personal research use. Some universities allow members of the community access to library resources for a nominal annual fee. Through dedicated research into existing academic discussions, dialogues, and debates, Bailey students will find the most appropriate journals, publishers, and settings through which to disseminate their own contributions.

As much of the work of engaging with academia will be done through writing and publishing I suggest it is imperative that Bailey students conform to academic writing standards. *The Esoteric Quarterly* and the School for Esoteric Studies have taken the lead amongst Bailey organizations by adopting such standards. Prominent among these are appropriate stylistic standards such as *The Chicago Manual of Style*, used widely in academia, or the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* ("APA style"), used primarily in the social sciences. Articles or books that do not conform to such standards, especially with regard to referencing sources, will be rejected by mainstream publishers. If published elsewhere they will appear to be ill-informed or immature works that will likely be ignored by many despite providing possibly valuable content. While much information can be gleaned from publisher's brief style sheets or from close attention to published works, the best way to learn such standards is to obtain one of the above mentioned writing style manuals appropriate for one's work.

I also suggest that several specific practices should be followed. First, students should consider conforming to the commonly used standard for referencing Bailey's works which is to use the date (year) of first printing rather than to include or reference later printings or electronic versions (e.g., "*A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1925" rather than, "*A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1982 (Twelfth Printing, 3rd Paperback Edition"), assuming that all editions have the same pagination.

Second, it will be useful to provide specific page references for all ideas found in published works. Technically, only direct quotations may require specific page referencing whereas general ideas need only include the author and volume, indicated by date. However, since introducing Bailey's ideas to the public is a novel undertaking, articles and books focused on her work will serve as important reference materials for research. Providing specific information to help this esoteric research, as well as for all published works explored, will be quite

valuable. In other words, it is of little help to discuss a complex esoteric idea and to then simply reference (Bailey, 1925) and expect the reader of the article to scan the entire volume of *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* or otherwise scour the index in the hope of finding further information on a particular topic, whereas by providing the specific page number(s) the reader will be directed to the information immediately. If the editor of your work prohibits such extensive referencing at least you will have a detailed record of your research and you might be able to insert a footnote stating that detailed references are available upon request.

Third, it seems necessary to point out that anonymous writings are generally not allowed in academic publishing. Many Bailey students maintain this practice but I suggest (from personal experience) that it likely exhibits false humility, a glamour of selfish selflessness, or fear, especially the fear of exposure, as many Bailey students prefer to remain safely in the shadows. Anonymous writings will likely have little, if any, impact on the intelligentsia and the public. If something is worth stating one must have the courage to take a public stand and to be accountable for it. I further suggest that the practice of retaining anonymity is contrary to the Tibetan's insistence that secrecy must be avoided and that it also violates "The Rules of the Road."¹¹⁹

Fourth, it is imperative for Bailey students to utilize gender-inclusive language, a practice that has been the norm in journalistic and academic publishing for over three decades now. Again, *The Esoteric Quarterly* and The School for Esoteric Studies have taken leadership roles in this area.¹²⁰ For Bailey students and organizations to continue using male dominant language (aside from direct quotations) when communicating with the public may give the immediate impression that the writing (and/or speech) is anachronistic, biased, and likely irrelevant. Given that violence against women remains a major injustice throughout the world, continued use of patriarchal language may also seem to be insensitive, insulting, and as possibly contributing to sustaining oppressive attitudes and behavior.

Finally, it might be helpful to keep in mind that efforts to introduce the ideas of the Tibetan to the public are all aspects of a great group experiment and there is no one correct way of undertaking such work. The Tibetan insists that the work of esotericists in the New Age is not to be *organized* or regimented but rather needs to be expressed as a living, dynamic *organism*, as a network of light. This work will be carried out through the efforts of many individuals linked together via numerous inter-subjective connections: purely subjective work on the plane of mind; communications and dialogues facilitated especially by electronic means; and meetings on the physical plane, ranging from small study groups to educational settings and conferences. Publishing an academic paper or book is one important way of introducing the Tibetan's teachings to the public and the intelligentsia. There are many other ways to contribute to this work that each student can imagine, explore, and develop. Creating research networks is one. As suggested by the Tibetan,¹²¹ forming meditation and study groups on a local level is another valuable contribution especially if such study groups are brought to the attention of the intelligentsia, for example by advertising the study group meetings on university campuses. As this work proceeds I believe there will be increasing opportunities to teach Bailey's esoteric philosophy, or "Cosmic Fire Studies," in numerous educational and academic settings.

Challenges to the Work of Building a Bridge to Academia

Perhaps the greatest challenge for the work of building a bridge between the Tibetan's teachings as presented in the writings of Alice Bailey and academia is that there are apparently few Bailey students willing and able to undertake this work. I do not think this is an insuperable problem, however, as I believe it will only take a small number of dedicated students to spark an interest within academia. Once the intelligence and wisdom inherent in the Tibetan's teachings have penetrated academia I think the vast majority of the work to be done in bringing the ideas of the New Age before the public will be done by academics

and the intelligentsia who recognize their value, not by longtime Bailey students who have demonstrated little interest to date in educating the general public. I believe an important task, as students of the Tibetan's teachings, is to initiate the process and guide it as best we can with the wisdom and experience gained over nearly one hundred years. We need to *precipitate* the ideas into the public consciousness and I believe the best way to do so is through direct communication with the intelligentsia and academics. As the Tibetan often explained, the intelligentsia will then transform esoteric ideas into ideals that the general public will recognize and manifest.

Another major challenge to this work will be to respond to the attacks that will inevitably be directed toward any efforts to introduce Bailey's writings to academia and toward Bailey's work in general. We should expect and prepare for a range of criticisms and respond with as much equanimity and loving intelligence as possible, preferably through some form of group work. To date, criticisms have focused primarily on superficial charges that Bailey's writings are racist and anti-Semitic. Regarding race relations, Bailey was actually decades ahead of her time in opposing racial discrimination and in calling for racial justice.¹²² It is likely that Bailey's ideas regarding the evolution of human consciousness through various root-races will be criticized and students of her work will need to consider carefully such arguments—we will need to be well-grounded in esoteric teachings, understand clearly the criticisms directed toward them, hold the critic accountable for explicating her or his own theoretical position, and be able to engage in fruitful dialogue. I suggest it would be a valuable contribution for one or more Bailey students to publish an article or book that not only expli-

cates Bailey's theory of human and planetary evolution by building on the work of the authors previously referenced (endnote 82), but that also includes a thorough examination, comparison, and critique of current academic theories of racial and planetary evolution.

Thoughtful criticisms claiming that Bailey's writings are anti-Semitic will also need to be addressed with a high degree of knowledge and loving intelligence. This work has been undertaken in recent years by a group of Bailey students in an online dialogue, and Lucis Trust offers a paper on their website addressing the issue.¹²³ The Tibetan's position is clearly anti-Zionist as he argued forcefully against creating a further separation within humanity, a separation that would inevitably be brought about by

the creation of the state of Israel. The resulting wars, violence, and tensions in the Middle East and related worldwide instability and suffering have regrettably proven the accuracy of his predictions. In 1946 he insisted that the world religions must make specific changes. He continued,

If none of these things happen, humanity is headed towards a religious war which will make the past war [1914–1945] appear like child's play; antagonisms and hatreds will embroil entire populations and the politicians of all the nations will take full advantage of the situation to precipitate a war which may well prove the end of humanity. There are no hatreds so great or deep as those fostered by religion.¹²⁴

It seems that this is the direction in which humanity is rapidly heading and that the primary solution lies in education. The Tibetan stated that the issues confronting humanity at the end of the war (1914–1945) “should be faced *with*

In order for the Tibetan's teachings to reach the wider public, the intelligentsia, and academics, it is important for Bailey students to address, critique, and incorporate ideas that are circulating today in the public sphere rather than focusing exclusively on dated esoteric writings. As the Tibetan insisted, we need to come down from our ivory towers and labor in “the hard arena of daily and public life.”

courage, with truth and understanding, as well as with the willingness to speak factually, with simplicity and with love in the effort to expose the truth and clarify the problems which must be solved.”¹²⁵ I suggest that if all sides of the historical, political, and religious issues involved are widely studied and understood; and if individuals, in recognizing the Law of Rebirth, realize both that they have likely contributed to the problems of humanity through their past actions and that they will likely have future incarnated experience in a culture, religion, or nation they currently oppose, the natural goodwill and intelligence of humanity will more easily be able to work out solutions from this more inclusive and less entrenched perspective. This recognition requires, of course, that the doctrine of reincarnation be intelligently, convincingly, and widely disseminated. As noted above, this work is one of three *immediate* steps ahead for the educational systems of the world; it concerns a fact that *must* be established by the New Group of World Servers; and in its recognition *the problems of humanity will be resolved*.

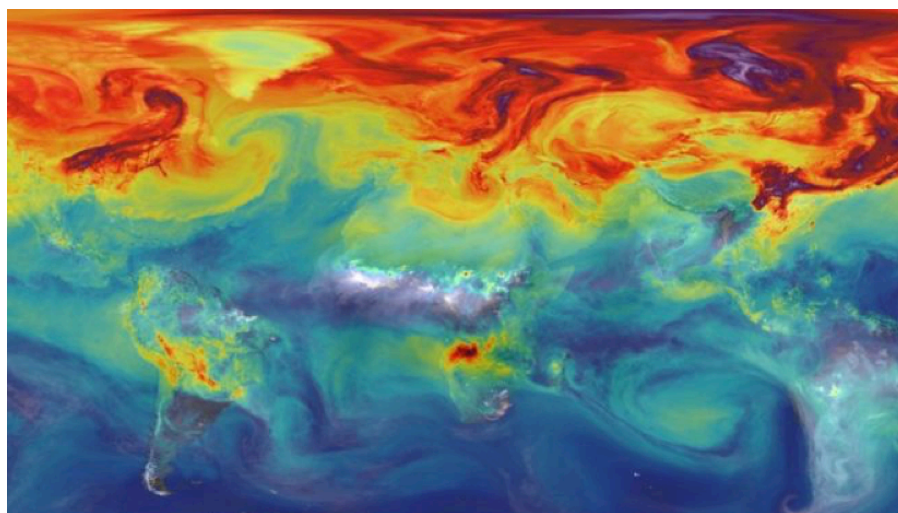
New challenges will arise as Bailey’s writings are introduced into academia since they will challenge or contradict many traditional understandings. As I have argued, it is important for Bailey students to be well educated in current academic knowledge so that they may understand and respond to such challenges, questions, and criticisms and thereby be able to engage in fruitful dialogue. It is also important for Bailey students to be receptive, adaptable, and humble, and to recognize the limitations of the Tibetan’s dated teachings, limitations which he frequently acknowledged, such as in his statement that he is “guilty of creating new prisoners . . . [as] all books are prison houses of ideas . . .”¹²⁶

Other major challenges will arise from the actions of those who find value in Bailey’s work and appropriate, or misappropriate, the Tibetan’s teachings while having only a limited understanding of them. The best solution, I suggest, is for longtime students of these teachings

to exercise leadership in educating the intelligentsia and the public and to set high standards for the interpretation, application, and dissemination of these teachings. Other challenges will surface regarding the legitimacy of such efforts. It is likely that some students new to the work will establish themselves as teachers and authors. This may lead to grievous degradations of the teachings or, in some cases, such efforts may be brilliant. Even among longtime Bailey students the efforts to educate the public and to convey esoteric ideas range along an entire spectrum of intelligent understanding and effectiveness. Another major challenge will arise regarding the disparate motives for such work as some individuals may seek to appropriate the Tibetan’s teachings for egotistical reward and/or commercial gain. As the teachings gain recognition it is likely that they will be commodified and sold with extravagant claims. Another danger lies in the likelihood that esoteric ideas will at times be presented or utilized on cognitive levels only without adequate emphasis on the necessity for incorporating meditation and service into a daily life practice. And finally, a major challenge will be to overcome the fragmentation that has developed among Bailey organizations and students since Bailey’s passing in 1949. Working together on the plane of mind to build a bridge to the intelligentsia may serve to help heal these divisions.

These are just a few examples of the many challenges and problems that will arise from efforts to introduce the Tibetan’s teachings into academia. Despite the risks, given the crises facing humanity today I believe such efforts must be made and that longtime students of these teachings need to actively discuss and coordinate their ideas and plans, their progress, their challenges, and their proposed solutions. All of these efforts must be undertaken in light of the Tibetan’s insistence that new methods of communication, cooperation, and group work must be developed through *dynamic organisms* of world servers rather than through existing structures of crystallized organizations.

Conclusion



A depiction of the global sources of CO₂

<http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-37729033>. Image Credit: NASA.

In Part II of this article I have endeavored to outline a positive approach to address and help resolve our current crises by simply following the urgent injunctions made by the Tibetan to educate the public and the intelligentsia regarding “the academic truths of the esoteric teaching.” Part I of this article and my concluding remarks here, however, may sound negative, harsh and judgmental. Indeed they are, as my stated intention is to sound a much stronger wake-up call than the one issued by Nancy Seifer ten years ago, a call that was largely ignored by the Bailey community. Most Bailey organizations and students have focused selectively on optimistic statements made by the Tibetan and have created a thoughtform of assured and joyful triumph. This thoughtform, in my opinion, has lulled the Bailey community into a state of hopeful expectancy while perpetuating “the old methods and modes of work” with only minor adaptations. In line with this thoughtform it has been proclaimed with certainty that the members of the Hierarchy will begin the process of externalization “. . . in the coming decades . . . to help usher in the new age and prepare human consciousness for the reappearance of the World Teacher.” In order to provide a more balanced perspective and to counteract this

possibly illusory and misleading thoughtform I have focused on many less optimistic statements the Tibetan makes and on the possible dire consequences he states will result if the necessary work is not accomplished. In contrast to the pronouncement quoted above I believe the Tibetan indicates clearly that it is *our* work *now* to “prepare human consciousness for the reappearance of the World Teacher,” an urgent task given that over the past seventy years not nearly enough has been accomplished in educating the general public regarding the Three Recognitions.

Our global crises are worsening daily—global CO₂ levels have reached 410 parts per million¹²⁷ while simultaneously politicians, controlled by major corporations, are reversing decades of environmental protections. Authoritarian political movements are on the rise . . . I need not continue. Many Bailey organizations and students seem to accept this descent toward global catastrophe as the inevitable result of extra-planetary forces and assert the fact that it heralds the equally inevitable Reappearance of the Christ and Externalization of the Hierarchy, an event which will presumably save humanity and the planet. Bailey organizations and students typically point to the encouraging efforts made by others in “the hard

arena of daily and public life” as indications of this impending event while remaining isolated in their ivory towers, restricting their own efforts for the most part to subjective, “esoteric” work as it has been done for nearly a century, seemingly oblivious to the Tibetan’s urgent calls for his students to assume their spiritual duties and responsibilities by demonstrating public leadership and fighting evil with every possible agency. On numerous occasions during the global crises of the past century the Tibetan literally begs his students to take action to educate the public with respect to the light and wisdom inherent in his teachings. Regarding his efforts he states,

... there are enough people in the world today [1941] to turn the tide *if* they can be aroused from their apathy.

I tried to arouse them to speed and clear thinking between the years 1932-1938 but though something was accomplished, it was not enough. The blindness, illusion, separateness and inertia of the aspirants of the world today constitute one of the factors with which the Hierarchy has to contend. Aspirants are preoccupied with their own little affairs and with their own small efforts, instead of relinquishing everything in an endeavour to unite on the needed appeal and activity. They are contending for their own interpretations of truth, and for their pet ideals of peace, living or work and—like Nero—they “fiddle whilst Rome burns.”¹²⁸

While disaster at that time was narrowly averted, the Forces of Materialism have since regained strength and a pervasive global influence and control. Bailey organizations and students, however, have for the most part settled down to providing esoteric education that draws interested students into their organizations, rather than disseminating esoteric knowledge and wisdom out to the intelligentsia and the wider public as the Tibetan requested. Merely having a website or utilizing social media are not, in my opinion, serious and committed educational endeavors to bring about fundamental changes in human thinking by the year 2025. I question whether Bailey organizations today are not susceptible to the

same criticisms Bailey herself directed toward the Theosophical Society when she claimed, “. . . [its management was] reactionary and old-fashioned . . . it was degenerating into a sectarian group more interested in founding and sustaining lodges and increasing the membership than in reaching the general public with the truths of the Ageless Wisdom.”¹²⁹

While it seems that every Bailey organization has a project underway to eliminate world glamour and illusion, we might do well to keep in mind the Tibetan’s warning: “Occult bodies and esoteric groups are, at this time, the most glamourised of any of the world groups . . .”¹³⁰ One Bailey organization has insisted recently that we must appeal to the intuition to understand our current crises because the intellect alone is not sufficient and succumbs to illusion. Another Bailey organization has called for students to utilize the energy of *Fohat* (Tbt.) to “purify the astral plane . . . and permanently destroy the negative thought-forms.”¹³¹ I suggest that these proposals are misdirected and avoid the necessary mental work “of hard straight thinking” that is involved in the more effective approach that utilizes the powers of the illumined mind, an approach that the Tibetan endorses when he warns students of mistaken attempts to dissipate glamour by invoking the soul and higher energies.¹³²

Perhaps the above ideas for subjective and highly abstract work are sound. Perhaps also the Externalization of the Hierarchy is proceeding exactly according to the Plan and a large number of trained initiates are already or will soon be manifesting the necessary work. I do not know. What I do see is an isolated and fragmented community of Bailey students, many of whose published works are not well developed and will not withstand the scrutiny of intelligent analysis. It is not my intention to criticize unnecessarily specific organizations or individuals. However, after thirty-five years of experience attempting to work within the Bailey community I feel compelled to not only sound a wake-up call but to also sound a cautionary warning. Yes, we may be students of a teaching that reveals astounding intelligence and wisdom. However, in my opinion, this

knowledge often engenders a sense of spiritual superiority while in fact many of our public efforts are extremely weak and expose a great vulnerability as many Bailey organizations and students yet lack “the needed prerequisites to intensive intelligent work” as the Tibetan noted long ago. Our weaknesses and vulnerabilities are generally concealed by our commitment to the principle of harmlessness and by a refusal to offer criticism of each other’s efforts. Our weaknesses and vulnerabilities are further concealed by our historical unwillingness to risk exposure and criticism in the public sphere and by our choice to remain in the shadows doing our “esoteric work” and “preparing the subjective field.” I believe strongly that it is imperative for us to share *constructive* criticisms amongst ourselves rather than to wait and suffer *devastating* criticisms from the intelligentsia when the ideas of Bailey organizations and students are exposed more broadly in the public sphere.

In contrast to the subjective efforts of Bailey organizations mentioned throughout this article, the suggestions I have offered in this article are more down-to-earth, practical, and will, I believe, be more effective in addressing our world crises. I have endeavored to outline a plan that will bring the practical wisdom of the Tibetan’s teachings directly to the intelligent public so that the prevalent forces of evil can be recognized and effectively opposed, and right human relations can thereby be achieved more readily. The purpose of this article is also to encourage open and honest dialogue and debate within Bailey organizations, between organizations, and amongst students as to what our immediate goals should be in the next few years and how to most effectively achieve them.

I conclude this article with an optimistic vision. I imagine that the Three Recognitions, of the world of meaning and of the Soul, of the Hierarchy, and of the Plan are brought to public attention before 2025 by a new wave of “young workers” who embody Aquarian values and who are ready to move beyond “the old methods and modes of work” as the Tibetan insisted we must. I envision a world in which his ideas are discussed widely in the

public sphere and academia, and university courses in “Cosmic Fire Studies” are widespread. I imagine international conferences where participants representing the greater Bailey community work in creative cooperation with an equal number of academics from diverse fields of study. I envision a world in which the thoughtform of “possessive individualism” has been replaced by the New Age ideals of “the group good,” “group work,” and “service to humanity.” I imagine that before 2025 the “Words of the Year” recognized by our major dictionaries will be “Goodwill” and “Right-Human-Relations.”

I believe all of this is possible. I also believe it will take an enormous amount of dedicated effort undertaken on the mental plane, focused in the light of the Soul, energized by love, and manifested courageously on the physical plane in our daily lives and contacts. We cannot wait for the Hierarchy to resolve our world crises. The Hierarchy is waiting for us.

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- ¹ Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II* (New York: Lucis, 1955), 48.
 - ² Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology I* (New York: Lucis, 1936), xx.
 - ³ Alice A. Bailey, *Externalisation of the Hierarchy* (New York: Lucis, 1957), 15-16.
 - ⁴ Alice A. Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation* (New York: Lucis, 1922), 302-305. Elsewhere Bailey states, “The Yoga Sutras are the basic teaching of the Trans-Himalayan School to which many [but note, not all] of the Masters of the Wisdom belong . . .” Alice A. Bailey, *The Light of the Soul: Its Science and Effect—A Paraphrase of The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali* (New York: Lucis, 1927), xv.
 - ⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (New York: Lucis, 1925), 1079-80; *Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 15-16.
 - ⁶ Alice Leighton Cleather and Basil Crump, *The Pseudo-Occultism of Mrs. A. Bailey* (from the pamphlet issued by International Study Centre for Independent Search for Truth, 1929). Online: <http://www.teosofiskompaniet.net/BlavatskyvsBaileyALC.htm> (accessed September 23, 2016).
 - ⁷ Phillip Lindsay has compiled numerous informative articles under the heading: “Alice A. Bailey, H. P. Blavatsky and Helena Roe-

- rich—Cleavages between the followers of three traditions: The Theosophical Society, The Arcane School, The Agni Yoga Society.” Online:
<http://www.esotericaastrologer.org/EAauthorEsays/AABHPBHR3.htm#HRAB2> (accessed November 18, 2014).
- 8 The Tibetan acknowledges that some students may contact distorted representations of the Masters on the higher levels of the astral plane. See, for example, Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age I* (New York: Lucis, 1944), 238, 544, 567-68, 602. He also asserts that teachings regarding the Masters put forth by the “I AM” movement are a travesty, “prostituting and bringing down almost into the realm of cheap comedy” the work and movement within the Hierarchy (Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* [New York: Lucis, 1960], 16). See also Leoni Hodgson, “The Problem of Channelling and Channelers” (2013). Online:
<http://www.brisbanegoodwill.com/esoteric-philosophy/problem-of-channelling-and-channellers/> (accessed May 7, 2016).
- 9 Bailey offers eight fundamental doctrines of the Ageless Wisdom tradition upon which “all the esoteric teaching rests” (Alice A. Bailey, *The Unfinished Autobiography* [New York: Lucis, 1951], 294-95).
- 10 Guénon, René, *Le Théosophisme: Histoire d'une Pseudo-Religion* [1921]. *Theosophy: History of a Pseudo-Religion*. Alvin Moore, Jr., Cecil Bethell, Hubert, and Rohini Schiff, trans. (Hillsdale: NY, Sophia Perennis, 2001). For a Traditionalist criticism of Steiner see, Rodney Blackhirst, “Rudolf Steiner, Anthroposophy, and Tradition.” Online:
http://www.sacredweb.com/online_articles/sw5_blackhirst.pdf (accessed December 13, 2015).
- 11 Alice A. Bailey, *The Soul and its Mechanism* (New York: Lucis, 1930), 107-112.
- 12 For a critical review from a Traditionalist perspective of John Holman’s presentation of Blavatsky, Bailey, and Assagioli’s views, see Samuel Bendeck Sotillos, review of *The Return of the Perennial Philosophy: The Supreme Vision of Western Esotericism*, by John Holman (London: Watkins Publishing, 2008). Online:
http://sacredweb.com/online_articles/sw25_sotillos.pdf (accessed April 24, 2017).
- 13 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology I*, 195. For other definitions of “esotericism” see especially, Alice A. Bailey, *Education in the New Age* (New York: Lucis, 1954), 59-68.
- 14 “What is Esotericism? Esotericism in Academia.” From the website of the Association for the Study of Esotericism (ASE). Online:
http://www.aseweb.org/?page_id=6 (accessed September 24, 2016). See also John F. Nash, “Themes in Western Esotericism,” *The Esoteric Quarterly* (10)3: 17-45 (Fall 2014).
- 15 Antoine Faivre (b. 1934) is a pioneering figure in modern esoteric studies and formerly held a chair in the École Pratique des Hautes Études at the Sorbonne.
- 16 M. Temple Richmond, “The Central Doctrines of the Alice A. Bailey Writings and Their Roots in the Theosophy of H.P. Blavatsky with Response to Faivre’s Six Criteria for the Definition of Western Esotericism” (Convention of the American Academy of Religion—Western Esotericism Consultation, Boston, MA, 1999). At one time this paper was available online as an Occasional Paper of the Aquarian Age Community. Richmond has since rewritten the paper as, “The Central Metaphysical Doctrines of the Alice A. Bailey Writings and Their Roots in the Theosophy of H.P. Blavatsky.” Online:
<http://kinsett.com/articles/spirituality-articles/the-central-metaphysical-doctrines-of-the-alice-a-bailey-writings-and-their-roots-in-the-theosophy-of-h-p-blavatsky-by-m-temple-richmond> (accessed November 7, 2016).
- 17 Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *The Western Esoteric Traditions: A Historical Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2008).
- 18 Association for the Study of Esotericism (ASE) 6th International Conference, “Cartographies of the Soul.” June 17, 2016, University of California, Davis. Online:
http://www.aseweb.org/?page_id=348 (accessed September 25, 2016).
- 19 Richmond, “Central Metaphysical Doctrines,” 17-18. Antoine Faivre and Jacob Needleman, *Modern Esoteric Spirituality* (New York: Crossroad, 1995).
- 20 See for example, Harris L. Friedman and Glenn Hartelius (ed.), *The Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of Transpersonal Psychology*, (Malden, MA: John Wiley and Sons, 2013); Donald Moss, *Humanistic and Transpersonal Psychology: A Historical and Biographical Sourcebook* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999); David Borsos, *The Esoteric Philosophy of Alice A. Bailey: Ageless Wisdom for a New Age* (PhD dissertation, California Institute of

- Integral Studies, 2012), 55-90. Online: <http://gradworks.proquest.com/3517075.pdf> (accessed April 25, 2017).
- 21 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology* I, 331-32.
- 22 Personal letters addressed to Assagioli ("FCD") from the Tibetan can be found in, Bailey: *Discipleship* I, 138-56; and *Discipleship* II, 459-73.
- 23 Roberto Assagioli, *Psychosynthesis: A Manual of Principles and Techniques* (New York: Penguin, 1981).
- 24 One notable exception is transpersonal scholar Arthur Hastings (1935–2014) who devoted two chapters to Bailey in his work on the phenomena of channeling (*With the Tongues of Men and Angels* [Fort Worth, TX: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1991]). However, he took an etic approach and apparently derived most of his understanding of Bailey's work through Sir John Sinclair's *The Alice Bailey Inheritance* (Wellingborough, United Kingdom: Turnstone, 1984).
- 25 Anonymous reviewer comments included in personal communication from Miles A. Vich, then editor of *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*, July 30, 1998. I inquired several times of the current editor, Marcie Boucouvalas, as to whether the journal still maintains this apparent exclusionary policy but I received no reply.
- 26 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age* II, 70-71.
- 27 Laurence Newey, "The Antahkarana as an Electrical Phenomenon," A talk given by Laurence Newey at the Arcane School Conference in New York, 2012. Online: https://www.lucistrust.org/the_electric_bridge/the_antahkarana_as_electrical_phenomenon (accessed October 29, 2016). See also Malvin Artley, "Perspectives on the Antahkarana," *The Esoteric Quarterly*, (11)1: 15-38 (Spring 2015).
- 28 See Bailey: *Education in the New Age*, 143-53; *Rays and the Initiations*, 441-530.
- 29 Bailey, *Rays and Initiations*, 447 (italics in the original).
- 30 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age* II, 408.
- 31 Bailey: *Rays and Initiations*, 497-98; *Cosmic Fire*, 430 (italics in the original).
- 32 Borsos, *Esoteric Philosophy*, 7, 165-86.
- 33 For an in-depth study of these obstacles see, Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *Esotericism and the Academy: Rejected Knowledge in Western Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
- 34 See: Bailey, *Autobiography*, 214-42; and Hanegraaff, *Esotericism and the Academy*, 277-314.
- 35 Bailey, *Autobiography*, 225.
- 36 Al Mankoff, "Roberto Assagioli, Psychosynthesis, and the Esoteric Roots of Transpersonal Psychology" (no date). Online: <http://www.two.not2.org/psychosynthesis/articles/mankoff.pdf>. (accessed April 25, 2017). Keith Hackwood quotes from a paper Assagioli gave to his students, "Please pay attention to the distinction between the ESOTERIC PAPERS and the EXOTERIC PROGRAMME – we have to keep this distinction very clearly and keep the 'wall of silence' – as I have said and written in the past – about the presentations." Online: <https://psychosynthesistrust.org.uk/beyond-wall-silence-psychosynthesis-inside/> (accessed April 25, 2017). Emphasis in the original.
- 37 See for example John Nash, *Christianity: the One, the Many – What Christianity Might Have Been and Could Still Become*, 2 vols. (Xlibris, 2007); *The Quest for the Soul* (Bloomington, IN: First Books Library, 2004); *The Soul and its Destiny* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2004); and many articles published in *The Beacon* and *The Esoteric Quarterly*.
- 38 I have argued that the criticisms of three leading transpersonal theorists regarding such "outdated models" do not apply to Bailey's writings. See Borsos, *Esoteric Philosophy*, 55-90.
- 39 Stanislav Grof (see for example, *Psychology of the Future: Lessons From Modern Consciousness Research* [Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2000]) and Brant Cortright, who develops Sri Aurobindo's ideas (*Integral Psychology: Yoga, Growth, and Opening the Heart* [Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2007]), provide notable but minor exceptions to this exclusionary stance among leading transpersonal theorists, organizations, and journals.
- 40 Imants Barušs, *Authentic Knowing: The Convergence of Science and Spiritual Aspiration* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 1996), 92-118. Barušs' model describes "... a version of theosophy based largely on [Douglas] Baker and Bailey but modified by my own imagination" (Barušs, *Authentic Knowing*, 96). He has since distanced himself from Bailey's work as he finds it to be "... very much a product of a late 19th century worldview ..." which contains anachronistic

- ideas and ambiguities, and it overemphasizes a Christian perspective. I am in full agreement with his statement, "There is a lot that is useful in her theory, but I think that it needs to be approached discriminatively and translated into language that makes sense today" (personal communication, September 8, 2016). This is, of course, precisely the main point of this article.
- 41 Wouter Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought*. (Albany, NY: SUNY, 1998), 95.
- 42 Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology* II (New York: Lucis, 1942), 717. Some of Bailey's primary characterizations of the New Age emphasize the qualities of synthesis, inclusiveness, unselfish group work, and the renunciation of materialism. See Borsos, *Esoteric Philosophy*, 2.
- 43 Edward J. Dale, *Completing Piaget's Project: Transpersonal Philosophy and the Future of Psychology*. (St. Paul, MN: Paragon House, 2014), 148. Barušs also warns of the dangers of being associated with "new-age enthusiasts with uncritical fantasies about the nature of reality" (*Authentic Knowing*, 4). He includes references to several critical studies of the new age.
- 44 Pontifical Council for Culture and Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, "Jesus Christ – the Bearer of the Water of Life: A Christian Reflection on the "New Age" (2003). Online: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/documents/rc_pc_interelg_doc_20030203_new-age_en.html (accessed June 23, 2016).
- 45 Giovanni Cubeddu, "Sixty-eight, Mysticism, Satanism: An Interview with Olivieri Pennesi." Online: <http://www.30giorni.it/us/articolo.asp?id=910> (accessed June 25, 2016). Blavatsky provided a full explanation as to why she chose "Lucifer" as the title for a new theosophical magazine in the first editorial "What's in a Name?" Online: <http://www.blavatsky.net/index.php/what-s-in-a-name> (accessed June 25, 2016). The Lucis Trust provides a brief explanation on their website for the original choice of "Lucifer," which means "light-bearer," for their *publishing company* (https://www.lucistrust.org/arcane_school/talks_and_articles/the_esoteric_meaning_lucifer; (accessed April 24, 2017) and directs the reader to an article by Sarah McKechnie, "Descent and Sacrifice," *The Beacon* (September-October 1989). Online: https://www.lucistrust.org/arcane_school/talks_and_articles/descent_and_sacrifice (accessed June 25, 2016). John F. Nash contributes a clarifying analysis in his article "Ahriman and Lucifer in the Teachings of Rudolf Steiner," *The Esoteric Quarterly*, 9(3), 37-60.
- 46 Alice A. Bailey, *Problems of Humanity* (New York: Lucis, 1947), 130.
- 47 See for example: Warren S. Brown, Nancey Murphy, and H. Newton Malony, *Whatever Happened to the Soul? Scientific and Theological Portraits of Human Nature* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1998); Kevin Corcoran, ed., *Soul, Body and Survival: Essays on the Metaphysics of Human Persons* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001); Mark C. Baker and Stewart Goetz (eds.), *The Soul Hypothesis: Investigations into the Existence of the Soul* (New York: Continuum, 2011). For more historical accounts of the soul see, Raymond Martin and John Barresi, *The Rise and Fall of the Soul and Self: An Intellectual History of Personal Identity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); Stewart Goetz and Charles Taliaferro, *A Brief History of the Soul* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011); and Jonardon Ganeri, *The Concealed Art of the Soul: Theories of Self and Practices of Truth in Indian Ethics and Epistemology* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2012).
- 48 Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing* (New York: Lucis, 1953), 368; *Esoteric Psychology* I, 89-109.
- 49 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology* I, 104-105.
- 50 See, for example, Mark Siderits, *Buddhism as Philosophy: An Introduction*, Chapter Three, "Non-Self: Empty Persons." (Aldershot, Hants UK: Ashgate, 2007), 32-68.
- 51 Nancy Reigle, "Ātman/Anātman in Buddhism and Its Implication for the Wisdom Tradition." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Texas Federation of the Theosophical Society in America, San Antonio, April 18-20, 2008. Online: <http://www.easterntertradition.org/Atman-Anatman%20in%20Buddhism.pdf> (accessed June 10, 2016); Leoni Hodgson, "Buddhism and the No-soul Doctrine (version 4, March 2014)" Online: <http://www.brisbanegoodwill.com/esoteric->

- philosophy/buddhism-and-the-no-soul-doctrine-v3/ (accessed June 10, 2016).
- ⁵² Gerhard Faden, "No-Self, Dōgen, the Senika Doctrine, and Western Views of Soul." *Buddhist-Christian Studies*, 31 (2011), 41-54.
- ⁵³ Mark Siderits, Evan Thompson, and Dan Zahavi (eds.), *Self, No Self? Perspectives from Analytical, Phenomenological, and Indian Perspectives* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2011).
- ⁵⁴ Donna Mitchell-Moniak presented a workshop on aspects of Tibetan Buddhism as found in Bailey's writings at the 2016 University of the Seven Rays Conference. At the same conference in 2017 Peter Kubaska presented a workshop that investigated, in part, the relation of Dzogchen Tibetan Buddhism to Bailey's writings. Audio recordings may be available online at: <http://www.sevenray.org/>.
- ⁵⁵ For example, Nash observes that "Esoteric teachings relating to the planes and the structure of matter were taken more or less intact from Hindu teachings." John Francis Nash, *The Soul and Its Destiny*, 60.
- ⁵⁶ See David Reigle: *The Books of Kiu-te or The Tibetan Buddhist Tantras: A Preliminary Analysis* (San Diego, CA: Wizards Bookshelf, 1983); *Kālacakra Sādhana and Social Responsibility* (Santa Fe, NM: Spirit of the Sun, 1996); and numerous articles on the website, *Eastern Tradition Research Institute*. Online: <http://www.easterntradition.org/> (accessed October 31, 2016).
- ⁵⁷ See for example the website for The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society: <http://www.contemplativemind.org> (accessed June 29, 2016); and the "Survey of Transformative and Spiritual Dimensions of Higher Education" created by The Fetzer Institute. Online: <http://www.arthurzajonc.org/uploads/Survey%20of%20Transformative%20ed.pdf> (accessed June 29, 2016).
- ⁵⁸ See for example: Enrique Dussel, "A New Age in the History of Philosophy: The World Dialogue Between Philosophical Traditions," *Prajñā Vihāra Journal of Philosophy and Religion* 9(1) (2008): 1-22. Online: <http://enriquedussel.com/txt/WORLD%20CONGRESS-paper.pdf> (accessed April 25, 2017); Jay L. Garfield, *Engaging Buddhism: Why it Matters to Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Jacob Holsinger Sherman, *Partakers of the Divine: Contemplation and the Practice of Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2014); and Kevin Schilbrack, *Philosophy and the Study of Religions: A Manifesto* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014).
- ⁵⁹ Katherine L. Hendon, *Devotion, Idealism, and Abstraction: Perspectives on the Religious Impulse from the work of Alice A. Bailey*. PhD dissertation, California Institute of Integral Studies, 2005, 163.
- ⁶⁰ Alice A. Bailey: *The Reappearance of the Christ* (New York: Lucis, 1948), 137-59; *Esoteric Psychology II*, 701-51; *Problems of Humanity*, 122-66.
- ⁶¹ For a thorough overview of modern Christian thinking see, James C. Livingston, *Modern Christian Thought*, Vol. 1, *The Enlightenment and the Nineteenth Century* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2nd ed., 2006); and James C. Livingston and Francis Schüssler with Sarah Coakley and James H. Evans, Jr., *Modern Christian Thought*, Vol. 2, *The Twentieth Century* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2nd ed., 2006). For contemporary overviews of Hinduism and Buddhism see, Jonardon Ganeri, *Philosophy in Classical India* (London: Routledge, 2001); and Roy W. Perrett, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).
- ⁶² Koo Dong Yun, *The Holy Spirit and Ch'i (Qi): A Chiological Approach to Pneumatology* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012).
- ⁶³ See for example: John B. Cobb, Jr. and David Ray Griffin, *Process Theology: An Introductory Exposition* (Louisville, KY: Westminster, 1976); Bruce G. Epperly, *Process Theology: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Bloomsbury, 2011); Joseph A. Bracken, S.J., *The One and the Many: A Contemporary Reconstruction of the God-World Relationship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2001); David Ray Griffin (ed.), *Deep Religious Pluralism* (Louisville, KY: Westminster, 2005); and Philip Clayton and Arthur Peacocke (eds.), *In Whom We Live and Move and Have Our Being: Panentheistic Reflections on God's Presence in a Scientific World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004).
- ⁶⁴ See for example: David Skrbina, *Panpsychism in the West* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2005), and "Panpsychism as an Underlying Theme in Western Philosophy: A Survey Paper." *The Journal of Consciousness Studies* (2003) 10(3): 4-46; Anthony Freeman, ed., *Consciousness and its Place in Nature: Does*

- Physicalism Entail Panpsychism? (Exeter: UK, Imprint Academic, 2006).
- ⁶⁵ Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology* I, 149.
- ⁶⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle* (New York: Lucis, 1950), 182.
- ⁶⁷ Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 693; see also Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic* (New York: Lucis, 1934), 8.
- ⁶⁸ Bailey has described the first section of *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* as a study of “matter” and of Fire by Friction, or “the fire of matter.” Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 4, 50-51, 223, 308.
- ⁶⁹ See for example: *Journal of Consciousness Studies: Controversies in Science and the Humanities* (Exeter, UK: Imprint Academic); Max Velmans and Susan Schneider, eds., *The Blackwell Companion to Consciousness* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007); William Seager, *Theories of Consciousness: An Introduction and Assessment* (London: Routledge, 1999).
- ⁷⁰ The entire second section of *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, comprising 1,000 pages, regards Solar Fire and The Fire of Mind or *Manas*, and is described by Bailey “in general terms as *Consciousness*.” Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 223.
- ⁷¹ For an exception see Borsos, *Esoteric Philosophy*. Esoteric scholar Zachary F. Lansdowne has published an article on Wittgenstein but he does not reference Bailey. Lansdowne, “Wittgenstein’s Philosophy of Mysticism,” *The Journal of Esoteric Psychology* 12(2) (Fall/Winter 1998-99): 14-24. James Moffatt has published a series of five articles which explore modern studies of consciousness and psychology from an esoteric perspective although he does not reference Bailey’s work. See the five consecutive issues of *Esoteric Quarterly* (Winter 2013 – Winter 2014).
- ⁷² See for example: Graham Parkes, ed., *Heidegger and Asian Thought* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawaii Press, 1987); N. C. Panda, *Mind and Supermind* (2 vols.) (New Delhi: D. K. Printworld, 1996); Alpana Chakraborty, *Mind-Body Dualism: A Philosophical Investigation* (New Delhi: D. K. Printworld, 1997); Miri Albahari, *Analytical Buddhism: The Two-Tiered Illusion of Self* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Mark Siderits, *Buddhism as Philosophy: An Introduction* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2007); Christian Coseru, *Perceiving Reality: Consciousness, Intentionality, and Cognition in Buddhist Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); and Jay L. Garfield, *Engaging Buddhism: Why it Matters to Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).
- ⁷³ See for example: Edward F. Kelly, Emily Williams Kelly et al., *Irreducible Mind: Toward a Psychology for the 21st Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007); Edward F. Kelly, Adam Crabtree, and Paul Marshall, *Beyond Physicalism: Toward Reconciliation of Science and Spirituality* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015); and Imants Barušs and Julia Mossbridge, *Transcendent Mind: Rethinking the Science of Consciousness* (Washington D. C.: American Psychological Association, 2016).
- ⁷⁴ Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem* (New York: Lucis, 1950), 14-16.
- ⁷⁵ For discussions of the distinction between the *theory of ideas* and the *theory of language* see for example: Ian Hacking, *Why Does Language Matter to Philosophy?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975); and William G. Lycan, *Philosophy of Language: A Contemporary Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2000), 78-80. See also, Nicholas Jolley, *The Light of the Soul: Theories of Ideas in Leibniz, Malebranche, and Descartes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).
- ⁷⁶ See for example: Mintze van der Velde, “The Electric Bridge” Arcane School Talk London 2008. Online: https://www.lucistrust.org/the_electric_bridge/arcane_school_talk_on_the_electric_bridge_london_2008 (accessed July 7, 2016); Laurence Newey, “The Electric Gods: Crisis and Revelation in Astrophysics” *The Beacon* (April – June 2008). Reprinted online: https://www.lucistrust.org/the_electric_bridge/the_electric_gods (accessed, July 7, 2016); Christopher Holmes, “The Origins and Nature of Consciousness: Parts I-IV” *Esoteric Quarterly* (Fall 2010, Winter, Spring, Fall 2011).
- ⁷⁷ José Becerra, “A Model of the Human Atom” *Esoteric Quarterly* 11(4) (Winter 2016), 81-85.
- ⁷⁸ Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater, *Occult Chemistry*, 3rd ed., C. Jinarajadasa and E. W. Preston, eds. (Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1951); Stephen M. Phillips: *Extra-Sensory Perception of Quarks* (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1980); “Extrasensory Perception of Subatomic Particles: I. Historical Evidence,” *Journal of Scientific Exploration*, 9 (4) (1995): 489-525; “Reply to Dobyns,” *Journal of Scientific Exploration*, 9 (4) (1995): 539-

548. For criticism of Phillips' work see, York H. Dobyns, "Report of Referee On 'Extrasensory Perception of Subatomic Particles,'" *Journal of Scientific Exploration*, 9 (4) (1995): 527-38.
- ⁷⁹ Francisco J. Varela, Evan Thompson, and Eleanor Rosch, *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), 22.
- ⁸⁰ Malvin Artley, "The Brain and the Synthesis of the Centers," *Journal of Esoteric Psychology* 6(2) (1990), 36-50.
- ⁸¹ See for example: Patrick McNamara, *The Neuroscience of Religious Experience* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Andrew B. Newberg, *Principles of Neurotheology* (New York: Routledge, 2016); and numerous references provided by Daniel A. Helminiak in *Brain, Consciousness, and God: A Lonerganian Integration* (Albany, NY: SUNY, 2015), 1.
- ⁸² See for example: Arthur. E. Powell, *The Solar System* (London: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1930); Charles DeMotte, *The Inner Side of History* (Mariposa, CA: Source Publications, 1997); Phillip Lindsay, *The Hidden History of Humanity I: Esoteric Evolution of Planetary Life* (Bangalow, New South Wales: Apollo Publishing, 2006).
- ⁸³ Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology* II, 339, 574.
- ⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 434.
- ⁸⁵ Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology* I, 316-19. Bailey states that the early Atlantean civilization developed some twelve million years ago (*Esoteric Healing*, 226).
- ⁸⁶ The enteric nervous system contains more nerve cells than the entire spinal cord and can operate autonomously. See Michael D. Gershon, "The Enteric Nervous System: A Second Brain," *Hospital Practice* 34 (7) (July 15, 1999): 31-42; and Sandra Blakeslee, "Complex and Hidden Brain in Gut Makes Stomachaches and Butterflies" (New York Times, January 23, 1996). Online: <http://www.nytimes.com/1996/01/23/science/complex-and-hidden-brain-in-gut-makes-stomachaches-and-butterflies.html> (accessed November 23, 2016).
- ⁸⁷ See especially, Bailey: *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle*, 1-10, 139-97; *Cosmic Fire*, 77-133.
- ⁸⁸ Bailey states: "Science, as we know, is fast reaching the point where it will be forced to admit the fact of the etheric body, because the difficulties of refusing to acknowledge it, will be far more insuperable than an admission of its existence . . . [Medical scientists] are on the right road, and before long (perhaps within this century) the FACT of the etheric body and its basic function will be established past all controversy, and the whole aim of preventive and curative medicine will shift to a higher level." (Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 88-89.) Robert B. Laughlin, Nobel Laureate in Physics states, "The word 'ether' has extremely negative connotations in theoretical physics because of its past association with opposition to relativity. This is unfortunate because, stripped of these connotations, it rather nicely captures the way most physicists actually think about the vacuum . . . The modern concept of the vacuum of space, confirmed every day by experiment, is a relativistic ether. But we do not call it this because it is taboo." Laughlin, *A Different Universe: Reinventing Physics from the Bottom Down*. (New York: Basic Books, 2005), 120-121. See also James DeMeo, "Does a Cosmic Ether Exist? Evidence from Dayton Miller and Others," *Journal of Scientific Exploration* 48(4) (2014): 647-82.
- ⁸⁹ Van der Velde cautions that the plasma state should not be associated with the "fourth ether" but adds that "it is coming very close to it." (Van der Velde, "The Electric Bridge").
- ⁹⁰ Lee Smolin, *The Trouble with Physics: The Rise of String Theory, the Fall of a Science, and What Comes Next* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006). See also Timothy Ferris, *The Whole Shebang: A State-of-the-Universe(s) Report*, Chapter Five (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997), 120-44.
- ⁹¹ See Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle*, 145-62.
- ⁹² Roger Penrose, *Shadows of the Mind: A Search for the Missing Science of Consciousness* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994), 376 (emphasis in the original). See also Stuart Hameroff and Roger Penrose, "Conscious Events as Orchestrated Space-Time Selections," *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 3(1) (1996): 36-53.
- ⁹³ Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle*, 140.
- ⁹⁴ Rupert Sheldrake, *Morphic Resonance: The Nature of Formative Causation*, 4th rev. ed. (Rochester, VT: Park Street Press, 2009).
- ⁹⁵ Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 428.
- ⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 477.

- 97 Richard Feynman, *QED: The Strange Theory of Light and Matter* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 4-10.
- 98 Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 1953.
- 99 Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 811-12; *Esoteric Healing*, 372-74.
- 100 Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 428-29.
- 101 Ibid., 428.
- 102 Ibid., 714 (italics added).
- 103 Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 273, 376.
- 104 Robert O. Becker and Gary Selden, *The Body Electric: Electromagnetism and the Foundation of Life* (New York: William Morrow, 1985).
- 105 See, for example, Beverly Rubik, "The Biofield: Bridge Between Mind and Body," *Cosmos and History: The Journal of Natural and Social Philosophy* (11)2: 83-96 (2015); Menas C. Kafatos, Gaëtan Chevalier, Deepak Chopra et al, "Biofield Science: Current Physics Perspectives," *Global Advances in Health and Medicine* (GAHM). 2015; 4(suppl): 25-34. DOI: 10.7453/gahmj.2015.011.suppl. Online: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4654779/> (accessed February 19, 2017).
- 106 Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 424-504. Bailey's complete writings on the topic have been compiled in *Death: The Great Adventure* (New York: Lucis, 1985).
- 107 See especially, Charles Tart, *The End of Materialism: How Evidence of the Paranormal is Bringing Science and Spirit Together* (Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, 2009).
- 108 Bailey, *Education in the New Age*, 69-71; *Esoteric Psychology II*, 431.
- 109 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology II*, 677-79.
- 110 Bailey, *Reappearance of the Christ*, 116.
- 111 See for example: Sylvia Cranston, ed., *Reincarnation: The Phoenix Fire Mystery* (Pasadena, CA: Theosophical University Press, [1977] 1994); Sylvia Cranston and Carey Williams, "Reincarnation: A New Horizon in Science, Religion, and Society (Pasadena, CA: Theosophical University Press, [1984] 1999). Cranston's Harvard lecture constitutes Chapter 3 of the latter volume. Her Columbia lecture, along with three others given at the event, are included in the same volume as Chapter 23. It should be noted that Bailey's work has been targeted specifically regarding the dangers posed by the widespread adoption of the theory of reincarnation. See William Garrett, *Bad Karma: Thinking Twice About the Social Consequences of Reincarnation Theory* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2005), 154-63.
- 112 See Bailey: *Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 57-58; *Cosmic Fire*, 641; and *Esoteric Psychology I*, 234-35.
- 113 See for example Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 475-83.
- 114 See especially, John Polkinghorne: *Science and the Trinity: The Christian Encounter with Reality* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004); and *Quantum Physics and Theology: An Unexpected Kinship* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007). See also, Ernest L. Simmons, *The Entangled Trinity: Quantum Physics and Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014). Online: <http://muse.jhu.edu/book/28524> (accessed November 5, 2016).
- 115 See for example: Menas Kafatos and Robert Nadeau, *The Conscious Universe: Part and Whole in Modern Physical Theory* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1990); David Hodgson, *The Mind Matters: Consciousness and Choice in a Quantum World* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1991); Henry P. Stapp, *Mindful Universe: Quantum Mechanics and the Participating Observer*, 2nd ed. (New York: Springer-Verlag, 2011); and the work of theoretical particle physicist Basarab Nicolescu, *From Modernity to Cosmodernity: Science, Culture, and Spirituality* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2014).
- 116 Stuart A. Kauffman, *Reinventing the Sacred: A New View of Science, Reason and Religion* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 130. John Francis Nash introduces the topic of chaos theory and offers a different perspective from Kauffman's in stating that "... rich opportunities exist for mathematicians to move toward esotericism ..." especially as esotericism provides an expanded terminology and philosophical framework. He also encourages esotericists to study mathematics to expand their understanding and capacities. He intimates, but does not suggest directly, how this possible cross-fertilization, or "... group effort ... [and] work on a broad front" can and should be initiated by esotericists and sustained through dialogue, a bridging effort which is the theme of this article. See John F. Nash, "Esotericism and Mathematics," *The Esoteric Quarterly*, vol. 11, no. 4 (Winter 2016), 15-46.
- 117 See for example: William Braud and Rosemarie Anderson, *Transpersonal Research*

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- Methods for the Social Sciences: Honoring Human Experience* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998); and Harris L. Friedman and Glenn Hartelius, eds., *The Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of Transpersonal Psychology*, Part III – Transpersonal Methodologies (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 241-329.
- ¹¹⁸ Bailey, *White Magic*, 403.
- ¹¹⁹ Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology* II, 682; *Discipleship in the New Age* I, 583-84.
- ¹²⁰ See Dorothy I. Riddle, “Towards Inclusive, Bias-Free Language.” Online: [http://www.esotericstudies.net/Topics/Gender neutral.Inclusive Language.article.pdf](http://www.esotericstudies.net/Topics/Gender%20neutral.Inclusive%20Language.article.pdf) (accessed August 23, 2016).
- ¹²¹ Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology* II, 667-68.
- ¹²² Borsos, *Esoteric Philosophy*, 199-200n17.
- ¹²³ For seven years Phillip Lindsay hosted a forum titled “The Methuselah Project” on his website which addressed issues regarding Bailey’s writings on “the Jewish Problem,” a phrase in use well before the time of Bailey’s writings. Some related discussions can still be found on the website at <http://esotericastrologer.org/articles/the-jewish-problem/> (accessed September 21, 2016); and <http://esotericastrologer.org/articles/alice-a-bailey-h-p-blavatsky-and-helena-roerich-pt-iv/> (accessed September 9, 2016). See also online: https://www.lucistrust.org/arcane_school/talks_and_articles/concerning_the_ageless_wisdom_writings_on_the_jewish_people (accessed September 12, 2016).
- ¹²⁴ Bailey, *Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 545-46.
- ¹²⁵ Ibid., 615-16 (italics in the original).
- ¹²⁶ Bailey, *White Magic*, 523.
- ¹²⁷ *Scientific American*, April 21, 2017. Online: <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/we-just-breached-the-410-ppm-threshold-for-co2/> (accessed May 3, 2017).
- ¹²⁸ Bailey, *Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 310 (italics in the original).
- ¹²⁹ Bailey, *Autobiography*, 157.
- ¹³⁰ Bailey, *Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 571.
- ¹³¹ Drawing on H. P. Blavatsky’s definition from *The Theosophical Glossary*, Bailey describes Fohat as: “Cosmic electricity; primordial light; the ever-present electrical energy; the universal propelling vital force; the ceaseless destructive and formative power; the synthesis of the many forms of electrical phenomena.” Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation: Human and Solar* (New York: Lucis, 1922), 218.
- ¹³² Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem*, 83.

The Druze: A Secret Esoteric Sect

Donna M. Brown

Abstract

The Druze are a tightly-knit, mysterious community with a tradition over a thousand years old. They were likely first brought to the attention of the esoteric community by Helena Blavatsky (1831–1891), who initially came into contact with them and other Middle Eastern sects through her friend, Author L. Rawson (1828–1902), the only known outsider to have been initiated into the highly secretive Druze sect. Blavatsky and Rawson's comments on the Druze, along with those of Charles Leadbeater who claimed that the Master Jesus "lives among the Druses of Mount Lebanon,"¹ have long generated interest in this unique and mysterious faith. But it was not until 1926, and more recent efforts by members of the Druze community, that certain features of their belief system have come to light. Drawing upon these and other sources, this article explores the origins of Druzism, its primary tenets and its connections to Islam, the Gnostics, Persians, Hindus, Templars and Masonry.

Introduction

The Druze are an esoteric, ethno-religious sect who refer to themselves as *Ahl al-Tawhīd* (People of Unitarianism), and as *Al-Muwahhidūn*, which translates to people of "the One, Eternal Religion." The racial profile of the Druze is mixed. For the most part, the Druze are of Arab descent, but they also have Iranian, Kurdish, European and, according to some, Phoenician and ancient Israelite roots.

It is estimated that there are between 700,000 to 1.2 million Druze in the world, concentrated primarily in the mountains of Lebanon and Syria, with smaller groups in Iraq, Israel, Jordan and Turkey.

The Druze are a fiercely independent group who see themselves as "the self-appointed standard-bearers of *Tawhīd*"²—the belief in

the One God—in the sense that the unist concept became the nucleus around which their entire religion revolves. The word "Druze" is a misnomer that is usually traced to Muhammad bin Ismail Nashtakin ad-Darazi, a dissident 11th-century Isma'ili missionary and early leader of the Druze faith who was executed for his heretical beliefs. But a number of authorities maintain that the name "Druze" is merely a descriptive epithet, derived from the Arabic *yadrisun* ("those who 'study'"). Others claim that the word comes from the Arabic-Persian word *daruri* (intuitive knowledge), and *darazo* (bliss),³ or from Shaykh Hussayn ad-Darazī, one of the early converts to the faith.

Helena Blavatsky, and many Druze themselves, trace the Druze brotherhood to more ancient sources that long predate Islam, sources which this article will discuss later in the text. But in its present form, the Druze faith emerged over a thousand years ago in Cairo and had its beginnings in a form of unorthodox Islam. Druzism is an eclectic, syncretistic faith. In addition to including elements of Isma'ili doctrine, it contains strong currents of Gnosticism and Neo-platonic thought. Adherents of the Druze faith recognize Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad as Major Prophets. The Druze also revere a number of ancient Gnostic Sages such as Enoch and Hermes along with various Greek Philosophers, especially members of the so-called "Eight Sacred Druze Order."⁴ An ancient Druze manuscript—the *Unique Fifth Science*

About the Author

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— identifies these eight sages as Pythagoras, Socrates, Aristotle, Plotinus, Plato, Parmenides, Democritus and Empedocles.⁵

Some scholars claim that Druzism has links to the Essenes, while others, such as Gerard De Nerval (1808–1855), claim that “the Knights Templar exploited many of the Druze ideas, and that the Rosicrucians and Freemasons have done the same.”⁶ Although many Druze identify as Muslims, many others do not. Rather, these Druze see themselves as members of a heterodox religious sect.⁷ Kamal Jumblatt (1917–1977), a Druze philosopher and influential Lebanese politician describes the Druze faith as a meditative religion and an inclusive method for knowing the Absolute. Druzism has no clergy, rituals, or obligations that are believed to distract one from contemplation of God. Hence, there are those who do not see Druzism as a religion at all, but regard it as a veiled and complex philosophical belief system.

Like many secret societies that claim to possess a hidden, mystical knowledge (*‘irfan*), the Druze community is divided into two groups, the elite few who are initiated into the mysteries (*al’uqqāl* or sage), and the uninitiated or secularist masses (*al’juhhāl*) who do not have access to the Druze sacred texts. While instruction into the initiated ranks is possible for both men and women, the process is described as “so demanding that it can discourage the ordinary person who expresses a desire to enter into it.”⁸ Within the *uqqāl* there is a further division or rank called *ajawīd*. The *ajawīd* are the wisest of the wise and the decision makers and leaders within the Druze community. Due to strict vows of secrecy the precise functions of the *uqqāl* and *ajawīd* are difficult to determine. They do, however, exert a tremendous influence over their people, who consult them on important earthly matters and view them as ministers of reconciliation and peace whose very presence banishes discord and chaos.⁹ The so-called pleasures of life are of little interest to the *uqqāl*. Although they are permitted to marry, they seldom do, choosing instead to “detach themselves as much as possible from the ordinary pursuits of mankind” in order to “lead a life of the strictest devotion,

passed in profound contemplation of the mysteries of religion.”¹⁰

Despite the differences in rank and function between the *juhhāl* and the *uqqāl*, the Druze have been able to maintain a high degree of communal unity and there is little if any tension among them.

While the Druze have formed thriving communities with a focus on the all-important role of the mind, a strong sense of personal responsibility, moral integrity, hard work and self-reliance,¹¹ the average Druze living in the Levant is likely to have minimal interaction with non-Druze neighbors. What contacts there are tend to be formal and mainly at official levels.¹² Furthermore, there is no conversion to the Druze faith, and exogamy or marriage outside of the community is rare and strongly discouraged. The sect’s beliefs can only be passed on to those who are born to Druze parents. When a member of the Druze community dies, the soul of the deceased is thought to “immediately reincarnate into the body of a newborn Druze babe.”¹³

Although the majority of Druze have taken on the vestitures or outward coverings of Islam, they interpret the fundamental pillars of the Islamic faith—the profession of faith, prayer, charity, fasting in the month of Ramadan and the pilgrimage to Mecca—in an entirely different way. Muslims, for example, are obliged to pray five times day. These prayers consist in part, of repeating 3 times the phrase: “There is no God but God...” For the Druze this injunction is transformed into the aim of constantly holding this Supreme Truth in the mind. So too, the mandatory pilgrimage or Hajj, becomes the inner pilgrimage to “the House of God,” and the symbolic seat of Union in God.¹⁴

Due to their lack of nationalistic ideals and their outward adaptability to other faiths, the Druze have been able to integrate into the various countries in which they live and where they have held, and continue to hold, outsized influential political, economic and social positions. Yet their beliefs and customs continue to distinguish them from their Muslim, Christian and Jewish countrymen. This is due in large

part to the fact that the Druze formed closed communities in which their cultural and religious beliefs were concealed from outsiders. What these secretive beliefs are, where they originated, and why the learned system that the Druze developed has remained hidden and unchanged for over a thousand years are questions that this article seeks to address.

The Origins and History of the Druze

Generally Accepted Historical Overview

Most exegeses on Druze origins and history begin in or around the year 1017, and trace Druzism's roots to al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh (985–1021), the sixth Fatimid¹⁵ caliph and 16th Shia Isma'ili imam, and the Iranian Isma'ili teacher Hamza ibn-'Alī (985–1021). Many adherents to the faith consider Druzism to be an Abrahamic religion, based on the initial impulse from al-Ḥākim, and the teachings of Hamza. Thus, Druzism is seen as having its roots in Isma'ili esotericism,¹⁶ whose beliefs include, among other things: a belief that God is an Absolute Infinite Reality embracing all realities, a mystical exegesis of the Qur'an, metempsychosis, the return of the Lord of the World and adherence to a form of rigorous occult meditation or *Ibadat* that is thought to eventually produce spiritual elevation.

The Egyptian born al-Ḥākim (whose name means the one who is commanded by God), was arguably the most controversial Isma'ili Shia caliph and imam,¹⁷ due in part to erratic and ruthless behavior, the strict imposition of legislation on Muslims as well as non-Muslims, and heretical claims made by al-Ḥākim himself¹⁸ and/or by ad-Darazi that he was God and the prophesied redeemer. Despite much egregious behavior, al-Ḥākim is said to have been indefatigable in his efforts to defend and consolidate his realm and improve the standard of living for his people.¹⁹ Even his critics described him as a generous and pious man, who placed an immense priority on the education of his people and the Isma'ili Fatimid *da'is* or emissaries of the faith.

Al-Ḥākim's primary objective was to further the Isma'ili movement, which was then cen-

tered in Cairo. He accomplished this aim by creating an institute (*Dar-al Hikma* or House of Wisdom) for unrestricted scholarly and philosophical studies in which all the religious sciences were taught. Attached to it was *Dar al-Ilm* (the House of Learning), a library that contained a vast collection of manuscripts and books. One source writes that there were:

more than 200,000 bound books, amongst which were manuscripts in all domains of science and culture; books on jurisprudence of all the schools, grammar, philology, traditions of the prophets, history, biographies of rulers, mathematics, astronomy, spiritual knowledge and alchemy.²⁰

Another, the famous Shia historian Ibn Abi Tayyī' (1180-1228), described the library as "The Wonder of the World."²¹

But as Anis Obeid, a Druze physician and founder of the Druze Society in America explains, in May of 1017, after "exploring theological and philosophical approaches that were bolder and more daring than the limits of Isma'ili doctrine,"²² Ḥakīm sought to modify the standard doctrine and to unify the Sunni and Shia sects in a single belief—*al-Tawhīd*—the religion of Unity. In a famous decree, al-Ḥākim announced a new era of unity and freedom by reminding believers of the Quranic principle that: "There is no compulsion in religion,"²³ that "believers have free will and reason" and should be liberated so they could discern the truth for themselves.²⁴

On the very same day in May 1017, al-Ḥakīm appointed Hamza, who is considered to be the true founder of the Druze faith, to the Imamate. Hamza was a central figure in the intellectual ferment and cross-cultural interface that characterized Cairo at the time,²⁵ but he was a highly controversial choice since his appointment was in breach of the four hundred year old Isma'ili tradition that only passed the Imamate to those with Fatimid blood.²⁶ Nevertheless, Hamza pronounced the divine Call (*da'wa*) to the faith and was tasked by al-Ḥakīm with developing and organizing the newly modified Isma'ili doctrine.²⁷ Thus, it was Hamza who authored the main corpus of

the Druze sacred texts—the *Rasa'il al-Hikma* or “Epistles of Wisdom.”²⁸

During the first year of his neo-imamate, Hamza instructed a group of missionaries and then sent them out to spread the true knowledge of God’s absolute oneness and unity with all creatures. The people who accepted the Call were required to sign a written vow or “Pact of Time Custodian” (*Mithaq Walley El-Zaman*). It’s believed that every Druze has signed this Charter in one of their past lives. According to the Druze Professor Sami Nasib Makarem:

Those who took these vows would be liable for them on the final Judgment Day and their lives would be measured against the promise they made in these contracts.²⁹

These contracts, as Makarem explains, are made possible by the Druze belief in reincarnation, a belief that will be discussed in more detail later.

One of those who aided Hamza in spreading the new Druze doctrine was the missionary, ad-Darazi. But within a year Hamza and ad-Darazi were at odds. Not only was ad-Darazi professing the apotheosis of al-Hakīm, he was using violent means to gain converts. The dispute between the two men escalated when ad-Darazi, who had been distorting aspects of the Druze doctrine and using his position for personal gain, argued that he should replace Hamza as imam. Although ad-Darazi won a number of converts to the faith, his unethical and dishonest methods caused many others to reject the new movement. As a result, the divine Call was withdrawn, and the movement suspended. Shortly, afterwards, in 1019, as Robert Breton Betts writes, in *The Druze*,

Darazi was assassinated (probably with the blessing of al-Hakīm, who saw him as a divisive force in the movement) and then anathematized by the Druze faith as a heretic.³⁰

In the period that followed, a reassessment of the new faith, its structure and tenets took place. The changes that ensued, writes Obeid, “pushed the envelope of Shia Isma‘ili doctrine further from the Isma‘ili mainstream than ever

before.”³¹ The new movement relaxed certain outer, ritualistic ordinances (*zahīr*), such as daily prayer, fasting and the pilgrimage to Mecca, placing the emphasis instead on access to their inner or esoteric (*bātin*) referents. After a year, the suspension was lifted and the Call was reopened. Thus a new religion was born that continued for almost two years, until 1021. Then an unforeseen event took place. Al-Hakīm disappeared on one of his nightly walks into the desert. (While most Muslims believe he died in 1021, many Druze maintain that al-Hakīm departed from them due to the great discord within Islam at the time, and is waiting to return to the world to inaugurate a new golden age when inclusiveness, wisdom and mercy descend into hearts of all Muslims).³² Hamza, along with members of his inner circle, went into hiding. From his place of concealment Hamza imparted instructions to the new Caliph, az-Zāhir who promised to protect the followers of al-Hakīm. Instead, a furious reign of terror ensued in which the followers of the new movement were killed and tortured, forcing the movement to go underground for a second time. This time the suspension lasted 7 years until Hamza, still in retreat, instructed one of his emissaries, Baha’ al-Din (also Bahā’uddīn), to begin to nurture the faithful who had survived az-Zāhir’s persecution.³³ But since open involvement was not possible, Baha’ al-Din set to work codifying the religious teachings of the Druzism, to which he, Hamza and al-Hakīm contributed.³⁴

It was not until 1037 that Baha’ al-Din issued another Call to the faith and a third phase of open enrollment was initiated. Az-Zāhir had been dead for two years, and Baha’ al-Din had gained the respect of the new caliph. After the last of the Druze Cannon had been organized and dated in 1042, the call was permanently ended. The sect would no longer accept new pledges and since that time proselytization has been prohibited. But according to Breton Betts, al-Hakīm continued to send mystic meditations to Hamza until 1047, after which time, as Druze tradition has it, Hamza purportedly left his hiding place in Cairo and traveled to the land of the Chinese oases (Shangri-La or Shamballa), to join al-Hakīm in meditative

contemplation.³⁵ This belief was made somewhat plausible by the fact that al-Hakīm established diplomatic relations with the Song Dynasty in China and some of his retinue were known to have made pilgrimages to Buddhist sites in Shandong. Such ideas certainly contributed to the Druze belief that the souls of many pious Druze have been reborn in parts of western China.³⁶

Most scholars, however, believe al-Hakīm was murdered. But many Druze, continue to hold the belief that he entered into a state of Occultation (or *Ghaybah*) and is concealed by God.

Thus it was from 1047, as Breton Betts tells it, until the appearance fifty years later of the Crusaders... in 1097, the Druze all but disappear from the stage of history, to reappear only briefly from time to time until their rise as a major political force in the Levant following the Ottoman conquest in 1516.

But the many years of harassment and suffering left a permanent scar on the psyche of the Druze people. What was designed to be a universal faith has survived as a remnant that has been secreted away for nearly a thousand years.³⁷

Alternative Views of the Druze and their Faith

There are a number of other intriguing points of view regarding Druze history. Helena P. Blavatsky, for example, did not concur with scholarly reasonings on the origins of the Druze religion. She writes that “the religious system of the Druse is one of the last survivals of the archaic Wisdom-Religion” whose origins are “next to unknown,” but she adds that they are

the descendants of, and a mixture of, mystics of *all nations*--mystics, who, in the face of cruel and unrelenting persecution... have been gathered together, and who gradually made a permanent settlement in the vastness of Syria and Mount Lebanon, where they had from the first found refuge. Since then, they have preserved the strictest silence upon their beliefs and truly occult rites.³⁸

She also says that Hamza, who most Druze view as the Founder of the Faith, was the incarnation of Hamsa (Hamza ibn Abdul-Muttalib), the uncle of Muhammad. Hamza, she holds, traveled to Tibet in 625 in search of secret wisdom. From that time “he is said to reincarnate in the chief body of the Druze Hierophant (or Okhal) in the same way the Buddha is said to reincarnate among the Tibetan Lamas and Guru-Kings of the Sikhs.”³⁹

The Druze, writes Blavatsky:

are more Lamaistic in their beliefs and certain rites than any other people on the face of the globe. H'amsa, the Founder of their Order, came to Syria from the “Land of the Word of God,” which is a literal translation of Lhasa, the sacred city of Tibet. The spiritual titles given to H'amsa correspond perfectly with those of the Dalai Lama.⁴⁰

Her knowledge of the sect no doubt stemmed, in part, from her friendship with A. L. Rawson (who thought that the Druze held the secrets of the true Chaldean Magi), her travels in the Mid-East and her studies with the various groups she encountered there. In an article titled *Lamas and Druses*⁴¹ she says that contrary to the beliefs of “foolish spiritualists, she was not initiated in the Buddhist pagodas, but belonged to the secret sect of the Druze.”⁴²

In that same article she goes on to equate the Druze with the Sikhs of Asia Minor,

finding many similarities with the late “commonwealth” of the followers of Guru Nanak⁴³--even extending to their mysticism and indomitable bravery. But the two are still more closely related to a third and still more mysterious community of religionists, of which nothing, or next to nothing, is known by outsiders: we mean that fraternity of Tibetan Lamaists, known as the Brotherhood of Khe-lang [a group of Tibetan Lamaists or Chakravartins—wheel-turners or enlightened renunciants.] (author's brackets.)

The Comte de Saint-Germain is said to have belonged to the Khe-lang Brotherhood.

David B. Wolf, PhD, author of *Jethro, the Druze and Vedic Origins*, seems to affirm Bla-

vatsky's remarks on the East Indian connection when he says that many

Druze consider their roots to be Indian. Their beliefs are pervaded by characteristically Vedic conceptions. For instance, their scriptures, like the Vedic puranas and itihāsas, and unlike chronicles of Middle Eastern religions, describe history dating back hundreds of millions of years, with incarnations of God in a human form appearing at regular intervals. This is akin to the Vedic idea of regular appearances of avatars. Transmigration of the soul is also a central tenet of Druze philosophy. In fact, to describe this principle the Druze use the same analogy as Kṛṣṇa uses in the Bhagavad-gītā [2:22]: "As a person puts on new garments, giving up old ones, the soul similarly accepts new material bodies, giving up the old and useless ones."⁴⁴

Wolf notes further that

Kamal Jumblatt, the late Druze political hero and renowned spiritualist, often extolled Kṛṣṇa, the Bhagavad-gītā, the Rāmāyaṇa, and other Vedic books and personalities in his writings ... He also spoke of Druze going to India and taking sannyāsa... and Jumblatt was himself a vegetarian and considered himself, in his later years, to be living as a vanaprastha, the retired order of life in the Vedic social system.⁴⁵

Dr. Nejla M. Abu Izzeddin, in a new study on the Druze,⁴⁶ points to recently discovered manuscripts confirming Hindu and Buddhist influences. Her study shows that there were Isma'īlī Fatimid missions at work in India in the 10th century and that a state owing allegiance to the Fatimid caliph was established in Sind. More importantly, recently recovered manuscripts say that al-Hakīm traveled to Si-jistan on the Indian border where in meditation he had a vision of a universal religion—a religion in which he "bids the *muwahhidūn* [Druze] to take *hikma* [wisdom] from any lamp or candle they chose. The various paths, means and light are one path and light from the sun of the One Truth and of the One Real, Single and Eternal."⁴⁷ (author's brackets)

Others have suggested that the recorded roots of Druzism go back to ancient Egypt, specifically to the heretical Pharaoh Akhenaten⁴⁸ who replaced the Egyptian pantheon with a single god, the Aten. Akhenaten is sometimes described as the first monotheist and the one who influenced Moses and the Israelite monotheism.

Many Druze believe that they descend from Jethro (meaning pre-eminent,) the priest of Midian, who initiated Moses and is viewed as one of the embodiments of the Universal Mind. In the Biblical story, Jethro not only initiates Moses, he gives him Zipporah (the shining one), one of his seven daughters ("one of seven occult powers"—the light of knowledge—"that the Hierophant is supposed to pass on to the initiated novice"⁴⁹). Midian was one of Abraham's sons through Keturah, and Ishmael was Abraham's son through Hagar. These two sons and their followers, the Midianites and the Ishmaelites, merged into a single group of people.⁵⁰ And it is from this group that the Druze are thought to have come.

Tracing the invisible thread of Druze origins still further, the Druze author, Chadi Ghaith, in an article titled the *Forbidden Fifth Science*⁵¹ considers the Druze to be the Surviving Gnostics who have been able to preserve the wisdom of the Original Cause through the ages. He goes on to state that

the enlightened among the Druze consider their gathering under the Druze name and flag since 1000 years ago as merely one chapter of their very ancient history as Carriers of the Gnostic Flame ever since Atlantis and even before.⁵²

Fundamental Tenets of the Faith

The Druze are a mysterious and secretive sect who rarely speak openly about the more significant tenets of their faith. Furthermore, they practice *al-Taqiyya* or dissimulation, wherein the core elements of the faith are deliberately concealed, denied or even distorted for purposes of safekeeping. However, it should be noted here that *al-Taqiyya* is an inherent characteristic of Gnosticism and many

other esoteric traditions in which important doctrines and practices are kept from those who are uninitiated and unprepared for full access to *hikma* or wisdom.⁵³ Although very little is known about the deeper esoteric aspects of the Druze faith, which can vary for different Druze groups, some of the basic tenets have been made public.

The Concept of Tawhīd

Druzism is a path designed to lead to the recognition of *Tawhīd*—an Arabic term meaning “unification” or “oneness.” *Tawhīd*, says Obeid, “is a concept that combines absolute oneness of God and the unity of all creatures in the oneness of the One and only God.”⁵⁴ *Tawhīd* is not a static belief, but rather a dynamic action that must be lived in virtually every aspect of one’s life.

Members of the Druze community are strict and unequivocal believers in the One God who cannot be defined or fully known by humans. Yet Druze doctrine does not conceive of a God who is solely transcendent, or wholly independent of material existence. While God transcendent is above, beyond, and distinct from creation, God immanent is the sustaining cause within each and every aspect of creation. Makarem elucidates by saying that: “God is Existence itself. He is the only Existent; nothing outside of Him exists.”⁵⁵ “He is the One, without being numerical.”⁵⁶ Druzism can best be described as Panentheism, a form of monistic monotheism, the belief or doctrine that God is greater than the universe but includes and interpenetrates it. Consequently, the Druze reject all notions of plurality and believe that God has no partner or son, nor is He part of a Trinity.

While the Druze concept of *Tawhīd* is virtually identical to Islamic doctrines of *Tawhīd* and to monotheistic beliefs overall, the Druze scriptural view, according to Dr. Sami Swayd, maintains that

monotheists throughout history have generally fallen into three categories: (1) those

who pursue spirituality through vision [of the heart] (ru'yah), (2) those who pursue it through speech [mythic narrative, song and utterances] (qawl), and (3) those who seek it through reason (‘aql). The ... Druzes [are instructed] to apply their own reason and to lead a simple ascetic life that is devoid of worldly comforts and pleasures. Druzism is referred to in the sect’s authentic manuscripts as “the Sect of Reason” (Madhhab al-‘Aql).⁵⁷ (author’s brackets)

The emphasis on reason in the Druze faith follows the Gnostic Law

that Cosmic Reason or Divine Mind is the ordering principle in creation. Hence, it is reason, emancipated from all passions and egotistic urges and obtained through a lengthy and arduous process of initiation, which leads to knowledge and union with the One. But *Tawhīd* is more than intellect or knowledge. In an essay on the theme, Omar Wahab describes it as “an experiential certitude,” that depends upon the “re-cognition” that there “is no separation in either space or time between the One and the rest of creation.”⁵⁸ *Tawhīd* in the Druze faith is accomplished through the most profound reflection and meditation where one “bridges the perceived separation and internalizes the all encompassing oneness of existence.”⁵⁹ This process was initiated when existence came into being and continues until the end of time and space.

The religious system of the Druze is “one of the last survivals of the archaic Wisdom-Tradition” whose origins are “next to unknown,” . . . they are the descendants of, and a mixture of, mystics of all nations—mystics, who in the face of cruel persecution . . . have been gathered together, and who gradually made a permanent settlement in the vastness of Syria and Mount Lebanon where they had . . . found refuge. Since then, they preserved the strictest silence upon their truly occult rites.

Thus, *Tawhīd* is “a metaphysical truth and a way of life”⁶⁰ as revealed in the Qur’an, the Epistles of Wisdom and in the many other great Unitarian religions and spiritual trends throughout history.⁶¹ It is, says Jumblatt, the essence of knowledge and spiritual ethics based on Greek philosophy, and the very means by which religion itself can be transcended.⁶² Moreover, Druze conceptions of *Tawhīd*, which derive from Sufi notions of *ma‘rifa* or gnosis and *fana*, the process by which the individual self is completely annihilated in the ecstasy of union with the Divine, are the ultimate goals of the Druze faith.

Conceptions of God

The Druze do not believe that it is possible for the human intellect, which is bound by the limitations of space and time, to comprehend the infinite, unlimited and immeasurable Absolute in its Essence. As such, God in the absolute sense is referred to as *Lahūt*, an appellation that Obeid says “defies definition, since to define is to know”⁶³ or recognize God as He is in Himself. This is why the Druze adopted an unyielding de-anthropomorphism that divests all attributes from the Divine. In Hamza’s 13th Epistle, the “Disclosure of Truth” (*Kashf al-Haqa’iq*), he states:

The Lord [*Lahūt*] does not come under names, languages, and attributes. And I do not say that he is ancient or permanent because the state of being ancient or permanent are mere conditions created by God... His true essence cannot be recognized by sense or imagination and cannot be known through logic or analytical measurement. He is not subject to a known location because that would make him surrounded by boundaries and other locations would be devoid of his presence. Yet no location is devoid of his presence because that would leave a diminution of power. He has no beginning as that would necessitate an end, and he has no end because that would necessitate a beginning. He is not manifest, for that would demand occultation, and he is not occult for that would demand manifestation, for each adjective by necessity needs its counterpart.... He has no likeness. God is exalted above and beyond traits, ap-

pellations, languages and everything else, bar none.⁶⁴

Although the Druze deity in the Absolute sense is a pure abstraction and cannot be known (an apophatic belief about God that is shared by many of the western Christian mystics, and is also equivalent to the *neti neti* of jnana yoga and Advaita Vedanta), humanity can understand God as he is reflected in the mind. The Arabic term *Nasut* is used to denote God as he is revealed or reflected to humanity, especially in the form of His Light manifest in a created being. Yet, as Kais Firro points out in his *History of the Druze*:

The *nasut* is not an incarnation of God but an image through which He brings himself closer to human understanding, each manifestation containing a unitarian message.⁶⁵

Nasut, as the Epistles caution, is not the image of deity itself. *Nasut*, according to Swayd

refers to the light of God experienced by certain mystics who have reached a high level of purity in their spiritual journey. Thus, God is perceived as the *Lahūt* [the divine] who manifests His Light in the Station (Maqaam) of the *Nasut* [material realm] without the *Nasut* becoming *Lahūt*. This is like one’s image in the mirror: one is in the mirror but does not become the mirror. The Druze manuscripts are emphatic and warn against the belief that the *Nasut* is God ... Neglecting this warning, individual seekers, scholars, and other spectators have considered al-Hakīm and other figures divine.⁶⁶

The Druze Concept of Creation: The Five Cosmic Principles

The Druze concept of creation is based on emanationism, a cosmological theory asserting that all things flow from an underlying principle or reality, most often conceived as the Absolute Spirit or Ground of Being. Druze emanationism, which has its roots in Neoplatonic philosophy in its Isma‘ili elucidation, affirms that creation proceeds from one divine substance or Godhead in a descending progression or series, where each reality arises from the previous one. Emanation theory advocates that everything has always existed (as expressions

of *Tawhīd* or God's Unity) and has not been created *ex nihilo* (from nothing). Although emanationism usually sees creation as unwilled and spontaneous, the Druze believe creation proceeded from God's Will, or "the Cause of Causes." From this essential belief the Druze elaborated a unique hierarchical view with respect to the process of creation. This approach, which also contains Manichaeistic conceptions of the creation of evil, holds that there exists a hierarchy of five cosmic principles (*al-Hudūd*, Arabic: "the boundaries, limits") or graded emanations from God, which exist outside of the space-time framework.⁶⁷ These five are generally understood as: *al-'Aql*, Universal Mind or Intelligence; *al-Nafs al-Kullīyya* or Universal Soul; *al-Kalimah* or the Word; *as-Sābiq*, the Precedent or mental power of the Will and *at-Tālī* or the externalization of God's Will in the corporeal world.

The first archetype (*al-'Aql*) is the intelligent, purposeful principle that comprehends all things and preceded all other beings or things. The first aspect of creation, according to Obeid, "has to be conceptualized in a non-dimensional context and as an expression of God's Will."⁶⁸ Although "this Universal Mind was perfect in enlightenment and power and complete in character and action,"⁶⁹ having no rival or second, it began to take joy in its own perfection, forgetting that creation is the product of the Creator's exalted Will, Thought and Vision. In this way *Aql* was deflected from its purpose and was retarded in its love for the Whole by arrogance, pride and self-love. The result was a creation of an exact antithesis (*dhidd*) or adversary and the struggle between the pairs of opposites. (This particular aspect of Druze thought can be traced to elements of Zoroastrianism and Manichaeism and to the struggle between creation and destruction or the forces of darkness and light.)

Then, as Kais Firro tells it in *The History of the Druzes*:

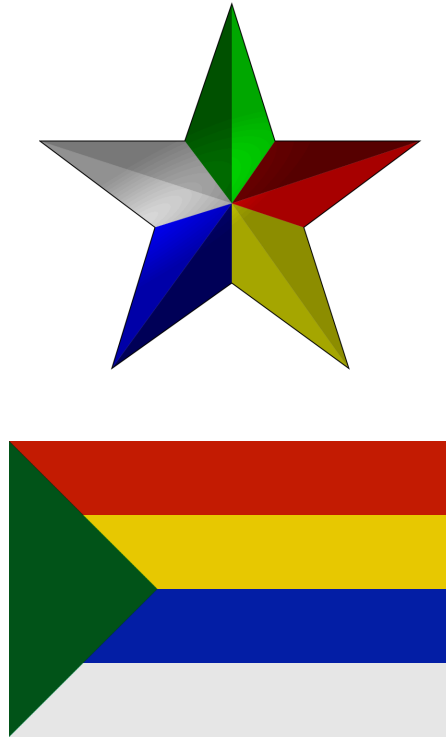
From the *Aql's* Light, God created the Universal Soul (*al-Nafs al-Kullīyya*) as its partner in the fight against the darkness and evil

of *dhidd* [opponent]. From the light of the Soul emanated the Word (*al-Kalimah*); the Precedent (*as-Sābiq*); and from it the Follower (*at-Tālī*). God then issued the spheres, the earth, and the elements. These five cosmic principles form the *Hudūd* (Spiritual *Dignitaries*) with their counterparts on earth.⁷⁰ (author's brackets.)

Although the Druze eschew strict iconography, they depict the Five Cosmic Principles as a five-colored star or pentagram, as shown in Figure 1 below. Intelligence/reason, which is needed for the recognition of Truth is represented by green. The Soul is depicted by red. Yellow represents the Word, which is the purest expression of Truth. The Precedent is represented by blue, which symbolizes the mental power of the will. And Immanence or power realized in the world of matter is depicted as white. The downward triangle in the star symbol is also said to represent the descent of the Universal Intellect into man. The ascending triangle symbolizes the progression of the soul on its return journey toward the One.

In a slightly different interpretation of the Druze star and the flag:

- Green symbolizes "the mind," Christ Consciousness, the pristine mirror of truth, Plato's sun whose light makes knowledge of the truth possible.
- Red symbolizes "the soul," the moon (the gentle reflector of the sun) the receiver of the light, and the *shaheed* [witness] of the truth in every age.
- Yellow symbolizes "the word," or the mediator between Plato's realm of eternity and Aristotle's realm of material existence. "The word" is the purest expression of the truth.
- Blue symbolizes the potential, the mental power of the will to be-come.
- White symbolizes the actualization of the potential, the be-coming of the blue power, the full materialization of Plato's world of forms in the world of matter.⁷¹ (author's brackets)



Figures 1, The Druze Star and Druze Flag⁷²

The five aforementioned principles are also always associated with various human individuals or luminaries who embody the archetypes they represent. For example, the Druze associate *Aql* (Universal Mind or Nous) with Hamza himself. These five “messengers” or “interpreters” of the “Word of the Supreme Wisdom,” as Blavatsky says in her article on the Druze, “are equivalent to the five chief Bodhisattvas each of whom is the bodily temple of the spirit of one of the five Buddhas.”⁷³ It is of interest to note here that associations also exist between the teachings on the Druze star and the *Order of the Eastern Star*, which assigns the names of five biblical heroines, each of whom represents a Masonic virtue, to the colored arms of the Order’s star.

Between the emergence of these five spiritual luminaries and the creation of man, says Firro, “there was a span of three hundred and forty-three million years, consisting of cycles lasting thousands of years until the beginning of the first manifestation of Deity in the human era.”⁷⁴ This figure corresponds roughly to the 306, 720, 000 years of a round or globe manvantara, the Hindu time scale of creation, plus a sandhi (1,728,000 years), and to the 300-320

million year period before the material emergence of man in the Fourth Round.

At the time of that emergence, according to the Druze faith, all human souls [monads?] were created at once and their number is fixed for all time. No sources seem to agree on what that number is, so it is not known whether it coincides with the 60 billion figure given by the Djwhal Khul through Alice A. Bailey.⁷⁵ According to Druze philosophy these souls did not enter into the first human prototypes or bodies that were created. They entered at a later date at which time humans longed to know their Creator. Thus, with the aid of Universal Intelligence, and a measure of free will, humanity acquired the capacity to know God.⁷⁶ (author’s brackets.)

The capacity to know Deity is not limited to earth’s human inhabitants. The Druze believe that there are people living in universes beyond our own, writes Abu Izzeddin, who points to a passage in the recently discovered manuscript *al-Munfarid bi-Dhdtih*, written in 1019, which says:

the planets and luminaries which you see and do not see,- in skies above and below

you, on your right and on your left, are an abode and a resting place for peoples like yourselves, but who have risen high and have been exalted and live eternally in paradise.⁷⁷

The Concept of Cycles

One of the central tenets of the Druze faith is the concept of cycles (*adwar*), wherein awareness of God can be reached through cyclic levels and manifestations. This concept applies to the cyclicity of revelation in which divinely inspired messages are revealed to humankind through a dominant messenger or prophet in a particular period or era, and also to the resultant cyclic spirals of evolutionary growth and development. Although Druzism resorts to *taqiyya* (dissimulation) to protect the tenets of the faith, it usually places an emphasis on two major cycles—"Cycles of Concealment" in which spiritual teachings are limited or veiled, and "Cycles of Disclosure," in which an advanced understanding of God's unity or Oneness is possible.⁷⁸

The Druze hold that seven is a sacred number and that time itself is divided into seven cycles each corresponding to the manifestation of Deity. However, it is one single entity that appears in the world in these seven different periods and forms.⁷⁹ In other words, one single being is expressed into seven different fractal aspects.

The first of these messengers was Adam (*Shatnīl* in the Druze faith) the spiritual father of all humanity who transmitted the monotheistic seed and called humanity to the true knowledge of God.⁸⁰ This Adam is also described as the incarnation of 'Aql, Universal Mind or Wholly Mind (sometimes also referred to as the Christ of the Ages). Druzism accepts two, three and sometimes seven Adams, who Obeid describes as "archetypes representing different role models."⁸¹ The first of these archetypes manifests only after many cycles have elapsed and these cycles of activity are all thought to be the result of Deity's energizing Will. However, this first archetype or Adam is not the one mentioned in the Bible or the Qur'an. The first Adam symbolizes the creation of Cosmic Mind, the Adam Kadmon

of the Manichaeans and Qabbalah and *Adam al-Safa* (primordial Man) of the Sufis.

The second Adam, the rebellious Adam, is the Adam of the Biblical and Quranic traditions, which tells the story of human consciousness, or the mind that was once defined by wholeness or unity consciousness but became fractured, thereby giving birth to the individual mind and ego. However, the Druze do not see the story of Adam and Eve's Fall as the "original sin." Rather, the "Fall" is interpreted as a representation or a facet of the struggle between the pairs of opposites. The third Adam, as Makarem describes him, is a reference to Eve, Adam's spiritual wife, not his physical wife, but "the emissary who received the seed of knowledge from him and served as the receptacle for its germination and dissemination, just as woman serves as the receptacle for the seed of man where it is germinated and brought forth to life."⁸² The real Eve, according to Markarem, is the Universal Soul. Thus, as Marakem explains, the Druze do not believe that Adam was the first man or human on earth, for humankind "existed long before the Biblical and Quranic Adam and Eve who go back no more than several thousand years before the birth of Christ."⁸³

It must be added here that the aforementioned ideas regarding Adam correspond to esoteric philosophy's Four Adams or Archetypes, as described by Blavatsky; likewise to the existence of the Four Adams each dwelling in the Qabbalistic Worlds; and to the Zohar's two Adams, the Higher Celestial Adam not subject to decay, and the Lower Adam/Eve or male-female mortal portion who has temporal existence in the Higher.⁸⁴

Reincarnation

The concept of cycles also extends to the Druze view on reincarnation (Arabic: *taqammus*), which asserts that it is only through a series of rebirths that individual human souls, having originated as a spark from the One, can grow and evolve. *Taqammus*, or re-embodiment, which is philosophically related to the Hindu concept of Samsara, is a pivotal component of the Druze faith despite the fact

that it is not mentioned in the Qur'an and is rejected by most Muslims as heretical.

Druzism holds that the number of days in a person's life is fixed. While the body is subject to decay and death, the soul is seen as immortal. Furthermore, it instantaneously incarnates into a new physical form at the time of death. However, after signing the "Time Custodian Pact" or Unitarian Vow taken in a particular lifetime, many Druze believe that the soul can only pass into the body of another Druze. Other Druze dispute this view, along with the generally accepted notion that it is not possible for a male to incarnate as female and vice versa, saying that not only are these matters not referenced in the *Epistles*, they are not in keeping with logic and the concept of divine justice which allows for no discrimination.⁸⁵ For Obeid, incarnation starts from a neutral position since it "provides the only setting for free choice"⁸⁶ and accountability. He notes further, "according to the concept of *Tawhīd*, the only mechanism that levels the playing field is an extension of the human life span to the limits of existence through reincarnation."⁸⁷ Over the course of many lifetimes a soul will undergo a full range of experiences. Whether a particular rebirth is blessed or unfortunate is dependent on one's actions, in a manner that can be likened to the concept of Karma. Importantly, each soul has the opportunity to progress in successive incarnational cycles until it reaches a state of high purity and wisdom and can merge with its spiritual source.

Based on cabalistic figuring in which the number seven and seventy are prominent, many Druze hold that there have been seventy incarnations of God. Others give ten as the number of times God has incarnated in human form on earth. Druzism teaches further that the "true Christ" is a reincarnation of the Cosmic Intelligence or Ultimate Reason on earth. In keeping with certain theosophical conceptions of Jesus Christ, a distinction is drawn between Jesus, the son of Joseph and the Christ his teacher, who the Druze hold is second to God. As Philip Kuri Hitti, the Lebanese American scholar describes him,

the Jesus (ʿĪsa ibn-Yūsuf) of the Druze manuscripts is also somewhat different

from the Jesus of the New Testament. He is rather the Moslem Jesus patterned after the conception of him by the ancient heretic sect of the Docetae⁸⁸ who held that Christ suffered only in appearance.⁸⁹

Others maintain that it was Jesus who suffered and died and not the Christ, but that Jesus is the same identity as the Holy Spirit.

Heaven and Hell

Heaven and hell, in the Druze worldview, are viewed in a metaphysical and spiritual context. Heaven is seen as the apprehension of divine knowledge and the outward demonstration of the soul's utmost perfection. "Hell is the failure to attain this state."⁹⁰ Reward and punishment are seen as self-generating in the Druze faith.

In speaking of Heaven and Hell in his article on the *Forbidden Sixth Science*, Ghaith states the following:

... there is no such thing as HEAVEN or HELL anywhere beyond this world in some realm that transcends the mind's ability to conceive.... Accordingly, eternal punishment takes form in the gradual karmic entanglement of the soul in a behavioral chain-of-causality here on earth.⁹¹

Thus, Heaven and Hell are states of mind. Heaven is the emancipation from ignorance (*jahl*) and illusory existence. Hell is the pain that comes from being deprived of the divine Presence.

Although, certain members of the Druze community believe in a Day of Judgment (*Yawn al-dīn*), others do not. Those who believe in a final Day of Judgment or "Day of Faith" view it as the period wherein al-Hakīm will return again and confront each soul with the memory of all its previous lives and their consequences. Others perceive it as the culmination of a long series of the soul's transmigrations toward illumination and mystical union, or as a kind of Golden Age when death will still continue but be painless for those who have attained a real measure of union or *Tahwīd*. Still others see this day as a judgment that one inflicts upon oneself due to a loss of hope and the inability

to realize that there is no absolute opposition between Existence and Non-Existence.⁹²

Morality and Virtue

Morality is traditionally viewed from two perspectives: 1) as a fixed system of values and principles of conduct that regulate human behavior in the interests of the common good; and 2) a set of rules or commandments laid down by a divine being. Although Druze morality consists of a strict code of ethical conduct and might be said to represent one of the most important aspects of the spiritual life, it dismisses traditional systems of morality as inadequate. From the Druze point of view, writes Wahab, existence is the projection of the Divine; morality and virtue are the divine Norm and part of our original nature; they are not based on specific outcomes. Virtue is not a means to an end. Motive is all-important. One's actions must be based on pure motive, humility, a desire to diminish the ego, and for the purpose of facilitating the knowledge of or expression of unity or oneness.⁹³

Druze morality is most often based on the following Seven Precepts, which must be willingly followed:

- Veracity and truthfulness in speech—the love of Truth
- Fellowship, Brotherhood and aid to one's brethren along the way to Truth
- Renunciation of all forms of former worship (specifically, invalid creeds) and false belief that negate God's fundamental Oneness or Unity
- Repudiation of selfishness, confusion, and all the forces of evil or despotism
- The realization of God's Unity and its expression in the world
- Forbearance which implies moral strength, courage and endurance
- Absolute submission to God's divine will (*taslim*) and service through right thought, speech and action.

Related to these seven precepts are: purity of the mind, the spirit and the body, compassion, justice, tolerance, and fortitude, which involves the practice of detachment and the need to realize a peaceful state of mind regardless of circumstances, austerity, and dignity. Rawson

suggests that some of the above seven precepts are blinds, and there are others that are not printed or written down.

The Role of the Mind

The Druze, whose philosophy is based on Greek and Pythagorean notions of liberation through knowledge, place tremendous emphasis on the role of the mind. As such, they hold that humans are thinking beings with the freedom to explore without restriction all that is possible to be known.

As previously mentioned, Druzism places the Universal Mind (*Aql*), the intelligent purposeful principle, at the apex of its evolutionary scheme. The individual mind is conceived of as the microcosmic representation of the Universal Mind and indestructible with respect to the notion of Time.⁹⁴ Because the mind is thought to be ahead of the Soul in the Druze system, and unique to human beings, it is seen as “a prerequisite for spiritual development.”⁹⁵ Mind, in the Druze view, gives one the power to shape, create and control matter making it an evolutionary agent par excellence. Moreover, mind or knowledge, and reason, are seen as the gateway to awareness or Truth, and the means of *Taqammus* or uniting with the Divine.

But achieving union with the Supreme Source is predicated on having sound ethics, an open mind, pure thoughts, detached focus and the ability to reason and discriminate or see things as they are in reality. Union is also dependent upon listening to the all-important dictates of conscience or the voice of meaning from within. Developing the mind in this way, says Wahab, allows one to develop “pristine awareness” or the intuitive realization of the meaning behind the phenomenal world of existence. He describes this faculty further as “existential insight,” which bypasses the analytical process of reason and judgment to serve as a perfect mirror reflecting God's Will and Purpose. To the Druze then, mind is the means by which humanity as a whole can evolve to become one intelligent consciousness or a single universal mind within the Mind of God.

The mind also plays a significant role with respect to the way that the Druze interpret their

holy texts. Although they recognize the significance of the Qur'an, the Torah, the Bible and other sacred texts, such as Vedic and Greek theological and philosophical literature, these are, as Robert Engelbach describes them, "viewed as shells from which the inner meaning must be extracted."⁹⁶ In fact, the Druze believe that there are three levels to interpreting the sacred texts and that each of these reflect a level of spiritual development and progression. They are:

1. the exoteric, available to anyone
2. the hidden, or allegorical, accessible to those who can reflect or think deeply
3. the esoteric of the esoteric, or *batin al-batin* (a concept also known as *Anagoge*), a level that is inaccessible to all but the enlightened few.⁹⁷

In Hindu philosophy these are called Śabdārtha, Bhāvārtha and Guhyārtha respectively.

These three levels of interpretation are also equivalent to the method as outlined by Djwhal Khul through the work of Alice A. Bailey on developing the intuition through the study of symbol. They are 1) the exoteric interpretation, based largely on its objective utility and the nature of the form; 2) the subjective or conceptual interpretations, wherein the idea lying behind the objective manifestation is revealed; 3) the spiritual meaning behind the subjective, i.e., its energetic effect and its purpose.⁹⁸

The Druze and Their Relationship to the Templars and Masonry

It is a fact, as Bernard H. Springett wrote in 1922, in the *Secret Sects of Syria and Lebanon*,⁹⁹ that what we now know as Masonry "has been part and parcel of the religions of the Middle East for thousands of years."¹⁰⁰ Springett based much of what he wrote on the connection between the Druze and Masonry on his own researches and on the notes of A. L. Rawson, a Druze initiate and high-ranking member of several Masonic lodges. Before them, Geoffrey Higgins (1722–1803), whose work also influenced Helena Blavatsky and the early theosophists, along with the French poet

and historian Gerard de Nerval (1808–1855), and the British diplomat, author and mystic, Laurence Oliphant (1829–1888), concluded that certain secret Islamic communities, chiefly the Druze and the Isma'ili Nizaris Assassins¹⁰¹ were responsible for transmitting the ancient Gnostic wisdom to Europe through their influence on the Knights Templar, the Freemasons and the Rosicrucians.

Albert Pike in his *Magnum Opus* or *Great Work* writes in his commentary for the Ritual of the 22nd Degree—"The Knight of the Royal Axe or the Prince of Libanus,"—that the Colleges on Mount Lebanon, begun by Solomon, "were perpetuated by the Druze, from whom the Crusaders obtained their knowledge of this degree."¹⁰²

In the 1890s the Rev. Haskett Smith reasoned that the Druze "retain many evident tokens of their close and intimate connection with the Ancient Craft of Freemasonry."¹⁰³

It is not possible to assert with any certainty that the Druze, who took part in the Crusades under the banner of Islam,¹⁰⁴ conferred initiation on the Knights Templar, whose order was founded in 1118, to guard the Holy Land and protect Christians pilgrims during the crusades, or if it was the Templars who passed on their doctrines to the Druze. Rawson thought that Druzism and its origins are and must forever remain an unsolvable mystery. But, like Pike, he supposed: "that this peculiar sect originated with the Freemasons that followed upon the steps of Solomon."¹⁰⁵ He went on to say that Druze influence on the mind and life of medieval Europe could not be overstated.¹⁰⁶

Indeed, the relationship between the Druze and Masonry is now fairly well established among many historians, Masons, and quite a few Druze themselves. The Mason Jean-Pierre Schmit, who based his article, *The Secret Statutes of the Knights Templar*, on documents from the Vatican archives which belonged to the Masonic Grand Lodge of Hamburg and which describe the secret statutes of the order, makes various references to the Druze.¹⁰⁷ Among other things these official Rules, composed in 1205, refer to the Saracens¹⁰⁸ and the Druze as "fraternal brothers."

In another article on “Freemasonry in Lebanon,” written for the journal of *Archeology and History in Lebanon*, the authors claim that:

the Druze belonged to the subsidiary branch of the first Freemasons, and that their connections with Freemasonry date to the Crusaders, who themselves discovered Freemasonry during their occupation of Palestine. Some Masons go even further, affirming that the titles of the 21st and the 22nd degrees of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite Prince of Libanus refer to the followers of that symbolic religion.¹⁰⁹

Timothy Hogan, “Grand Master Ordre Souverain du Temple Initiatique,” in *The Way of the Templar* explains that the primary reason the Christian Gnostics, the traditions of the Rose Cross and the Chevaliers or Knights of the Temple were closely associated with the Druze, the Isma‘ilis, the Sufis, and other Muslim brotherhoods was because they acknowledged the same source for many of their doctrines and beliefs.¹¹⁰ These groups also shared an interest in the esoteric interpretation of sacred texts, as well as an interest in Alchemy, Gnosticism, Hermeticism and Astrology. Hogan notes that the Templars were part of a secret mission to establish a link between Christianity and Islam. This mission entailed “seeking out and rescuing from annihilation the secret doctrines”¹¹¹ that were being protected in Europe, but also by schools in North Africa and the Middle East. He goes on to say that associations between the various Muslim Brotherhoods and the Knights of the Temple were so close that the latter were referred to as the “Chevaliers of the Allah.”¹¹²

According to Hogan, these traditions had a special interest in certain fixed stars and their cycles in the heavens. Of particular interest was:

the star of Aldebaran [Alpha Tauri: The Star of Illumination or Revelation in the Bull’s eye that irradiates the Way], was associated with St. Michael in the heavens and St. George on earth. To this day, many Druze Temples in Lebanon feature statues of St. George in their sanctuaries [*Khalwa* or Lodge], and certainly these figures of St. Michael and St. George have been featured in the traditional Knighthood accolade of ‘dubbing.’¹¹³ (author’s brackets)

There are a number of other resemblances and unifying factors between the Druze and Freemasonry. Both groups incorporate the gnostic wisdom of Egypt, Greece, Persia and Islam, and revere Hebraic mystical traditions. Both employ secret handshakes, grips, signs and passwords

that are adopted for purposes of recognition and to make certain that no information pertaining to the esoteric tenets and mysteries of the religion is shared with anyone who is not an initiate. The Druze and Freemasons each utilize circumambulations and hollow pillars¹¹⁴ signifying, among other things, the foundation of the “Sacred Science” and the number two or the pairs of opposites between which one must pass as one of the stages of the initiatory process. Additional similarities can be found with respect to the Druze catechism and Grand Orient Freemasonry in that one can only receive instruction from the *uqqāl* or initiates after taking a number of solemn oaths under the Law of Silence (*Kitman al Dinn*) before entering a cycle of initiation. Moreover, for both the Druze and the Masons, the oath, once

Many Druze identify as Muslims, many others do not, nor do they believe in the principles of the Islamic faith. Rather, they see themselves as members of an heterodox religious sect. Kamal Jumblatt . . . describes the Druze faith as a meditative religion, and inclusive method for knowing the Absolute. Druzism has no clergy, rituals or obligations. Hence there are those who do not see Druzism as a religion at all, but regard it as a veiled and complex philosophical system.

taken, can never truly be rejected or taken back—once a Druze always a Druze; once a Mason, always a Mason. Although a Druze or a Mason may be expelled for unacceptable conduct, neither can be released from his or her contract or pledged word.

Yet another tie between these two groups is the Grand Lodge. Groups like the Rosicrucian Fellowship maintain that the “House of Wisdom or Science” (*Dar al-Hikma*) and the adjacent “House of Learning or Knowledge” (*Dar al-Ilm*), built under the auspices of al-Hakīm in Cairo, constituted a Grand Lodge.¹¹⁵ According to the *Ordre Kabbalisitic de la Rose Croix*, Christian Rosenkreuz, after traveling to the mystic city Damcar in Arabia in search of lost knowledge, is said to have established a “House of the Holy Spirit,” modeled after al-Hakīm’s “House of Wisdom,” upon his return to Europe. The young C.R.C. is said to have been instructed by the Arabian adepts during his three year stay in the Mid-East.¹¹⁶

Based on firsthand experience with the Druze in Lebanon and Syria, Rawson elucidates further:

To the central *Dar ul-hikmat* “House of Science” was attached a Grand Lodge, where the candidates for initiation into the esoteric doctrines of Ismailism were instructed in the articles of the faith. Twice a week, every Monday and Wednesday, the *Dai ud-Daawat*, the Grand Prior of the Lodge, convened meetings, which were frequented by both men and women, dressed in white, occupying separate seats. These assemblages were named *Majalis ul-hikmat* or “philosophical conferences.” Before the initiation the *Dai ud-Dawaat* waited on the Imam (the Caliph), the Grand Master, and read to him the discourse he proposed to deliver to the neophytes, and received his sign-manual on the cover of the manuscript. After the lecture the pupils kissed the hands of the Grand Prior, and reverently touched the signature of the Master with their foreheads. Makrisi’s account of the different degrees of initiation adopted in this Lodge forms an invaluable record of freemasonry. In fact, the Lodge at Cairo [which had nine degrees] became the

model of all the Lodges created afterwards in Christendom.¹¹⁷ (author’s brackets)

This model seems to have continued in its basic shape within the context of the current Druze faith.

Druze Initiation

Very little is known about the Druze system of Initiation. However, Rawson communicated some of what he knew to Springett, who wrote about it in the *Secret Sects of Syria and Lebanon*. Jean-Marc Aractingi’s more recent *Secrets Initiatiques en Islam et Rituels Macconiques*¹¹⁸ also provides a good outline of admission and initiation into the Druze initiatory scheme.

Aractingi describes admission into the Druze sect as beginning with a period of six months or more in which the Sheikhs or members of the *uqqāl* observe the candidate’s general behavior. Rawson says the probation is long and severe. In evaluating the candidate’s character and actions, his or her past and present circumstances are taken into account. Testimony as to the candidate’s worthiness and sincerity is taken from his or her associates and members of the community. Thus the aspirant faces not only the judgment of the Sheikhs but also that of society in which he or she lives. If the candidate is deemed worthy, he or she then undergoes a preliminary test, which consists of questioning by the Sheikhs.¹¹⁹

Once entered as a beginner or Apprentice (*Mubtadi*), the candidate must undergo a two-year period of probation. If the probationer passes the *first initiatory test*, which Rawson says is a daylong ordeal designed to rigorously test the candidate’s self-control and physical and mental endurance,¹²⁰ he or she must undertake a solemn oath and make a written contract before entering a cycle of initiations.

The oath, taken on a section of the Epistles of Wisdom, as Rawson explains, involves the unequivocal acknowledgement of the Oneness or Unity of God (*Tawhīd*) and surrender to God’s Will. The written contract makes one a secret guarantor of the Unitarian religion.¹²¹ It is also thought that the initiate must commit him or herself to playing a part in the rebuild-

ing of Solomon's Temple.¹²² This is not as surprising it may seem given that the Druze in Lebanon claim to have supplied the "Cedars" (a symbol for "Great Men" or "trees of Righteousness") that were used in the building of the arc of the first Temple. Hence the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite assignment of the Druze, i.e., the Royal Axe or Prince of Libanus to the 22nd degree, which deals with "great work or labor."

At each initiation the candidate is given gradual access to the various ancient manuscripts. Some of these manuscripts are part of a long initiatory chain given only to those who have been prepared to receive them. A portion of these manuscripts, according to Kamal Jumblatt, a Lebanese Druze initiate, are "certain works of ancient Egypt, in particular the secret work of Hermes Trimégiste, known to us under the name of Imhotpe... the builder of the first Pyramid in Sakharah, one of the first initiatory centers of antiquity."¹²³

Instead of the nine Degrees instituted at the Grand Lodge in Cairo, the Druze are said to have five Degrees. According to Rawson, the "first three degrees are typified by the three feet of the candlestick of the inner Sanctuary.... The 'three feet are the holy Application, the Opening, and the Phantom.'"¹²⁴ These three correspond to man's inner and outer soul, and his body, which is viewed as a phantom or a passing shadow. The five degrees are emblematic of the five mystic elements or cosmic principles, with the "last two being the most important and terrifying in their grandeur."¹²⁵

In the closing paragraph of his letter to Blavatsky about his initiation into the Druze sect, Rawson, who was given special dispensation to move through the stages of aspirant and apprentice quickly, concludes by saying that the Druze initiation

is so peculiar that it could not be printed so as to instruct one who had not been "worked" through the "chamber." So it would be even more impossible to make an exposé of them than of the Freemasons. The real secrets are acted and not spoken, and require several initiated persons to assist in the work.¹²⁶

Conclusion

This article has sought to tell the story of the mysterious Druze, a small and exclusive group that has baffled and intrigued scholars, missionaries and the curious for centuries. The complex origins of the Druze people and their rich syncretic beliefs, which presents as a complex mix of Neo-Platonic and Pythagorean philosophy, Gnosticism and Shia Isma'ili Islam, along with elements of Persian, Hindu and Judaic thought, have been discussed. The Druze lineage, as this article has also attempted to show, has clear links to the Templars and Freemasons, suggesting that Druzism has the hallmarks of an occult fraternity that has endured from ancient times.

One of the most important tenets of the Druze system is its emphasis on *Tawhīd* or God's absolute Unity or Oneness. For the Druze *Tawhīd* "does not simply mean that all religions are of the same monotheistic source, but that the source is the essence of everything in it. There is no separation between God and man, or between God and any other aspect of the universe."¹²⁷ Hence, *Tawhīd* is more than a fundamental concept; it is something that is to be perceived and lived in every single moment of life.

In addition to the concept of God's Absolute Oneness, the Druze adopted the Neo-Platonic doctrine of cyclic re-embodiments of the Universal Intelligence emanating from the Ineffable Logos or Creator, wherein each succeeding manifestation is the result of the previous cycle. Reincarnation is another feature of this eclectic sect, along with a strong emphasis on brotherhood, morality, initiation and reason.

Because the sacred literature of the Druze is not widely circulated, and its inner teachings, like a precious gem, are still hidden away or conveyed in the language of occult blinds, any attempt to write their story will consist of a mixture of fact and various speculative theories. Complicating matters further is the fact that the Druze themselves hold very different views about their origins, beliefs and practices. Many Druze identify as Muslims and rely on the Qur'an (along with the Epistles of Wisdom) as their primary books. Yet there are also

Druze communities who maintain that Islam has nothing to do with Druzism at all, that its language is universal and that Druzism is not a religion but more of a sacred science or a “timeless Mind creed than anything else.”¹²⁸ Despite these, and other complicating factors, it is clear that the Druze have deep esoteric roots and are one of the keepers of the Ancient Wisdom.

At present the Druze are facing a number of challenges. They are a people without geopolitical allies, and as such, they are a forgotten minority in the Middle East. The Druze are also under threat in countries like Syria and Iraq where once again they are being persecuted for their beliefs, and in Lebanon, due to political tensions in the region. Moreover, many Druze communities have lost contact with the modern world owing to long entrenched Druze traditions and habituated ways of thinking that run counter to the dynamic and progressive intent of *Tawhīd*.¹²⁹ Their numbers continue to dwindle because of their exclusive nature and their strict rules on endogamy and entrance into the faith. On the positive side, there has been renewed interest in this unique and highly guarded sect along with the emergence of new information, much of it coming from the Druze themselves regarding the basic tenets of their faith and its sacred literature. In light of these factors some Druze, such as Obeid, have called for reforms that would allow for greater openness, access and entry into the Druze faith as well as greater adaptability to the societies, especially in the West, where a number of Druze now live.¹³⁰ But it is an open question as to whether the Druze people, their sacred texts and their secrets will continue to survive.

¹ Charles W. Leadbeater, *The Masters of the Path* (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1925), 42.

² Anis Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2006), 11.

³ *Druze or Druze*, Online Encyclopedia, http://encyclopedia.jrank.org/DRO_ECG/DRUSES_or_DRUZES_Arab_Druz_.html (accessed August 30, 2016).

⁴ Chadi Gaith, *The Forbidden Fifth Science*, <http://www.druzenet.net/dn-theifthscience.html>. (accessed December 1, 2016).

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Gerard De Nerval, *Journey to the Orient* (reprint 2012; Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1930), 238.

⁷ Miriam Cooke, *Nazira Zeineddine: A Pioneer of Islamic Feminism* (London: Oneworld Publications

⁸ Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 100.

⁹ George Washington Chasseaud, *The Druze of Lebanon: Their Manner, Customs and History* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan, 2009), 378.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Robert Breton Betts, *The Druze*, Hartford, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), 54.

¹² Ibid., 36.

¹³ Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 145.

¹⁴ Jean-Marc Aractingi, *Secrets Initiatiques en Islam et Rituels Macconiques* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2008), 23.

¹⁵ The Fatimid or Isma'ili Shia Caliphate trace their lineage to Fatimah, the daughter of Muhammad and her husband Ali ibn Abi Talib, who the Shia believe should have been the first Caliph after the death of Muhammad.

¹⁶ Ismā'ilism is a branch of Shia Islam with an emphasis on the engagement of both the spirit and the intellect. Ismā'ilism contains Gnostic and Neo-platonic influences, which posits the creation of the universe by a process of emanation from God. It also contains a strong esoteric dimension based on the idea that the Qur'an contains an inexhaustible wellspring of allegorical and symbolic inspiration lending itself to a spectrum of interpretations. The unity and absolute transcendence of God is the first and foremost article of the Isma'ili faith. The Druze adopted these and other Isma'ili and Shia beliefs and practices.

¹⁷ For contrasting views of the controversial al-Hakīm, see: *Caliph of Cairo: Al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah*, by Paul E. Walker (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010) or *The Shi'a Imamate: A Fatimid Interpretation*, by Sami Marakem (London: I.B. Tauris and Co., 2013).

¹⁸ Both the Isma'ili's and the Druze dispute the assertion that al-Hakīm claimed to be God,

- since such a contention is considered to be blasphemous in Islam. They maintain that such claims were made by ad-Darazi and compounded by information on the part of the Abbasid Caliphs. It should also be noted that while al-Hakīm was viewed as an infallible leader among the Druze and the Isma‘ili’s, the Jews and Christians saw him as a tyrant who destroyed their synagogues and churches—places of worship that he eventually rebuilt.
- 19 Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 56.
- 20 Pensator, “Dar Al-Ilm: The House of Knowledge in Cairo,” *The Rosicrucian Heritage Vol. 20, No. 2, 2013*, 16. Online at: www.amorac.org.uk (accessed January 21, 2017).
- 21 See for example: “The Father of Alchemy,” by Jābir ibn Hayyān, in the *Rosicrucian Beacon*, September 2016, Vol. 25. No. 4. Online at: https://amorac.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/2016-09_RC_Beacon.pdf.
- 22 Pensator, “Dar Al-Ilm: The House of Knowledge in Cairo,” 80.
- 23 *The Qur’an*, 2: 256, trans. A. Yusuf Ali (reprint 1977; Lahore: Asharf Printing Press, 1975).
- 24 Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 80.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 The Fatimids claimed descent from Fatima bint Muhammad, the daughter of the prophet Muhammad.
- 27 It should be noted here that some Isma‘ili’s discount the belief that al-Hakīm supported and encouraged Hamza and the deviant teachings of the Druze. However, most scholarship corroborates the Druze version of events.
- 28 Other ancient Druze texts the *Rasa’il al-Hind* (Epistles of India) and the previously lost (or hidden) manuscripts such as *al-Munfarid bi-Dhatihi* and *al-Sharia al-Ruhaniyya*, having to do with the unique essence of the Divine and spiritual law respectively, as well as others including didactic and polemic treatises.
- 29 Sami Nasib Makarem, *The Druze Faith* (Ann Arbor, MI: Caravan Books, 1974), 18.
- 30 Robert Breton Betts, *The Druze* (London: Yale University Press, 1988), 11.
- 31 Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 89.
- 32 Abu Izzeddin, *The Druze: A New Study of Their History, Faith and Society*, 105.
- 33 Breton Betts, *The Druze*, 12-13.
- 34 Ibid., 13.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 This information was related by the Druze to Sir Lawrence Oliphant and is discussed in his book (*The Land of Gilead*), which is based on his travels to Egypt and the Mid-East. According to recent statistics, there are 14.6 million Muslims living in China today.
- 37 Breton Betts, *The Druze*, 14.
- 38 Ibid., 176.
- 39 “Great Theosophist: The Druze of Mount Lebanon,” *Theosophy Vol. 26, No. 1, 1937*. <http://www.wisdomworld.org/setting/druzes.html> (accessed Oct 26, 2016).
- 40 H. P. Blavatsky, “Lamas and Druses,” in *H. P. Blavatsky’s Collected Writings* (Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1996), 175.
- 41 Ibid., 176.
- 42 H. P. Blavatsky, *The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky*, vol. 1, 1861-1879 (Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 2003), 413. Despite Blavatsky’s claim to “belong to the secret sect of the Druze,” it does not appear that she was actually initiated into the faith. She did however, study with them.
- 43 Guru Nanak (1469–1439), was the founder of Sikhism and the first of the ten Sikh Gurus.
- 44 David B. Wolf, *The Druze and Vedic Origins*, <http://www.veda.harekrsna.cz/connections/Vedic-Druze.php> (accessed December 20, 2016).
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 Nejla M. Abu Izzeddin, *The Druze: A New Study of Their History, Faith and Society* (Leiden, NLD: Brill Academic Publishers, 1993), 121.
- 47 Ibid.
- 48 Timothy Hogan, *Entering the Chain of Union* (Lulu.com, 2012), 211.
- 49 H.P. Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary* (reprint 1966; CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 1892), 386.
- 50 See *The Exodus Route: The Wilderness of Shur*, <http://www.bible.ca/archeology/bible-archeology-exodus-route-wilderness-of-shur-ishmaelites-midianites-amalekites.htm> (accessed December 20, 2016).
- 51 Chadi Gaith, *The Forbidden Fifth Science*, <http://www.druzenet.net/dnthe5thscience.html> . (accessed January 8, 2017).
- 52 Ibid.
- 53 Kais Firro, *The History of the Druzes* (Leiden, NLD: Brill Academic Publishers, 1997), 22.
- 54 Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, xi.
- 55 Makarem, *The Druze Faith*, 41.

56 Hamza ibn ‘Alī, *The Epistles of Wisdom*, No. 5-14. The Epistles are held in the Shay Nasib Makarem collection, Aytat, Lebanon.

57 Sami Swayd, *Druze Spirituality and Asceticism*. Online at: www.eial.org/mesp/Swayd.rtf.rtf (accessed December 23, 2016).

58 Omar Wahab, *A Glimpse of Eden*. Online at: <http://www.druzeworld-wide.com/Articles.html>. (accessed December 31, 2016).

59 Ibid.

60 Ibid.

61 Swayd, *Druze Spirituality and Asceticism*. www.eial.org/mesp/Swayd.rtf.rtf (accessed January 8, 2017).

62 Kamal Jumblatt, as quoted by Dr. Nazek Abu-Ilwan Abed in *Jumblatt, Religion, and Tawhid*.

63 Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 103.

64 Ibid., 104.

65 Firro, *The History of the Druzes*, 13.

66 Samy Swayd, *Druze Spirituality and Asceticism*.

67 Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 129.

68 Ibid., 130.

69 Ibid., 131.

70 Firro, *The History of the Druzes*, 11.

71 David Kendall, *The Druze People in Syria*. <http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/sy-druz.html> (accessed January 8, 2017).

72 Both images are in the public domain.

73 Blavatsky, *The Lamas and the Druze*, 152.

74 Firro, *The History of the Druzes*, 11.

75 Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (reprint 1979, New York: Lucis Trust, 1951), 579.

76 Abu Izzeddin, *The Druze: A New Study of Their History, Faith and Society*, 113.

77 Ibid.

78 Swayd, *Druze Spirituality and Asceticism*.

79 See for example: *The Nusayri’s Religious System: The Concept of God*. Online at: http://mahajjah.com/5-the-nusayris-religious-system-the-concept-of-god/#_ftn32 (accessed January 3, 2017).

80 Makarem, *The Druze Faith*, 68.

81 Obeid, *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 124.

82 Makarem, *The Druze Faith*, 69.

83 Ibid., 70.

84 *The Qabbalistic Keys to Creation of Man*. Online at:

http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/secret_teachings/sta30.htm (accessed January 9, 2017).

85 Obeid. *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 159.

86 Ibid., 153.

87 Ibid.

88 The Docetae doctrine maintains that Christ’s body was merely a phantom or appearance, or that it was comprised of spiritual substance. This doctrine according to Philip Hitti, “was handed down to the Moslems probably through Manichaean channels. The Manichaean movement, which arose in close connection with Mandaeanism in ‘Irāq or southern Babylonia, about the middle of the third century A.D., and which, as *al-Fihrist* declares, was a blend of the old Magian cult with Christianity, was Iranian in its mythology and cosmological beliefs.”

89 Philip K. Hitti, *Origins of the Druze People and Religion* (reprint 2008; New York: Ams Pr Inc., 1928), 40.

90 Pam Rohland, *The Druze*, <http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Bu-Dr/Druze.html>. (accessed November, 23, 2016).

91 Chadi Gaith, *The Forbidden Fifth Science*.

92 Ibid.

93 Wahab, *A Glimpse of Eden*.

94 Obeid. *The Druze and Their Faith in Tawhid*, 138.

95 Ibid., 267.

96 Robert Engelbach, *Esoteric Muslims: The Druze*. Online at: <http://www.spiritofthescriture.com/id2639-esoteric-muslims-the-druze.html> (accessed January 21, 2017).

97 Samy Swayd, *The Historical Dictionary of the Druze* (London: Rowan and Lightfield, 2015), 223.

98 Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem* (Reprint 1978; New York: Lucis Trust, 1950), 7-8.

99 Bernard H. Springett, *The Secret Sects of Syria and Lebanon* (London: Kegan Paul, 2006).

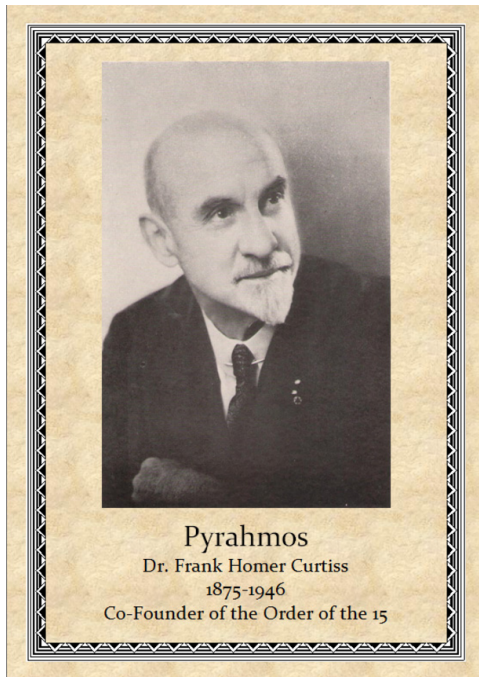
100 Ibid., 1.

101 The Isma‘ili Nizaris Assassins have commonly been thought to be hashish smoking, murderers who assassinated their religio-political adversaries in parts of the Muslim world. New scholarship has largely discredited these longstanding claims as part legend and part intrigue among orthodox Muslims and Christians who viewed the esoteric Nizaris as heretics. The appellation, “Assassin” or Assesseen

- in Arabic, is now thought to signify the Nizaris as “guardians” of a secret wisdom that could not be given out to the unworthy or ignorant.
- ¹⁰² Albert Pike, “The Knight of the Royal Axe or the Prince of Libanus Degree.” This article was extracted from Pike’s *Magnum Opus or Great Work* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger), XXII...5.
- ¹⁰³ As quoted in *Heirs to Forgotten Kingdoms* by Gerard Russell (Philadelphia: Basic Books, 2014), 115.
- ¹⁰⁴ Hitti, *Origins of the Druze People and Religion*, ch. 2, p. 5. Hitti describes how the Tanūkhhs, one of the two most powerful families in Lebanon, “led their incursions into the Phoenician coast and finally succeeded in holding Beirūt and the maritime plain against the Franks.”
- ¹⁰⁵ Rawson as quoted by Springett in *The Secret Sects of Syria and Lebanon*, 40.
- ¹⁰⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁷ Jean-Pierre Schmit, *The Secret Statutes of the Knights Templar*. Online at: <http://www.lesfilsdelavallee.fr/index.php/en/the-secret-statutes-of-the-knights-templar>. It should be noted here that these documents, which are copies of documents found in the Vatican and copied by the Danish scientist Fredrick Münter, were thought to have been fake. But new research based on the work of Benjamin Tudela (1130–1173) gives more credence to claims of their authenticity. Timothy Hogan discusses these matters in the *Way of the Templar* (Raleigh, NC: Lulu Publishing, 2015).
- ¹⁰⁸ The word “Saracen” is primarily associated with the Crusades and was synonymous with “Muslim” in the Medieval Period.
- ¹⁰⁹ Gerard Figuie, Rita Sayegh, Riad Abou Jaoude, “Freemasonry in Lebanon: An Overview,” *Archaeology and History in Lebanon*, Issue Twenty Five, Winter 2007, p.8. For additional information on the Druze and Masonry see: http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/sumer_anunnaki/reptiles/serpent_tribe/serpent_tribe16.htm.
- ¹¹⁰ Timothy Hogan, *The Way of the Templar* (Raleigh, NC: Lulu Publishing, 2015). 22.
- ¹¹¹ Ibid., 24.
- ¹¹² Ibid., 22.
- ¹¹³ Ibid., 23.
- ¹¹⁴ “A Topic of Masonic Interest: The Druze.” Online at: <https://freshfromthequarry.com/2015/10/01/topic-of-masonic-interest-the-druze/>. (accessed November 18, 2016).
- ¹¹⁵ “The Secret Tradition of Islam,” by the Life Science Fellowship http://www.alpheus.org/html/articles/esoteric_history/secret_islam.html. (accessed February 4, 2017).
- ¹¹⁶ “Mystery of the Rose Cross,” *Ordre Kabbalistique de la Rose Croix*. <http://www.okrc.org/index.php/en-us/tradition-of-the-korc/the-rose-cross/6-mystery-of-the-rose-cross>. (accessed February 6, 2017).
- ¹¹⁷ Springett, *The Secret Sects of Syria and Lebanon*, 41.
- ¹¹⁸ Aractingi, *Secrets Initiatiques en Islam et Rituels Macconiques*
- ¹¹⁹ Ibid., 70.
- ¹²⁰ Springett, *The Secret Sects of Syria and Lebanon*, 206.
- ¹²¹ Ibid., 194-195.
- ¹²² See for example, *Sons of the Serpent Tribe-The Old Battle Axe: Qadosh, The Cedar Mountain*: www.bibliotecapleyades.net/sumer_anunnaki/.../serpent_tribe/serpent_tribe16.htm, and *The Way of the Templar*, by Timothy Hogan.
- ¹²³ Aractingi, *Secrets Initiatiques en Islam et Rituels Macconiques*, 82.
- ¹²⁴ Springett, *The Secret Sects of Syria and Lebanon*, 205.
- ¹²⁵ Ibid., 192.
- ¹²⁶ Ibid., 207.
- ¹²⁷ Engelbach, *Esoteric Muslims: The Druze*.
- ¹²⁸ Gaith, *The Forbidden Fifth Science*.
- ¹²⁹ Obeid, *The Druze and their Faith in Tawhid*, 263-264.
- ¹³⁰ Ibid., 264-265.

Great Esotericists

Harriette Augusta Curtiss (1856–1932) and Frank Homer Curtiss (1875–1946)



The path of discipleship is often portrayed as a solitary one. Personal relationships are sacrificed to group service, and romantic “entanglements” are viewed as distracting and wasteful of energy. Helena Blavatsky, for one, emphasized the need for celibacy; it is impossible, she declared, “for him to divide his attention between the pursuit of Occultism and a wife.” She added: “let me remind you, practical Occultism is far too serious and dangerous a study for a man to take up, unless he is in the most deadly earnest, and ready to sacrifice all, himself first of all, to gain his end.”¹ Not incidentally, major world religions require monks, nuns, and in some cases clergy, to take vows of celibacy.

Some of the great esoteric teachers never married (for example: Éliphas Lévi, Tallapragada Subba Row, Jiddu Krishnamurti, Charles Leadbeater), or found their voices after failed

marriages (Blavatsky, Annie Besant, Alice Bailey). Several others had spouses who showed minimal or no interest in their esoteric work (Anna Kingsford, Arthur Waite, Max Heindel, Katherine Tingley, Dion Fortune). In a few cases esotericists formed close, extra-marital relationships with coworkers.²

Notwithstanding the possible distractions of intimate unions, several married couples made significant contributions to modern esotericism. MacGregor and Moina Mathers, Rudolf and Marie Steiner,³ Helena and Nicholas Roerich, Alice and Foster Bailey,⁴ Corinne and Theodore Heline, and Geoffrey and Sandra Hodson⁵ immediately come to mind. Less well-known, but deserving of more attention was the American couple Harriette and Homer Curtiss.

Harriette Augusta—who in adulthood bore a striking resemblance to Eleanor Roosevelt—

was born in Philadelphia in 1856. After a good education she planned a career on the stage; but her mother dissuaded her, and eventually she developed abilities as a clairvoyant. In 1907, at the age of fifty-one, she married the much-younger Homer Curtiss, a medical doctor who had graduated from the University of Pennsylvania. By that time both had developed a strong interest in the teachings of the Theosophical Society.

Soon after their marriage the Curtisses formed an esoteric study group in Philadelphia; its first meeting was on January 1, 1908. The group grew in size and became known as the "Order of the 15," a name explained many years later as capturing "its cosmic and numerological designation."⁶ Harriette Curtiss assumed the role of "Teacher" and adopted the pseudonym Rahmea, interpreted as "Princess of the Flame"; Homer Curtiss served as the order's secretary, taking the name Pyrahmos.

The Order's goal was to build bridges between Theosophy and orthodox Christian teachings. The Curtisses acknowledged their debt to Helena Blavatsky, co-founder of the Theosophical Society. Their first book, *Letters from the Teacher* (1909), bore the following dedication:

To that Great Teacher who brought the Wisdom-Religion to the Western World, known on earth as HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY, this volume is affectionately dedicated by her loving pupils and disciples Pyrahmos and Rahmea.⁷

Authorship was listed as: "Transmitted by Rahmea, Priestess of the Flame. Edited by F. Homer Curtiss, B.S., M.D., Secretary of the Order." Perhaps that style provides a clue to respective roles in their work as a whole; but all subsequent books were published under "Harriette Augusta Curtiss and F. Homer Curtiss."⁸

The Order of the 15 relaxed the Theosophical Society's insistence on vegetarianism but preserved most of its other teachings, including universal brotherhood, reincarnation, and the return of the World Teacher. As the rift between the Adyar and American branches of the Theosophical Society grew wider, the Curtisses sided with the American branch and the

"back to Blavatsky" movement. In so doing they cut themselves off from the Christianization movement in the Adyar Society, in which Besant and Leadbeater played prominent roles. Moreover, there is no evidence of close connections with Steiner, whose own interest in the esoteric aspects of Christianity was demonstrated in 1902 with the publication of *Christianity as Mystical Fact*. The Curtisses' work on Christian esotericism seems to have developed independently from comparable work in progress elsewhere during the period.

The teachings of the Order of the 15 were promulgated through monthly lessons and correspondence with students.⁹ The monthly lessons were designed to be accessible to entry-level students, "yet they also contain so much deep understanding and occult lore that the most advanced students find much that is new . . . [but] put in a new light, *i.e.*, the light of the new day."¹⁰ In due course the monthly lessons were gathered into the basic text, *The Voice of Isis* (1914), and the more advanced text, *The Message of Aquaria* (1921). Edited correspondence was published in the two volumes of *Letters from the Teacher* (1909, 1926).

Over time the Curtisses' path began to deviate from Blavatskian Theosophy, and as their focus changed, so did the name of their organization. The Order of the 15 became the Order of Christian Mystics, which embraced the objective of promoting advanced Christian mysticism in accordance with the Western mystery school tradition. "It is Christian," they explained, "in that it seeks the universal Cosmic Christ Principle, no matter by what name that Universal Principle is known in other lands; and in that it bases its teachings on the Christian rather than on Oriental scriptures."¹¹ We should note that "mystics" must be interpreted in the sense of the practical mysticism of modern esoteric teachings rather than the traditional contemplative mysticism of both West and East.

The Order of Christian Mystics was the most successful of the Curtisses' endeavors. At its peak, it enrolled thousands of students in over seventy countries. But the teachings were aimed primarily at the American esoteric community, for it was believed that America

would remain the spiritually dominant nation on earth for many years to come. The Curtisses' vision was to present a system of mysticism suitable for the western culture and mindset, encompassing a new interpretation on all former teachings given under the names of Rosicrucianism, Gnosticism and the western mystery school teachings.

Among much else the Order promoted a system of personal regeneration, referred to as spiritual alchemy, which involved transmuting the base sexual creative energy. By way of clarification:

Transmutation does not mean suppression or refusal to use the usual normal functions which have been given to man But it does mean that all thought in connection with this question must be metaphorically laid upon the altar of the Most High and blessed.¹²

During the first half of the twentieth century a number of esoteric teachers established religious affiliates of their esoteric schools or religious organizations through which their teachings could expand. For example, Leadbeater helped found the Liberal Catholic Church, and became its second presiding bishop. Steiner co-founded the Christian Communities. Ernest Holmes formed the Church of Religious Science after purposely remaining, for many years, outside the realm of organized religion.

The Curtisses' did likewise; during World War I they formed the Church of the Wisdom Religion, soon incorporated as the Universal Religious Foundation. By the 1930s more of the Curtisses' work was channeled through the Foundation than through the Order of Christian Mystics.

Through these various organizations the Curtisses published twenty-seven volumes of mystical teachings, answered thousands of let-

ters, and delivered thousands of lectures across the United States. All their books ran through multiple editions.

The Curtisses' most influential books were *The Key to the Universe* (1917) and *The Key of Destiny* (1919). The

The Order of Christian Mystics was the most successful of the Curtisses' endeavors. At its peak, it enrolled thousands of students in over seventy countries. But the teachings were aimed primarily at the American esoteric community, for it was believed that America would remain the spiritually dominant nation on earth for many years to come.

unifying theme of the two-book series—each more than 300 pages in length—is number symbolism. *The Key to the Universe* focuses on the numbers zero through ten, *The Key of Destiny* on the numbers eleven through twenty-two. Numerology obviously played a major role, and the authors began the first book with the observation: “Mathematics is the only exact science. . . . Words are symbols of ideas, but numbers are realities.”¹³ Pythagoras

symbols of divine would have agreed.

To bring each number to life the authors drew upon the perspectives of mathematics, astrology, Greek mythology, Vedic religion, the Hebrew alphabet, esoteric teachings on the human constitution, and more. Importantly, they related each number to a Major Arcanum in the Tarot, providing a brief but clear exposition of Tarot symbolism. To illustrate these latter discussions they provided monochrome reproductions from the Dodal and Convey Marseille Tarot decks, the “St Germain” Egyptian deck (attributed to the late nineteenth-century Edgar de Valcourt-Vermont), and the Waite-Smith deck.¹⁴

Each number was discussed at length. For example, the Curtisses devoted sixty-six pages to the number seven. By way of introduction they characterized seven as

the most sacred of all numbers and for several reasons is so considered in all theologies. *1st*, because it relates to the mystery of the manifestation of the Godhead, the *Mystery of Creation*; *2nd*, because the number 7

governs the equally divine *Mystery of Gestation*, and 3rd because it is the *Number of Perfection*.¹⁵

From the perspective of the Tarot the Curtisses wrote:

In the Tarot the 7th card is called The Chariot, and is represented by a conqueror crowned with a coronet, composed of 3 pentagrams of gold. He stands in a chariot having the form of a cubic stone, having over him an azure canopy supported by 4 columns, and having 14 stars over his head. . . . [Two] sphinxes, 1 black and 1 white, draw the chariot, each straining in an opposite direction, yet both looking toward the right and under the absolute control of the driver.¹⁶

They interpreted the Chariot card thus:

The card symbolizes the main characteristics of the sacred septenary. It represents man who has become the Conqueror, master both of himself and the elements, making the cube—now become the Philosopher's Stone—his chariot; the heavens his canopy; the 2 sphinxes . . . his servants to bear him onward.¹⁷

The eighty-six pages devoted to the number twelve in *The Key of Destiny* are prefaced by the comment that it “pertains primarily and fundamentally to the complete expression or Fruition of the Divine Trinity within the circle of its manifestation.”¹⁸ The twelfth Major Arcanum, the Hanged Man, is described and analyzed, as before. But the discussion of “twelve” focuses more on the tribes of Israel and Christ's twelve disciples. No fewer than thirty-eight pages address the labors of Hercules. The Curtisses end their discussion of Hercules' final labor—conquest of the hell-hound Cerberus—thus:

Hercules brought Cerberus up into the light of day, thus proving . . . that the Goat of Medes is not the devil, nor is the dog Cerberus in reality the fearsome creature usually depicted, for by the power of the Christ both can be conquered and made the friends of the man who has accomplished, i.e., the Sun Initiate.¹⁹

Like Kingsford, Besant, and others, the Curtisses acknowledged the role of the Divine Mother. The Curtisses noted the near-universality of a divine feminine personage among world religions, while reproaching Christianity—except “The Catholic Church”—for paying the least attention to her.²⁰ Their teachings on the Divine Mother evidently sought to remedy that inattention. She is, they explained,

that mighty Passive Principle which gathers up the Light as it penetrates Chaos and cherishes it in her bosom. It is forever the tender, brooding Mother-force which works on the germs of good in all things that they may ultimately bring forth that good. It is That unseen Mother-love of the Godhead, hovering like a dove over its nestlings It is that mysterious force of healing which makes every wound, be it of the physical body, the mind or the heart, tend to heal It is that love which makes Time the great healer of all woes, the soother of all sorrows, the adjuster of all inharmonies; that brings sunshine after rain, laughter after tears, and joy, deep and abiding, after sin, sorrow and repentance.²¹

The Divine Mother clearly has her being at the highest levels of the Godhead; indeed she is co-equal with God the Father:

The great Divine Mother is not something apart from God, but a definite and necessary manifestation or expression of God as Divine Love. It is from this eternal truth that all great religions have recognized and immortalized the Mother-aspect of the Divine as co-equal with the Father-aspect.²²

One section of *The Message of Aquaria* (1921) describes the evolution of the early root races. Members of the first root race, “beings of an incorporeal and ethereal substance half astral and half physical,” had not yet reached the lowest arc of [their] cycle of descent into matter. Forms in the second root race “became more and more dense by the gradual absorption of a new element. But only “toward the middle of the Third Race (Lemurian) did solid bones develop, the sexes separate, the body

become ‘clothed with coats of skin’ and take on human form as we know it today.”²³

Not surprisingly, given its title, *The Message of Aquaria* focuses to a large extent on the coming Aquarian Age. In the New Age many of the world’s problems will be solved by religion, but it will be led by a priesthood of initiates:

Such an initiated priesthood was founded by Melchisedec, and only when a priesthood “after the order of Melchisedec” has been re-established and humanity again gladly follows the Divine Law—not as children, but because they recognize its authority—can the problems of mankind be truly solved and the conditions under which humanity is suffering today be finally readjusted.²⁴

One of the problems with conventional Christianity, the Curtisses noted, was confusion between the Master Jesus and the Christ:

Jesus the man was an Avatar who, as He himself says, ‘came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me,’ while the Mystic Christ is not a personality, but a Divine Essence. It is a spiritual emanation from the Godhead, the Son of God or the Godhead in its creative aspect; that mystic Power or Principle which fructifies and animates all manifestations of life.²⁵

The student, in the Curtisses’ view, was better served in this regard by the Pauline epistles than by the gospels.

From time to time the Curtisses’ moved their headquarters to different locations. Initially in Philadelphia, it moved to California prior to World War I, and around 1925 to Washington, D.C. Homer Curtiss continued the work after Harriette made her transition from natural causes on September 22, 1932. After his own death in 1946, the headquarters moved to Hollywood, California, but the Order of Christian Mystics and the Universal Religious Foundation soon ceased operations.

With the collapse of the Curtisses’ organizational structures there was a risk that their works would be forgotten. In recent years,

however, their books have received new prominence and are readily available in printed form and online.²⁶ Harriette and Homer Curtiss’ marriage of twenty-four years came to an end with Harriette’s death. It would be inappropriate for us to speculate on the nature of their relationship at the personality level, though most of us would hope that they were fulfilled in their marital state. There is every reason to believe that their union was laid “upon the altar of the Most High.”

We also acknowledge that, on the mental and spiritual levels, they were highly effective coworkers who achieved much, touched many lives, and left a legacy of writings, which are as relevant to us today as they were to their students in the first half of the twentieth century. Along with Kingsford, Steiner, Besant, Leadbeater, Bailey, and others, they helped lay the groundwork for modern esoteric Christianity.

Contributed by John F. Nash
Johnson City, Tennessee

¹ Helena P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy* (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1987), 263.

² Anna Kingsford formed a close spiritual relationship with widower Edward Maitland, apparently with the blessing of her husband, the Rev. Algernon Godfrey Kingsford. Katherine Tingley formed a similar relationship with William Q. Judge while married to her third husband Philo B. Tingley.

³ Rudolf Steiner formed a spiritual relationship with Marie von Sivers while separated from his first wife Anna Eunicke Steiner. He and Marie married after Anna’s death.

⁴ Alice Bailey was divorced from her first husband the Rev. Walter Evans.

⁵ Geoffrey Hodson married Sandra Chase after the death of his first wife, the former Jane Carter. Both helped in his esoteric work, but Sandra Hodson assumed responsibility for the posthumous publication of some of his most valuable teachings.

⁶ Harriett A. Curtiss & F. Homer Curtiss, *The Key of Destiny* (San Francisco: Curtiss Philosophic, Book Co., 1919), 183.

⁷ Harriett A. Curtiss & F. Homer Curtiss, *Letters from the Teacher (Of the Teacher of the*

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- ⁸ *Order of the 15*) (Denver, CO: Curtiss Book Co., 1909), unnumbered Dedication page. Capitalization in original.
⁹ Copyrights, however, were usually registered in Homer Curtiss' name.
¹⁰ A similar format was adopted by Alice Bailey for the Arcane School.
¹¹ Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key of Destiny*, 183. Italics in original.
¹² Ibid., 191.
¹³ Harriett A. Curtiss & F. Homer Curtiss, *Letters from the Teacher*, vol. II (Hollywood, CA: Curtiss Philosophic, Book Co., 1926), 156.
¹⁴ Harriett A. Curtiss & F. Homer Curtiss, *The Key to the Universe: or a Spiritual Interpretation of Numbers and Symbols* (San Francisco: Curtiss Philosophic, Book Co., 1917), 17-18.
¹⁵ For more information on Tarot decks, see John F. Nash, "The Origins and Evolution of the Tarot," *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Spring 2017, 67-98.
¹⁶ Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key to the Universe*, 219. Capitalization and italics in original.
¹⁷ Ibid., 281.
¹⁸ Ibid.
¹⁹ Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key of Destiny*, 29. Ibid., 114.
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- ²⁰ Devotion to Mary in Roman Catholicism is often attributed to people's yearning for a goddess. Evidently the Curtisses were unaware of the more explicit reverence of the Divine Mother in Eastern Orthodoxy.
²¹ Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key to the Universe*, 192-193.
²² Harriett A. Curtiss & F. Homer Curtiss, *The Divine Mother* (San Francisco: Curtiss Philosophic, Book Co., 1921), 13.
²³ Harriett A. Curtiss & F. Homer Curtiss, *The Message of Aquaria: The Significance and Mission of the Aquarian Age* (Washington: Curtiss Philosophic Book Co., 7/e, 1947), 73. Parenthesis in original.
²⁴ Ibid., 427-438. Embedded quote in original.
²⁵ Harriett A. Curtiss & F. Homer Curtiss, *The Mystic Life, An Introduction to Practical Christian Mysticism*, 2/e, (Curtiss Philosophic Book Co., 1936), 73-74.
²⁶ Particularly useful is a website registered in South Africa: "Teachings of The Order of Christian Mystics, 1908-1946," <http://orderofchristianmystics.co.za/> (accessed April 30, 2017). The website provides online facsimiles of most of the Curtisses' publications.

Book Review

***The Soul of Psychosynthesis: The Seven Core Concepts*, by Kenneth Sørensen**, first edition, Kentaur Publishing, 2016. Paperback, 192 pages. List price US \$19.52. Available at: Amazon.com.

Summarizing Roberto Assagioli's contributions to the field of personal and spiritual growth is a daunting task. He was a pioneer in the field of psychology, a novel writer in spiritual and metaphysical subjects, a serious researcher and student, a teacher and a loving human being. Not surprisingly, introducing the main concepts of Psychosynthesis, Roberto Assagioli's major contribution to the world, is an equally challenging project.

In *The Soul of Psychosynthesis: The Seven Core Concepts*, Kenneth Sørensen achieves this in an original book that is both informative for readers in the psychological field and also accessible to readers from other backgrounds seeking to learn Psychosynthesis. To help the reader find their way through the labyrinth of Psychosynthesis ideas, Sørensen gives the reader a thread of Ariadne, a suggestion made by Assagioli himself that the Seven Core Concepts of Psychosynthesis are:

- 1) Disidentification;
- 2) The personal self;
- 3) The Will: good, strong, skillful;
- 4) The Ideal Model;
- 5) Synthesis;
- 6) The Superconscious; and
- 7) The Transpersonal Self.

Sørensen's book examines and illustrates these concepts devoting a chapter to each and showing their application in professional settings and in everyday life. He contextualizes his discussion with some clinical vignettes from his own therapeutic practice and by sharing examples drawn from his research and personal experiences with Psychosynthesis. The book includes seven interesting appendixes with exercises and additional information about Roberto Assagioli's life and work. Sørensen's contribution is grounded in

years of work in the field and can be trusted. He's a trained Psychosynthesis psychotherapist and has been serving as the director of the Norwegian Institute of Norway.

To readers of *The Esoteric Quarterly*, the book's main title *The Soul of Psychosynthesis* will surely look significant. Psychosynthesis is well-known as a humanistic and transpersonal approach that has helped refocus psychology around the Soul. This was no easy task at the time Assagioli (1888-1974), was writing, when positivistic and psychoanalytic approaches were more prevalent in Europe. Assagioli, along with other prominent exceptions such as Jung, Maslow and Keyserling, was a pioneer in a new land. He had studied the Ageless Wisdom traditions of East and West, and wanted to use an inclusive language that would convey the perennial truth to a wider audience, including the scientific milieu. He introduced the study of the Superconscious and the Transpersonal Self to psychology (indeed he's said to have coined the word "transpersonal psychology") and he was a complete forerunner in the psychological study of the Will. He also expanded the study of the evolution of consciousness by expanding the number of psychological functions to seven and by introducing "seven psychological types," each associated with certain transpersonal qualities.

Sørensen's study has the great merit of introducing each of these main ideas to the reader in a structured and logical fashion, defining each concept, exemplifying them, providing exercises and linking them with each of the other concepts. In addition, Sørensen suggests an original reading of Assagioli's metaphysics as *Evolutionary Panentheism*, a framework that contemplates that divinity's transcendent being "is an immanent presence in creation, and that the universe is created and maintained through involution and evolution." (p.11) This reading is interesting as it positions Assagioli in dialogue with "integral theory" authors like Ken Wilber.

To support this claim, in Chapter 2 (Psychosynthesis Model of the Personality), Sørensen argues that Assagioli's approach is integral as it offers a multidimensional view of the human personality that includes all of the relevant theories available at the time. This is synthesized in Assagioli's well-known "egg" diagram of the human constitution, which is reproduced, expanded and examined from different angles throughout the book. It is important that Sørensen has chosen to keep the position of the Self at the top of the "egg" diagram given by Assagioli and explains why this position gives a sense of orientation, purpose and evolutionary development that would be lost should we choose to retire the Self from the diagram, as it has been attempted by some writers in the field. It would be very interesting to read more about the current state of this debate about the Self in Psychosynthesis and, possibly, a lengthier elaboration of the similarities and differences between Psychosynthesis and Integral Theory. In this master thesis from 2008, Sørensen offers a comparison of Wilber and Assagioli.¹ While the first issue has been discussed in a recent issue of the *Journal of Psychosynthesis* published by the Institute of Psychosynthesis in Florence (October 2015), the second issue merits deeper consideration and Sørensen opens up the dialogue.

Of special interest is the distinction Sørensen makes between the structural and the developmental theory of Psychosynthesis, in Chapter 3. It explains how the levels of the "egg" diagram are levels of personal and transpersonal experience rather than static compartments or contents of the personality. This chapter provides excellent material to think about the links between Psychosynthesis and Humanistic psychology, especially Maslow's theory. Sørensen shows that Psychosynthesis develops Maslow's five developmental stages of human psychology by subdividing the fifth stage into three further stages: (1) the activation and expression of the potentialities in the Higher Unconscious; (2) the direct awareness of the Self and (3) the communion of the Higher Self and the Universal Self. This is clearly one of the greatest contributions that

Assagioli made to Humanistic Psychology. This chapter also introduces the Star Model of the psychological functions, which evokes the Seven Rays in Alice A. Bailey. Diagram 10 concerning the Great Chain also evokes some similarities with Alice A Bailey diagrams about the human constitution that are very thought-provoking.

Another important contribution of this book is the clear distinction between aspects of the Self and how these apply to Psychosynthesis Therapy. In Chapter 6, while discussing the Will in Psychosynthesis, Sørensen shows that the Self is not only Love-Awareness but also Will. The author describes the different stages in the individual development of the Will, technically known in Psychosynthesis as "there is a Will" "I have a Will" and "I am a Will." The Will gives a sense of direction and purpose to our lives, although this Will is usually veiled by the identifications that inform the nucleus of primary and secondary subpersonalities (discussed in Chapter 4). Sørensen explains that discovery of the Will is like a call for freedom and is often connected to a crisis because the pain of crises can trigger a process of dis-identification and discovery of the Will. Additionally, the discovery of the Will provides us with an ethical framework to make choices responsibly. This chapter also summarizes some techniques that Assagioli used for training and evoking the Will, as well as the tripartite model of the strong, the good and the skillful Will. These can be related with the Will to know, the Will to Good and the Will to be in the Ageless Wisdom.

The Soul of Psychosynthesis: The Seven Core Concepts is a wonderful companion for readers who seek a serious introduction to Psychosynthesis. The book is also a resourceful handbook for professionals in the psychological field interested in deepening their background in the purposeful approach created by that great Soul, Roberto Assagioli.

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¹ Kenneth Sørensen, *Integral Psychosynthesis*, <http://www.integralworld.net/sorensen1.html>.