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The Esoteric Quarterly

A publication of the School for Esoteric Studies

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



The School for Esoteric Studies

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The Esoteric Quarterly

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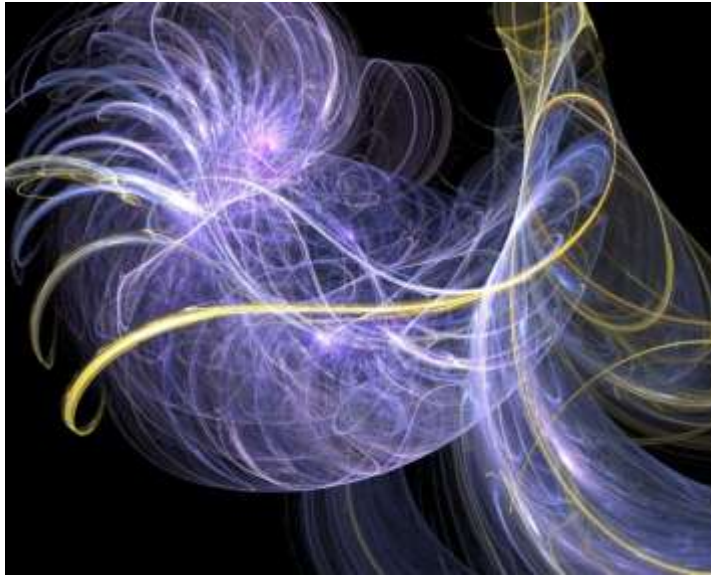
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The mission of the *Esoteric Quarterly* is to provide a forum for the exploration of esoteric philosophy and its applications. Full-length articles and student papers are solicited pertaining to both eastern and western esoteric

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@esotericstudies.net.



AGELESS WISDOM DISCUSSION FORUM

The Ageless Wisdom concepts come to us across a span of time and through the medium of human interpreters who reflect the times in which they lived. In the meantime, social awareness has evolved, and many students see the need for these concepts to be reinterpreted vis-à-vis a world that has become more inclusive and more integrated.

The Tibetan has said, “It is for you to ascertain the truth [in his books] by right practice and by the exercise of the intuition.” In order to have a dialogue about those concepts that need to be placed in the modern context, the School for Esoteric Studies has implemented a Discussion Forum on its website. This Forum is intended to support each of us in our verification of the truth as it relates to our spiritual growth and service, while at the same time encouraging a tolerance of different perspectives.

Please join us in this endeavor by commenting on the topics presented, suggesting new topics and submitting relevant articles. The Discussion Forum can be accessed at: <http://esotericstudies.net/forum/>

School for Esoteric Studies

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Editorial

Demonstrations of Divinity

A central tenet of the *religio perennis* is the belief that human beings proceed from an Infinite and Eternal Being and can participate in deific grace and perfection. Although most orthodox traditions accept the idea that it is possible for humanity to share in the gifts or energies of the Divine, some draw clear distinctions between our capacity to partake of divine energies and our ability to become one with the Divine's identity or essence. The Ageless Wisdom tradition by comparison, places a special emphasis on humanity's inner divine essence, asserting that the deific fire or spark resides within each and every one of us and at the heart of all creation.

Perceiving the truth of our divine nature, which means recognizing *Man as more than man*, is a universal objective with powerful psychological, societal and spiritual significances. But such an awakening goes well beyond a mental or theoretical conception of our authentic archetypal essence; it requires a factual and progressive demonstration of a purpose driven life conditioned by the creative intelligence, the Soul's enduring love, and Monadic will and intent. So critical is the emergence and demonstration of essential divinity that upon it the very future of humanity depends. It is with one or more of these three expressions of divinity that the featured articles and short paper in this issue of the Quarterly share an interest in.

The first article to explore this theme is the final article in a seven-part series correlating ancient sacred texts with Alice Bailey's Technique of Integration for the Seven Rays. In his concluding article, Zachary Lansdowne compares the Old Testament book of Habakkuk with Bailey's Integration Technique for the Seventh Ray. He introduces us to this little-known prophet and provides a summary of Habakkuk's three chapters, which illustrate the moral or ethical principles that govern human conduct. The author draws numerous

parallels between Habakkuk and Bailey's five-fold Integration Technique in order to demonstrate that despite being written for different purposes and time periods, both symbolic texts depict the archetypal patterns of guidance that lead to integration and fusion with the Soul and the first real grasp of divinity.

Our next article, from John Nash, is part of an ongoing effort to harmonize the disparities between various aspects of Christian doctrine and modern esoteric teachings. This particular article elucidates the similarities as well as the differences between these two sets of teachings on the central questions concerning the divinity and person of Jesus and the Christ. In addition to its focus on traditional doctrine, the article touches upon a number of the heresies and controversies that arose alongside orthodox Christology. The article also presents an alternative esoteric exegesis on the nature, origins and redemptive mission of Jesus and the Christ. Despite the diversity and divergence of theologies and teachings disclosed in the author's comparisons, this article represents an important step in bridging the gulf between esoteric and traditional teachings. It throws a new light on the Christ's unique expression of divinity and Christianity's rightful place as part of the New World Religion.

Our final full-length offering, from Iván Kovács, draws upon the teachings of Alice Bailey and other esoteric and historical sources to paint an engaging portrait of the various lives of the present Seventh Ray Lord, the Master Rakoczi, one of the most mysterious and important members of the Planetary Hierarchy. The article examines the activities of the Master R. in his present role as the Lord of Civilization and head of the now incoming Seventh Ray, as well as his previous incarnations as Roger Bacon, Francis Bacon, Francis Rakoczi II, and the Comte de St.

Germain. In chronicling the lives of these notable beings and by establishing a clearer link between them, Kovacs gives us a fuller picture of some of the divine characteristics that constitute a perfected Soul, a Master of the Wisdom and senior member of the Spiritual Hierarchy.

In addition to the full-length articles in this issue, we would like to draw your attention to a new feature that examines the lives of prominent esotericists. The first installment surveys the life and contributions of esotericist, visionary and hermetic mystic, Anna Bonus Kingsford. Also included is a short paper by William Meader focusing on “The Awakening” of Humanity’s Soul and the resulting challenges and opportunities that such a vital recognition inevitably brings.

Following our usual custom we include a book review for “The Mark,” by Maurice Nicoll, which presents a revealing interpretation of the Gospels in the tradition of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky.

This issue of the Quarterly also contains a Sufi poem—*The Moths and the Flame*— on the sacrificial fire of love, by Farid ud-Din Attar.

Our “Picture of the Quarter” is a circular Mandala painting by the late visionary artist, John F. B. Miles. The painting—*Synaesthesia-Celtic Renaissance*— is thought to be one of the artist’s finest works. Its title relates to the merging or crossing of the senses as well as the artist’s interest in the ancient Welsh legends of the *Mabinogion*. Miles’ intricate painting can also be seen as depicting a condensation of cosmic creative energy in all its magnificence and ordered chaos. In Robert Beer’s biography of the artist, we learn that it was this “glimpse of The Life Force,” along with the accompanying presence of unconditional love that “underpinned the artist’s creative and sensory perceptions.” We want to thank Robert Beer for so graciously granting us permission to feature this exquisite painting. For further information on the life and works of John F. Miles, we encourage our readers to visit

Robert Beer’s Online Gallery and Blog at: www.tibetanart.com.

Publication Policies

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

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

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

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

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

Additionally, we expect authors to disclose any prior publication of an article, adapted from a book or any another source, at the time of its submission.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

Zachary Lansdowne has recently made a case for Karma Yoga as a First Ray Technique of Integration.¹ From an *evolutionary* perspective, this position is questionable because Karma Yoga was the principal yoga of the Lemurian race² and “resulted in the awakening of the four centers below the diaphragm.”³ In this fifth race, practicing a refined version of Karma Yoga may still be helpful and rewarding, but it does not take one very far. “[T]he whole human family is transiting out of a pronounced cycle of Karma Yoga into the required cycle of Raja Yoga, from unthinking activity into a period of illumined mind control.”⁴

From the *theoretical* standpoint, what defines a yoga first and foremost is “point of directional control.”⁵ One may start from the bottom (on the personality level) and continue to work the way up (Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga). Or one may center one’s consciousness in the Soul and proceed from there (Raja Yoga, the upcoming “Yoga of Synthesis”⁶). The remaining option is to start with the Higher Triad and work downward. This is what may be called a true First-Ray yoga—along with its technique of integration. On this path one realizes that one is Atman (or something like that) *from the outset* rather than as an outcome and proceeds to make it a manifested reality by means of the dynamic aspect of Will.

One well-known example is the yoga based on Advaita Vedanta. There is another excellent, very clear example: Sri Aurobindo’s yogic sadhana. Here are some excerpts from his little-known book on the subject:⁷

“The proper course of the sadhana is just the opposite of the thing most people do and you have also done. People begin with the body and the prana, go on to the chitta and the manas, and finish up with the buddhi and the Will. The real course is to start with the Will and finish with the body.”

“Educate the Will first, through the Will educate the jnanam, through the jnanam purify the chitta, control the prana and calm the manas. Through all these instruments immortalize the body.”

“The question is how to start. The Shakti is in you. Let her work and assist her by taking the right attitude... As anumanta, give the command, as sakshi watch her work out the result, as bhokta enjoy the result and as bharta help her by maintaining the adhara... Be sure your Will can never fail to act... Adopt the attitude I have described here and apply it to every individual act of the sadhana or of life. You have nothing else to do. Kali will do the rest.”

One may ask, doesn’t requiring Will from the outset amount to putting the cart before the horse? Most certainly it does, but apparently there are some people who are able to handle it. In this solar system this path cannot be recommended for wide use, but in the next one it may become routine. Let’s wait and see.

Maxim Osinovsky

¹ Zachary F. Lansdowne, “The Bhagavad Gita Compared to Bailey’s Technique of Integration for the First Ray,” *Esoteric Quarterly*, Fall 2011.

² Alice A. Bailey, *The Light of the Soul* (New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1955), 121.

³ *Ibid.*, 122.

⁴ Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II* (New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1983), 121.

⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *The Light of the Soul*, X.

⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic* (New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1979), 429.

⁷ Aurobindo Ghose, *Yogic sadhan* (Calcutta: Arya Pub. House, 1923). All quotations are from an electronic copy found at: <http://freeonlinebook.-net/Others/261077/Sri-Aurobindo—YogicSadhana>.

Dear Editor:

The Sanskrit word *yoga* refers to a discipline of self-development that leads to physical or spiritual well-being. The Hindu teachings on yoga are comparable to the Theosophical teachings on the seven rays, because both sets of teachings regard aspirants as belonging to different psychological types and regard each type as having its own discipline of self-development.

In his foregoing letter, Maxim Osinovsky describes three directional approaches to yoga: (1) “start from the bottom (on the personality level) and continue to work the way up”; (2) “center one’s consciousness in the Soul and proceed from there”; (3) “start with the Higher Triad and work downward.” Here, the “personality” consists of the mental, emotional, and physical bodies, “Soul” is a center of consciousness, and “Higher Triad” denotes what is called Atma-Buddhi-Manas, or spiritual will, spiritual love, and higher mind. Osinovsky writes regarding the third approach:

This is what may be called a true First-Ray yoga—along with its technique of integration. On this path one realizes that one is Atman (or something like that) *from the outset* rather than as an outcome and proceeds to make it a manifested reality by means of the dynamic aspect of Will.

All of these directional approaches to yoga are valid and are in fact depicted by various symbolic formulas given by Alice A. Bailey, as explained next.

Upward Approach

Bailey says that “The Technique of Integration, a sevenfold technique, is applied upon the Path of Probation” and that “there is a technique for each of the seven rays.”¹ She also says that each technique is divided into five phases: “The words, covering the process in every case, are *Alignment, Crisis, Light, Revelation, Integration*.”² The technique for each ray starts from the bottom and works upward, because it is intended for the initial portion of the spiritual journey, called the “Path of Probation.” Aspirants on this initial portion identify with their personality and so need to pass through the five phases before they can realize their unity with the Soul.

My recent article, on which Osinovsky comments, explains the First-Ray technique and relates it to the Bhagavad Gita’s treatment of karma yoga, which is the path of union through action.³ Other articles provide explanations of the techniques for the other rays and relate those techniques to other ancient religious texts.⁴ Accordingly, Bailey’s “Technique of Integration” for each ray depicts the first, or bottom-up, approach to yoga.

Centering Approach

Bailey provides “The Seven Keys to the Seven Ray Methods.”⁵ Each of these Keys is a concise symbolic statement. For example, the First-Ray Key is as follows:

Let the Forces come together. Let them mount to the High Place, and from that lofty eminence let the Soul look upon a world destroyed. Then let the word go forth: ‘I will persist’.

This Key can be interpreted as depicting Osinovsky’s second approach, which is centering one’s consciousness in the Soul and proceeding from there. The other Keys can be interpreted in a similar way, so that there is a centering technique for each ray.

Downward Approach

Bailey also presents “seven healing techniques,” one for each of the seven rays,⁶ and six characteristic qualities for each of the seven rays,⁷ but with very little explanation. Nevertheless, she gives an important clue about these healing techniques: “They are susceptible of three significances.”⁸ An earlier article explains one of the three possible significances: the “healing technique” for each ray can be construed as depicting a method of service by which people with the corresponding Soul ray use their six characteristic qualities.⁹ The designation “method of service” is used instead of “method of healing,” because the significance treated in that article is not concerned with physical healing.

In the case of the First Ray, the six characteristic qualities are: “singleness of purpose; dynamic power; clear vision; detachment; solitariness; and sense of time.” The first step in Bailey’s “Healing Technique for the First Ray,” when construed as a method of service that incorporates these

characteristic qualities, is to achieve “singleness of purpose” with respect to the spiritual will. Similarly, the first step in the “Healing Technique for the Second Ray,” when construed as a method of service, is to receive “love divine,” which is a characteristic quality for the Second Ray; and the first step in the “Healing Technique for the Third Ray,” when construed as a method of service, is to gain “mental illumination,” which is a characteristic quality for the Third Ray.

Thus, Bailey’s Healing Techniques for the first three rays, when construed as methods of service, illustrate Osinovsky’s third, or downward, approach to yoga, because each technique *begins* by bringing the corresponding element of the Higher Triad down into the personality.

Conclusions

The approach to yoga that we are guided to take on the spiritual journey depends upon both our point of attainment and ray. If we are beginners on the spiritual journey, then we need to take a bottom-up approach, such as depicted in Bailey’s Techniques of Integration for each of the seven rays. If we are farther along on the spiritual journey, we can apply Bailey’s Key for the appropriate ray. If we are even farther along, we can from the outset evoke a characteristic quality of the appropriate ray and then proceed by following the rest of Bailey’s Healing Technique for that ray, construing it as a method of service. Thus, Bailey provides seven symbolic formulas that depict the ray techniques for each of the three directional approaches to yoga, so that twenty-one techniques of self-development are depicted altogether.

These ray techniques are based on the following postulate: the personality is a center of experience, the Soul is a center of consciousness, and seven archetypal paths can lead from the first center to the second one. These ray techniques do not deal with the question of why this postulate is true or of how it may have come about. Rather these techniques are intended only for those people who accept this postulate, because they regard their environment as the place of purification and field of their planned service and because they recognize that their own discipline of self-development, which they feel inwardly directed to follow, is part of a depicted ray technique.

Zachary Lansdowne

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- ¹ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II (1936; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1979), 346, 379.
 - ² *Ibid.*, 347.
 - ³ Zachary F. Lansdowne, “The Bhagavad Gita Compared to Bailey’s Technique of Integration for the First Ray,” *Esoteric Quarterly*, Fall 2011.
 - ⁴ Zachary F. Lansdowne, “The Book of Habakkuk Compared to Bailey’s Technique of Integration for the Seventh Ray,” *Esoteric Quarterly*, this issue.
 - ⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I (1936; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1979), 416-417.
 - ⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing* (1953; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1978), 705-712.
 - ⁷ Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I, 63-87.
 - ⁸ Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 706.
 - ⁹ Zachary F. Lansdowne, “Methods of Service for the Seven Rays,” *Esoteric Quarterly*, Fall 2010.

Poem of the Quarter

The Moths and the Flame

By Farid ud-Din Attar

Translated by Afkham Darbandi and Dick Davis from the *Conference of the Birds*.
Reprinted with permission from Penguin Books Ltd, London.

Moths gathered in a fluttering throng one night
To learn the truth about the candle light,
And they decided one of them should go
To gather news of the elusive glow.
One flew till in the distance he discerned
A palace window where a candle burned --
And went no nearer: back again he flew
To tell the others what he thought he knew.
The mentor of the moths dismissed his claim,
Remarking: "He knows nothing of the flame."
A moth more eager than the one before
Set out and passed beyond the palace door.
He hovered in the aura of the fire,
A trembling blur of timorous desire,
Then headed back to say how far he'd been,
And how much he had undergone and seen.
The mentor said: "You do not bear the signs
Of one who's fathomed how the candle shines."
Another moth flew out -- his dizzy flight
Turned to an ardent wooing of the light;
He dipped and soared, and in his frenzied trance
Both self and fire were mingled by his dance --
The flame engulfed his wing-tips, body, head,
His being glowed a fierce translucent red;
And when the mentor saw that sudden blaze,
The moth's form lost within the glowing rays,
He said: "He knows, he knows the truth we seek,
That hidden truth of which we cannot speak."
To go beyond all knowledge is to find
That comprehension which eludes the mind,
And you can never gain the longed-for goal
Until you first outsoar both flesh and soul;
But should one part remain, a single hair
Will drag you back and plunge you in despair --
No creature's self can be admitted here,
Where all identity must disappear.



Synaesthesia-Celtic Renaissance

by John F. B. Miles

www.tibetanart.com

The use or reproduction of this image is prohibited.

Quotes of the Quarter

In the perspective of *gnosis*, Christ, “Light of the world,” is the universal Intellect, as the Word is the “Wisdom of the Father.” Christ is the Intellect of microcosms as well as that of macrocosm. He is Intellect in us as well as Intellect in the Universe and *a fortiori* in God; in this sense, it can be said that there is no truth nor wisdom that does not come from Christ, and this is evidently independent of all considerations of time and place. Just as “the Light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not,” so too the Intellect shines in the darkness of passions and illusions. The relationship of the “Son” to the “Father” is analogous to the relationship of pure Love to Being or of the Intellect to the “Self,” and that is why we are, in the Intellect or in sanctifying Grace, “brothers of Christ.”

Likewise Christ is prefigured in the whole of creation; this too has one aspect of incarnation and another of crucifixion. On a lesser scale, humanity; and with it the individual human, is an image of Christ, and comprises both aspects; man is “incarnation” by his Intellect and his freedom, and “crucifixion” by his miseries.

Frithjof Schoun, trans., *Gnosis: Divine Wisdom* (Bloomington, IN: World Press, 2006.)

The Teaching of Jesus was a hallowed communication of insights, a series of sacred glimpses, rather than a codification of doctrine. He presented not a *summa theologica* or *ethica*, but the seminal basis from which an endless series of *summae* could be conceived. He initiated a spiritual current of sacred dialogue, individual exploration and communal experiment in the quest for divine wisdom. He taught the beauty of acquiescence and the dignity of acceptance of suffering - a mode appropriate to the Piscean Age. He showed salvation—through love, sacrifice and faith—of the regenerated psyche that cleaves to the

light of nous. He excelled in being all things to all men while remaining utterly true to himself and to his 'Father in Heaven'. He showed a higher respect for the Temple than its own custodians. At the same time he came to found a new kind of kingdom and to bring a message of joy and hope. He came to bear witness to the Kingdom of Heaven during life's probationary ordeal on earth. He vivified by his own luminous sacrifice the universal human possibility of divine self-consecration, the beauty of beatific devotion to the Transcendental Source of Divine Wisdom—the Word Made Flesh celebrating the Verbum In the Beginning.

Raghavan Iyer, *The Word Made Flesh*
(Theosophy Trust, 2007)

Then come the early workings of the Logos in matter, aptly typified by the infancy of the myth. To all the feebleness of infancy His majestic powers bow themselves, letting but little play forth on the tender forms they ensoul. Matter imprisons, seems as though threatening to slay its infant King, whose glory is veiled by the limitations He has assumed. Slowly He shapes it towards high ends, and lifts it into manhood, and then stretches Himself on the cross of matter that He may pour forth from that cross all the powers of His surrendered life. This is the Logos of whom Plato said that He was in the figure of a cross on the universes; this is the Heavenly Man, standing in space, with arms outstretched in blessing; this is the Christ crucified, whose death on the cross of matter fills all matter with His life. Dead He seems and buried out of sight, but He rises again clothed in the very matter in which He seemed to perish, and carries up His body of now radiant matter into heaven, where it receives the down pouring life of the Father, and becomes the vehicle of man's eternal life. For it is the life of the Logos which forms the garment of the Soul in man, and He gives it that men may live through the

ages and grow to the measure of His own stature. He sacrificed Himself to bring many sons into glory and He is with us always, even to the end of the age.

Annie W. Besant, *Esoteric Christianity*, 2/e, 1915, reprint (Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 2006)

Nothing satisfies him until he finds the Way, and nothing appeases the desire at the center of his being except that which is found in the house of his Father. He is what he is because he has tried all lesser ways and found them wanting, and has submitted too many guides only to find them “blind leaders of the blind.” Nothing is left to him but to become his own guide and find his own way home alone. In the loneliness which is the lot of every true disciple are born that self-knowledge and self-reliance which will fit him in his turn to be a Master... [He] is one whose courage is of that rare kind which enables its possessor to stand upright and to sound his own clear note in the very midst of the turmoil of the world. He is one who has the eye trained to see beyond the fogs and miasmas of the earth to that center of peace which presides over all earth's happenings, and that trained attentive ear which (having caught a whisper of the Voice of the Silence) is kept tuned to that high vibration and is thus deaf to all lesser alluring voices.

Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic* (New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1953, 583)

To condemn life as evil, before having exhausted its possibilities for higher development, before having penetrated to the an understanding of its Universal aspect, and before having realized its highest qualities of consciousness in the attainment of enlightenment, the noblest fruit and ultimate fulfillment of existence, such an attitude is not only preposterous and unreasonable, but utterly foolish. It can be compared to an ignorant man who, after examining an unripe fruit, declares it uneatable and throws it away instead of giving it time to mature.

Only one who has reached the supra-individual state of Perfect Enlightenment can renounce “individuality.” Those, however, who only suppress their sense-activities and natural functions of life, before they have even tried to make right use of them, will not become saints but merely petrified. A saintliness, which is built only on negative virtues, merely on avoidance and escape, may impress the crowd and may be taken as proof of self-control and spiritual strength; however, it will only lead to spiritual self-annihilation, but not to enlightenment. It is the way of stagnation, of spiritual death. It is the liberation from suffering at the price of life and the potential spark of illumination within us.

The discovery of this spark is the beginning of the Bodhisattva Path, which achieves liberation from suffering and from the fetters of egohood not by a negation of life, but by service to our fellow-beings, while striving towards Perfect Enlightenment.

Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism* (New York: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1969, 273)

When you heard an idea that was new to you and that seemed to be condemned by those whom you accounted authoritative in such matters, either you rejected it out of hand on that account or else you took it underground, which has always been the safest place for incubating the most interesting ideas.

Geddes MacGregor, *Reincarnation in Christianity*, (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1978, 63)

The rational soul begins to contemplate the things akin to itself and looking through the worlds, as through a mirror, beholds the marvelous beauties of the concepts, unfolds and removes symbolic coverings and brings forth thoughts and sets them bare to the light of day for those who need but a little reminding to enable them to discern the inward and hidden through the outward and visible.

Philo, *De Vita Contemplativa*



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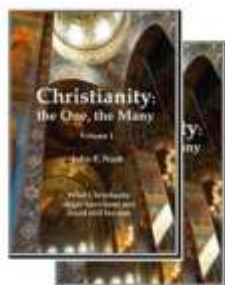


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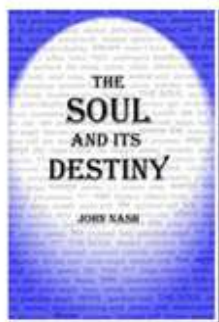
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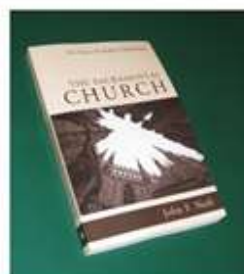
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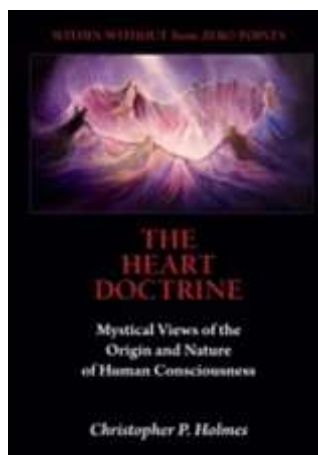
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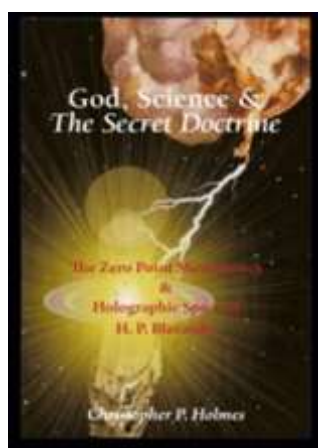
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The Book of Habakkuk Compared to Bailey's Technique of Integration for the Seventh Ray

Zachary F. Lansdowne

Summary

The Book of Habakkuk is part of the ancient Hebrew Bible and is accepted as canonical scripture by both the Jewish and Christian faiths. Its opening verse identifies Habakkuk as a prophet and attributes this book to him. Alice Bailey's "Technique of Integration for the Seventh Ray" is a modern text written with abstruse symbols, so it is difficult to understand. This article clarifies Bailey's Technique by showing that it is illustrated by verses in the Book of Habakkuk, even though these two texts were written for quite different purposes and time periods.

Habakkuk

Other than what can be inferred from his book, nothing for certain is known about Habakkuk's personal life. His book includes a prophecy that the Babylonians (or Chaldeans) would overthrow his country. In 587 B.C., the Babylonians captured Jerusalem, which was the political capital of the Kingdom of Judah, so Habakkuk is assumed to have lived in Judah and to have written his book not long before that capture. The *Zohar*, which is the foundational work in the literature of Jewish mysticism known as *Kabbalah*, claims that Habakkuk is the boy born to the Shunamite woman through Elisha's blessing, as described in 2 Kings 4:8-17. The *Bel and the Dragon*, which is the Greek apocryphal addition to the biblical Book of Daniel, tells a story about Habakkuk being taken to Babylon by an angel to feed Daniel while he was in the lions' den.

The Book of Habakkuk has three chapters and is commonly divided into two parts. The first part, which consists of chapters 1 and 2, reads like a dramatic dialogue between God and His prophet. This part begins with Habakkuk's complaint to God about the success of the

wicked in his own land (1:2-4). Unlike other books of prophecy that take God's message directly to the people, Habakkuk takes the complaint of the people to God. God replies that a new and startling display of His justice is about to take place: already the Babylonians, who are bitter, swift, and violent, are being raised up, and they shall put an end to the wrongs about which the prophet has complained (1:5-11). Then Habakkuk complains about the cruelties in which the Babylonians indulge (1:12-17). God's answer is the Babylonians shall be overthrown in a way that makes evident the moral principles that govern the conduct of humankind. Those principles are stated in the form of five "woes" (2:6-20).

The second part of the Book of Habakkuk, which consists of chapter 3, is a lyric prayer, or psalm, that contains petitions to God, a vision of God's coming, an acknowledgement of God's victory, and a commitment to God.

Modern scholars have admired the high quality of Habakkuk's writing. Andrew Faussett says, "The style is poetical and sublime."¹ James Smith states,

The "woe" oracles of Habakkuk are brilliantly constructed. A number of literary devices are used to make these utterances memorable. Most of these (e.g., assonance, alliteration, double entendre, rhyming phrases) are lost in translation.²

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 zackl@sprynet.com.

Francis Gigot makes these comments as part of his article in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, using the spelling “Habacuc” for the prophet’s name:

In the composition of his book, Habakkuk displays a literary power which has often been admired. His diction is rich and classical, and his imagery is striking and appropriate. The dialogue between God and him is highly oratorical, and exhibits to a larger extent than is commonly supposed, the parallelism of thought and expression which is the distinctive feature of Hebrew poetry. The *Mashal* or taunting song of five “woes” which follows the dialogue, is placed with powerful dramatic effect on the lips of the nations whom the Chaldeans have cruelly oppressed. The lyric ode, with which the book concludes, compares favorably in respect to imagery and rhythm with the best productions of Hebrew poetry. These literary beauties enable us to realize that Habakkuk was a writer of high order.³

Our analysis of Habakkuk’s book is based primarily upon the New King James Version (NKJV) of the Bible, which is a recent literal translation published in full in 1982.⁴ The aim of its translators was to update the vocabulary and grammar of the seventeenth century’s King James Version, while preserving the style and literary beauty of that classic text. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, every biblical verse comes from the NKJV. To clarify the meaning of a few verses, however, we also consider the *Amplified Bible*, which is another recent translation. It both explains and expands the meaning of words in the text by placing amplification in parentheses and brackets. Parentheses () signify additional phases of meaning included in the original word, phrase, or clause of the original language. Brackets [] contain clarifying words or comments not actually expressed in the immediate original text.⁵

Technique of Integration for the Seventh Ray

Teachings on the seven rays are contained in both the ancient Hindu *Rig Veda* and modern Theosophy.⁶ Alice Bailey (1880-1949), a modern theosophical writer, states:

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. This is a true definition of a ray.⁷

Every human being is swept into manifestation on the impulse of some ray, and is colored by that particular ray quality, which determines the form aspect, indicates the way he should go, and enables him (by the time the third initiation is reached) to have sensed and then to have cooperated with his ray purpose.⁸

In Theosophy, an “initiation” is said to be a milestone on the spiritual journey. Thus, according to Bailey’s account, every human being is connected to a specific ray and can receive guidance on the spiritual journey from that ray.

Bailey claims that her “Seven Techniques of Integration” depict “the pattern of the thought and the process of the life” of aspirants guided by each of the seven rays.⁹ She admits that her techniques are written in such a way that they are difficult to understand: “It is difficult to make easily comprehensible the nature and purpose of these techniques”; “Our study of the Techniques of Integration was definitely abstruse and couched in language quite symbolic.”¹⁰ She also says, “these ray techniques are imposed by the soul upon the personality after it has been somewhat integrated into a functioning entity and is, therefore, becoming slightly responsive to the soul, the directing Intelligence.”¹¹ In this context, the term “soul” denotes the “super conscious self,”¹² and “personality” denotes the mental, emotional, and physical bodies.¹³

If Bailey’s claim is correct, then her techniques depict the archetypal patterns that underlie all inspired methods of integration. For example, the written esoteric teaching of any religion might be a verbal expression of one of these archetypes, but with some distortions due to the limitations of words. Different exoteric religions might be expressions of the same archetype but with varying distortions. Thus, if her claim is true, it should be possible to show that her techniques, in part or in whole, are

similar to various recorded methods of integration that are thought to be inspired.

This article is concerned with only the Seventh Ray, which is called “the ray of ceremonial order or magic.” This ray is associated with *ceremonial ordering*, which 1 Corinthians 14:40 describes as the effort to “Let all things be done decently and in order.” This ray is also associated with *magic*, for which Helena Blavatsky (1831-1891), co-founder of the Theosophical Society, provides this definition:

The art of divine magic consists in the ability to perceive the essence of things in the light of nature ... and by using the soul-powers of the spirit to produce material things from the unseen universe.¹⁴

Bailey distinguishes between white magic and black magic:

The white magician works from the soul level out into the manifested world and seeks to carry out the divine plan, whilst the black magician works from the level of the intellect as he seeks to achieve his own separative ends.¹⁵

Either type of magic entails the ability to produce a material form that resembles a mental pattern: the white magician receives the mental pattern from the soul level, whereas the black magician formulates the mental pattern as a separative end.

Bailey’s Technique of Integration for the Seventh Ray is as follows:

“I seek to bring the two together. The plan is in my hands. How shall I work? Where lay the emphasis? In the far distance stands the One Who *Is*. Here at my hand is form, activity, substance, and desire. Can I relate these and fashion thus a form for God? Where shall I send my thought, my power the word that I can speak?

“I, at the center, stand, the worker in the field of magic. I know some rules, some magical controls, some Words of Power, some forces which I can direct. What shall I do? Danger there is. The task that I have undertaken is not easy of accomplishment, yet I love power. I love to see the forms

emerge, created by my mind, and do their work, fulfill the plan and disappear. I can create. The rituals of the Temple of the Lord are known to me. How shall I work?

“Love not the work. Let love of God’s eternal Plan control your life, your mind, your hand, your eye. Work towards the unity of plan and purpose which must find its lasting place on earth. Work with the Plan; focus upon your share in that great work.”

The word goes forth from soul to form: “Stand in the center of the pentagram, drawn upon that high place in the East within the light which ever shines. From that illumined center work. Leave not the pentagram. Stand steady in the midst. Then draw a line from that which is without to that which is within and see the Plan take form.”¹⁶

The purpose of this article is to demonstrate that the foregoing Technique is illustrated by verses in the Book of Habakkuk. Bailey states that each of her techniques can be divided into five phases: “The words, covering the process in every case, are *Alignment, Crisis, Light, Revelation, Integration*.”¹⁷ In what follows, our commentary is also divided into these five phases.

Alignment

In the first phase of the integration process, the aspirants bring their mental, emotional, and physical bodies into increased *alignment* with the soul. As a result, the personality, or what is sometimes called the “lower self,” is able to receive impressions from the soul, or “higher self.”¹⁸

Throughout this article, our interpretation of each segment of Bailey’s Technique of Integration for the Seventh Ray is given in *italic* and is followed by parentheses that contain the corresponding words of the Technique, which in turn are followed by an explanation of the symbols included in those words. The Technique’s first paragraph, which uses the first-person grammatical perspective, depicts an aspirant’s pattern of thought during the alignment phase, as explained next.

I seek to bring God and the material world together (“I seek to bring the two together”). “The two” are taken as God and the material world, because Bailey comments, “One of the major objectives of Seventh Ray energy is to bring together and to relate spirit and matter.”¹⁹

I am sensitive to the divine plan (“The plan is in my hands”), *but my personal ambition* (“How shall I work?”) *keeps me occupied with my own plans* (“Where lay the emphasis?”) *rather than guided by the divine plan* (“In the far distance stands the One Who Is”). The phrase “in my hands” could depict both the sense of touch and taking possession of something, and it is interpreted as signifying what is called “innate mental sensitivity,”²⁰ which is the capacity to touch the plane of ideas and bring them into consciousness. Bailey provides related instructions to an aspirant, using “Plan” to denote the divine plan and “astral” to denote emotional:

You are sensitive to the Plan, but occupied with your own plans and believe that your plans are part of the Plan. List the plans and the schemes along many lines which you have evolved, my brother, and see how many you have succeeded in carrying through. Blame none but yourself if they were founded on astral dreams.²¹

The physical plane contains my handiwork (“Here at my hand is form”), *perhaps as sculptures, designs, paintings, or books*. “Here” is taken as indicating the physical plane, because that is where human beings are conscious. Being skillful in producing material forms is a Seventh Ray characteristic, as Bailey explains:

It [the Seventh Ray] is the ray of form, of the perfect sculptor, who sees and produces ideal beauty, of the designer of beautiful forms and patterns of any sort ... The literary work of the Seventh Ray man would be remarkable for its ultra-polished style, and such a writer would think far more of the manner than of the matter in his work, but would always be fluent both in writing and speech.²²

The power of my thought produces material forms by means of physical-plane activity, vital

substance, and desire (“at my hand is form, activity, substance, and desire”). The word “hand” could be a symbol of power, as in Isaiah 23:11, “He stretched out His hand over the sea, He shook the kingdoms,” so the phrase “at my hand” could mean “through my power.” The word “substance” is taken as referring to what Theosophy calls the “etheric body,” which is the subtle body of vitality that underlies the dense physical body,²³ because Bailey says, “Substance is the ether in one of its many grades, and is that which lies back of matter itself.”²⁴ Each item in the given sequence is the immediate effect of the succeeding one, so the entire sequence exemplifies the rule, “Potencies produce precipitation,” on which Bailey comments, “When correctly understood, it will govern the method of work and the thought life of the worker in white magic.”²⁵ According to this rule, in order to produce material forms, every relevant factor must be driven into activity by the power of thought and made powerful. Bailey describes the same sequence of factors but in the reverse order:

The thinker on his own plane formulates a thought embodying some purpose or some desire. The mind vibrates in response to this idea and simultaneously produces a corresponding reaction in the kamic, desire or emotional body. The energy body, the etheric sheath vibrates synchronously, and thereby the brain responds and energizes the nerve-system throughout the dense physical body, so that the impulse of the thinker works out into physical plane activity.²⁶

I ask myself whether I can relate these factors and thereby fashion material forms that portray the beauty, goodness, and wisdom of God (“Can I relate these and fashion thus a form for God?”). “A form for God” is taken as a material form that portrays God’s true nature, of which Bailey gives this description: “the growing beauty of the Whole and the goodness of the Purpose and the wisdom of the Plan ... are great facts in manifestation.”²⁷

I also ask myself about where I shall use my knowledge of ritual and words of power (“Where shall I send my thought, my power

the word that I can speak?”). Rituals and words of power are also Seventh Ray characteristics, as Bailey explains:

By his knowledge of ritual (which is the ancient codified means whereby the attractive and expressive nature of the energies to be employed are organized and related), by his understanding of the “Words of Power” (which he discovers by experiment) and by using the potency of sound, the [Seventh Ray] disciple of the future will work and build the new world with its culture and civilization.²⁸

Pondering these questions is a form of meditation that produces the needed *alignment*, as Bailey also explains:

As he realizes the task to be carried out and the nature of the work to be done by the Seventh Ray worker, and appreciates the fact that it is the magical work of producing those forms on earth which will embody the spirit of God (and in our particular time, this necessitates the building of new forms), each Seventh Ray disciple will see himself as a relating agent, as the one who stands in the midst of the building processes, attending to his portion of the task. This, if really grasped and deeply considered will have the effect of producing alignment.²⁹

The initial verses of the Book of Habakkuk illustrate all of the foregoing steps. Verses 1:2-4, which also use the first-person grammatical perspective, state:

²O LORD, how long shall I cry,
And You will not hear?
Even cry out to You, “Violence!”
And You will not save.
³Why do You show me iniquity,
And cause *me* to see trouble?
For plundering and violence *are* before
me; There is strife, and contention arises.
⁴Therefore the law is powerless,
And justice never goes forth.
For the wicked surround the righteous;
Therefore perverse judgment proceeds.

These verses describe Habakkuk’s effort to bring God and the material world together. Verse 1:2 indicates that Habakkuk cried out to

God for a long time and discloses the content of his cry: “Even cry out to You, ‘Violence!’ And You will not save.” Thus, his initial plan for bringing God into the material world was to invoke God repeatedly for the salvation of his country from violence. Verses 1:3-4 show that this initial plan was not successful, so it must not have been the divine plan, because God did not respond in the way that Habakkuk had intended.

The next set of verses, 1:5-7, are presented as though they were spoken by God:

⁵Look among the nations and watch—
Be utterly astounded!
For *I will* work a work in your days
Which you would not believe, though it
were told you.
⁶For indeed I am raising up the Chaldeans,
A bitter and hasty nation
Which marches through the breadth of the
earth, To possess dwelling places *that are*
not theirs.
⁷They are terrible and dreadful;
Their judgment and their dignity proceed
for themselves.

Accordingly, Habakkuk’s invocation for God’s assistance evokes a prophecy from God rather than the peace for his country that he was originally seeking. These two sets of verses illustrate the process of invocation and evocation, which is a major theme in Habakkuk’s book. Bailey predicts that “The science of invocation and evocation will take the place of what we now call prayer and worship.”³⁰

In 1 Kings 19:12, God speaks to Elijah through his intuition, described as “a still small voice,” and yet Gigot characterizes Habakkuk’s dialog with God as “highly oratorical.”³¹ These descriptions of God’s speech are not incompatible, because Habakkuk might have received intuitions from God, which are formless, but converted them into the form of written words and sentences that are highly oratorical. If this scenario occurred, Habakkuk would have applied the *power of his thought* to produce words and sentences by means of physical-plane activity, vital substance, and desire. Habakkuk’s book illustrates *ceremonial ordering*, because it goes back and forth between the

human perspective, which is represented by his own speech in the dialog, and the divine perspective, which is represented by God's speech, thereby comparing and contrasting them. His book also illustrates *magic*, because it portrays through written words the beauty, goodness, and wisdom of God.

Moreover, Habakkuk's writing illustrates the ultra-polished style of Seventh Ray authors. Smith lists the literary devices that Habakkuk used to make his sentences memorable: "assonance, alliteration, double entendre, rhyming phrases."³² These literary devices could be regarded as *rituals* in the sense of methods of procedure. Gigot says that Habakkuk's "diction is rich and classical, and his imagery is striking and appropriate."³³ Habakkuk's rich diction and striking imagery could be regarded as *words of power*.

Another major theme in Habakkuk's book is the Law of Cause and Effect, according to which injustice inevitably reaps what it sows. This theme is clearly stated in the five "woes" (2:6-20), but it also seems to be present in the verses given above, because the additional violence predicted in 1:5-7 appears to be God's response to the violence described in 1:2-4. As Bailey explains,

The Oriental believer calls this *karma*. The Western believer talks of the Law of Cause and Effect. Both, however, are dealing with the working out by a man of his soul's salvation, and the constant paying of the price which the ignorant pay for mistakes made and so-called sins committed.³⁴

Habakkuk appears to have achieved *alignment* between personality and soul when he composed verses 1:5-7, because they deal with the working out of the soul's plan of salvation.

In summary, the Technique's first paragraph depicts the alignment phase. Habakkuk 1:2-4 illustrate the first five sentences of that paragraph, and verses 1:5-7 illustrate the rest of that paragraph.

Crisis of Evocation

Bailey writes, "The soul is a unit of energy, vibrating in unison with one of the seven ray Lives, and colored by a particular ray light."³⁵ In other words, each human soul has the quality of a particular ray, which is called its "soul ray." In the second phase of the integration process, the aspirants sense intuitively their soul ray, which in this case is ceremonial order or magic, because they have increased their alignment with their soul. The inconsistency between their sensed potential and their personal life brings them to an inner *crisis* in which they begin to bring forth the

guidance of their soul. The Technique's second paragraph, which is also written with the first-person grammatical perspective, treats this crisis, as explained next.

I hold my mental consciousness at the highest possible point and look in the three directions needed for the work of magic ("I, at the center, stand, the worker in the field of magic"). "Center" is taken as the highest point of mental consciousness. Bailey supports this interpretation by writing, "This the disciple must also do, gathering his forces (to use a common expression) into the highest point of his mental consciousness and holding them there in a state of absolute tension."³⁶ An equivalent way of describing this effort is: "hold the consciousness at the highest possible point."³⁷ Bailey comments,

Realize that that point is one from which you can look *outward* upon the world of

physical living, *inward* upon the world of the emotions or of mental perception, or *upward* towards the soul. These three directions form a triangle of projected sensitivity.³⁸

First, I look outward upon the world of physical living and contemplate using my rules, rituals, words of power, and raw materials (“I know some rules, some magical controls, some Words of Power, some forces which I can direct”). As discussed earlier, “Potencies produce precipitation” is an example of a rule, and Habakkuk’s book provides examples of rituals and words of power. *Second, I look upward towards the soul and invoke its assistance* (“What shall I do?”). *Third, because of my increased alignment, the soul guides me to look inward upon my world of emotions and mental perception. There I see danger* (“Danger there is”) *to my plan of bringing God and matter together* (“The task that I have undertaken is not easy of accomplishment”), *which is white magic, because my selfish ambition may bring about black magic* (“yet I love power”). Bailey describes this danger:

If the man concerned is materially minded, selfishly ambitious and unloving, the inpouring energy will stimulate the personality nature and he will immediately be warring furiously with all that we mean by the instinctual, psychic, intellectual nature. When all these three are stimulated, the disciple is often for a time swung off the center into a maelstrom of magical work of the lower kind—sex magic and many forms of black magic. He is glamoured by the beauty of his motive, and deceived by the acquired potency of his personality.³⁹

I recognize my susceptibility to the following glamours, which are emotional distortions based on pride: glamour of the emerging manifested forces (“I love to see the forms emerge”), *glamour of the relation of the opposites* (“created by my mind”), *glamour of magical work* (“and do their work”), *glamour of that which brings together* (“fulfill the plan”), *and glamour of the subterranean powers* (“and disappear”). Bailey says that these particular glamours are related to the Seventh Ray.⁴⁰

I begin to transform myself (“I can create”) *by applying disciplines that enable my personality to become receptive and attentive to the soul* (“The rituals of the Temple of the Lord are known to me”) *and by invoking the illumination of the soul for guidance during this work* (“How shall I work?”). Bailey comments, “He begins, however, with himself, and seeks to bring into expression the plan of his soul in his own setting and worldly situation.”⁴¹ The “Lord” is taken as the soul, because Bailey writes, “The soul is a Lord of love and wisdom.”⁴² The “Temple of the Lord” is taken as the personality that is receptive and attentive to the soul, because Bailey regards “the alignment of a receptive attentive personality” as a goal to be achieved,⁴³ and because 1 Corinthians 3:16 uses this symbol in a similar way: “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?” “Rituals” are taken as disciplines, which are trainings expected to produce specific patterns of behavior. Bailey supports this interpretation by saying that a discipline is a ritual:

One of the first lessons that humanity will learn under the potent influence of the Seventh Ray is that the soul controls its instrument, the personality, through ritual, or through the imposition of a regular rhythm, for rhythm is what really designates a ritual. When aspirants to discipleship impose a rhythm on their lives they call it a discipline, and they feel happy about it.⁴⁴

Next, let us consider Habakkuk 2:20:

²⁰But the LORD is in His holy temple.

Let all the earth keep silence before Him.

This verse uses two symbols that are also in the Technique’s crisis phase, described above, in what seems to be the same way. Thus, “LORD” is taken as the soul, and “His holy temple” as the personality that is receptive and attentive to the soul. Accordingly, “the LORD is in His holy temple” means that an intuitive idea from the soul has entered the receptive mind as an ideal.

Geoffrey Hodson (1886-1983), a theosophical writer, says that in the Bible, “*Earth* and all physical, solid objects refer, in the main, to the

physical body and to human states of waking consciousness.”⁴⁵ If “the earth” in verse 2:20 is taken as the physical body, then “all the earth keep silence before Him” can be interpreted to mean that the physical body is dedicated to the ideal held by the mind. Thus, verse 2:20 appears to depict, in Bailey’s words, the “practical ability to relate the idea to the ideal and to take those steps which will create the form of that ideal upon the physical plane.”⁴⁶ Bailey explains this practical ability in more detail:

The magician ... begins to grasp the vision of the spiritual man, as *he is in essence*. He realizes the virtues and reactions which that spiritual man would evidence in physical plane life. He builds a thought-form of himself as the ideal man, the true server, the perfect master. He gradually coordinates his forces so that power to be these things in external reality begins to take shape so that all men can see. He creates a pattern in his mind which hews as true as he can make it to the prototype, and which serves to model the lower man and force conformity to the ideal. As he perfects his technique he finds a transmuting, transforming power at work upon the energies which constitute his lower nature, until all is subordinated and he becomes in practical manifestation what he is esoterically and essentially.⁴⁷

In summary, the Technique’s crisis phase depicts the aspirants as recognizing their attraction to black magic and then invoking the illumination of the soul to purify their personality so that it can be an agent of white magic. Habakkuk 2:20 has two symbols in common with the Technique’s crisis phase and uses them in what appears to be the same way, so this verse can also be interpreted as depicting the purification of the personality through the illumination of the soul.

Light

Because of their crisis of evocation, the aspirants take stock of their situation and search within themselves. Eventually they enter the phase of *light* and see clearly their need to change their direction, method, and attitude.

The Technique’s third paragraph treats this phase, and consists of four disciplines. Each discipline describes a change that needs to be made, and it is written with the second-person grammatical perspective, as explained next.

Dissipate any glamour that arises from working with the soul (“Love not the work”). As an example, the glamour of the mysterious and the secret, which is also said to be related to the Seventh Ray,⁴⁸ is the sense of separateness, or of distinction, from having occult knowledge that most people lack, and this glamour could arise from working with the “mystery of the soul”⁴⁹ and “secrets of the soul.”⁵⁰ Bailey writes, “It is the illumined mind which dissipates glamour.”⁵¹ The effort here is using the mind that has been illumined by the soul to examine any glamour that arises from working with the soul.

Let your devotion to the divine plan control: your life so that it is one of service, your mind so that it progressively understands and grasps that plan, your hands so that they construct the material forms through which the divine will can express itself, and your eyes so that they focus on the needs of those whom you meet (“Let love of God’s eternal Plan control your life, your mind, your hand, your eye”). This discipline has four parts, each of which is related to a quotation from Bailey:

This [stage] demonstrates in an absorbing devotion to the Plan and is an effort, at any cost, to serve that Plan as it is progressively understood and grasped.⁵²

To cooperate sanely and wisely with God’s Plan and to merge one’s will in the divine Will must call into activity not only the deepest love of one’s heart, but the keenest decisions of the mind.⁵³

Then comes the revelation of the Plan, for this has ever to be the motivating power of the Seventh Ray disciple. He works on earth, upon the outer plane of manifestation, with the construction of those forms through which the divine will can express itself.⁵⁴

Take your eyes off yourself, take them off the personalities of your co-disciples, and

take them away even from me, your friend and teacher of several lives, and forget everything but the need of those you daily meet. Then *serve*.⁵⁵

Work towards blending the activities of your co-workers into an organized movement that brings the plan and purpose of God upon the earth (“Work towards the unity of plan and purpose which must find its lasting place on earth”). Bailey says, “None of these ray participants in the hierarchical crusade today can really work without each other,”⁵⁶ and she sets forth the peculiar role of the Seventh Ray disciple: “He must speak those Words of Power which are a group word, and embody the group aspiration in an organized *movement*, which, it will be noted is quite distinct from an organization.”⁵⁷ She also describes the requirement for success: “When the light of the seven Rays is blended with that of the Seventh Ray, then light supernal can be known.”⁵⁸

Work with the divine plan and focus upon your share in that great work (“Work with the Plan; focus upon your share in that great work”). To work with the divine plan, you must not be occupied with your own plans. In Bailey words, “As we learn to obliterate and efface out of our consciousness ourselves as the central figure in our life drama, then and then only can we measure up to our real potentialities as servers of the Plan.”⁵⁹ To focus upon your share in that great work, you must not be directing the activities of your co-workers even if you are blending their activities. Bailey gives this explanation, in which “the methods ... of the new” refer to Seventh Ray methods:

The difference between the methods of the old age and that of the new can be seen expressed in the idea of leadership by one and leadership by a group. It is the difference between the imposition of an individual’s response to an idea upon his fellow men and the reaction of a group to an idea, producing group idealism and focalizing it into definite form, carrying forward the emergence of the idea without the dominance of any one individual.⁶⁰

Next, let us consider Habakkuk 2:4:

⁴Behold the proud,

His soul is not upright in him;
But the just shall live by his faith.

This verse is rendered as follows in the *Amplified Bible*:

⁴ Look at the proud; his soul is not straight or right within him, but the [rigidly] just and the [uncompromisingly] righteous man shall live by his faith *and* in his faithfulness.

The first part of this verse appears to express the following insight: when we are bloated by feeling self-important because of our past work with the soul, we are actually no longer aligned with the soul but instead are submerged within our own emotional reverie. This insight helps us to accomplish the Technique’s first discipline: dissipate any glamour that arises from working with the soul.

The second part of verse 2:4 is quite famous, because it is quoted three times in the New Testament: Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11, and Hebrews 10:38. Bailey speaks of “the personality faith in the fact of the soul and of the Plan.”⁶¹ In keeping with this definition of “faith,” someone who “shall live by his faith” lets his life be controlled by his devotion to the soul’s revelation of the divine plan. Such a person becomes a “righteous man,” when he lets his devotion control his physical-plane activity, because Bailey also says, “Physical plane methods, when motivated by unchanging love of humanity and under the direction of an enlightened soul, become agents of righteousness.”⁶² Thus, the second part of verse 2:4 appears similar to the Technique’s second discipline, because both texts indicate that someone who “shall live by his faith” is a “righteous man.”

A *superscription* is a set of words that seem to stand outside the text of a book. The final sentence of the Book of Habakkuk is a superscription that states: “To the Chief Musician. With my stringed instruments.” This superscription appears at the end of chapter 3, which is a lyric prayer, or psalm. Smith gives the following explanation:

This superscription suggests that Habakkuk’s psalm of submission to God was uti-

lized in the temple music program. “To the chief musician” is an expression which occurs some fifty-five times in the superscriptions of the Psalms. This is the only place where this expression occurs at the conclusion of a poetic piece. Apparently the purpose of this language is to alert the temple music conductor to the note that follows. The poem was apparently designed to be sung to the accompaniment of “stringed instruments.” The highest function of humankind is rendering praise to the Creator. Singing songs of praise is integral to life.⁶³

This superscription provides evidence that Habakkuk carried out the third discipline: work towards blending the activities of your co-workers into an organized movement that brings the plan and purpose of God upon the earth. In particular, the activities of the musical conductor, singers, and musicians were blended into a temple musical program that rendered praise to God.

Habakkuk 1:1, which is the opening verse, states: “The burden which the prophet Habakkuk saw.” Smith makes three points regarding this verse:

First, the word “burden” describes the nature of what follows. The word came to have the connotation of an oracle announcing the demise of foreign nations. In this case the word is even more appropriate. Habakkuk is concerned throughout with an intellectual and emotional burden which only the revelation of God can alleviate.

Second, the authority of the book is indicated in the mention of the office of the writer. He is called “a prophet.” He was one who had been called of the Lord to proclaim to his generation the message of God.

Third, Habakkuk “saw” the contents of this book. They do not represent human speculation, but are in fact divine revelation.⁶⁴

This verse indicates that the contents of Habakkuk’s book came as divine revelation, so it provides evidence that he carried out the fourth discipline: work with the divine plan and focus upon your share in that great work.

In summary, Habakkuk’s book can be interpreted as illustrating all four disciplines in the Technique’s light phase.

Revelation

By applying their disciplines to themselves, the aspirants enter the fourth phase and receive the *revelation* of the path and what they need to do in connection with it. Each aspirant receives the revelation of only his or her next step ahead, which, when taken, enables the subsequent step to be revealed.

Before interpreting the Technique’s fourth paragraph, which depicts the revelation phase, let us consider the meaning of its symbols. A *pentagram* is a five-pointed star drawn with five straight strokes. Eliphas Levi (1810-1875), the French occult author largely responsible for reviving interest in magic during the nineteenth century, says that the significance of this symbol depends upon its orientation:

The pentagram, which, in gnostic schools, is called the blazing star, is the sign of intellectual omnipotence and autocracy. It is the star of the magi; it is the sign of the Word made flesh; and, according to the direction of its points, this absolute magical symbol represents order or confusion, the divine lamb of Ormuz and St. John, or the accursed goat of Mendes. It is initiation or profanation; it is Lucifer or Vesper, the star of the morning or the evening. It is Mary or Lilith, victory or death, day or night. The pentagram with two points in the ascendant represents Satan as the goat of the Sabbath; when one point is in the ascendant, it is the sign of the Savior. The pentagram is the figure of the human body, having the four limbs, and a single point representing the head. A human figure, head downwards, naturally represents a demon; that is, intellectual subversion, disorder, or madness.⁶⁵

Bailey, quoting from an undisclosed document, says that the pentagram’s significance depends upon whether it is “open” or “closed”:

It is occultly said that “the pentagram is open and a place of danger when the disciple knows not order within his own life,

and when the ritual of the soul is not imposed and its rhythm not obeyed. The pentagram is closed when order is restored and the ritual of the Master is imposed.” The writing goes on to say that “if the disciple enters through the open pentagram, he dies. If he passes over into the closed pentagram, he lives. If he transmutes the pentagram into a ring of fire, he serves the Plan.”⁶⁶

To understand these aspects of the pentagram, let us review some information about esoteric anatomy. The dense physical body is said to be controlled and vitalized by seven major centers in the etheric body.⁶⁷ These etheric energy centers have counterparts in the emotional and mental bodies. According to Bailey, the mental body, or mind, is controlled and vitalized by exactly five mental centers: the mental unit, mental solar plexus, mental spleen, mental generative organs, and mental base of spine.⁶⁸ For the purposes of this commentary, it is not necessary to know the functions of these mental centers. This information, however, does enable the pentagram to symbolize the mind, with each point of this five-pointed star representing one of the five mental energy centers.

Accordingly, the pentagram “when one point is in the ascendant” is interpreted as the mind when consciousness is polarized in it, and the pentagram “with two points in the ascendant” is the mind when consciousness is polarized in either the physical or emotional body. Moreover, the “closed” pentagram is interpreted as the mind when it does not allow the polarization of consciousness to shift outside it, while the “open” pentagram is the mind when it allows the polarization to shift among the personality vehicles. In addition, the pentagram

transmuted into a “ring of fire” is taken as the mind when it is illumined by the soul.

What does it mean to be polarized in the physical, emotional, or mental body? Bailey provides a description for each of these cases:

During this [first] period, the man is polarized in his physical body and is learning to

be controlled by his desire body, the body of feeling or of emotion. He has no aspirations save such as pander to the pleasures of the body; he lives for his physical nature, and has no thought for aught that may be higher.

The second period covers a point in development when the polarization is largely in the emotional body and when lower mind desire is being developed ... He is capable of a deep love for teachers and guides wiser than himself, of a wild unreason-

ing devotion for his environing associates, and of an equally wild and unreasoning hatred, for the equilibrium that mind achieves, and the balance that is the result of mental action, is wanting in his make-up.

Now, on entering the third period, comes the most vital point in the development of the man, that in which mind is developing and the polarizing life shifts to the mental unit ... He realizes the joys of intellect and strives ever for a mental body of greater adequacy; his desires turn upward instead of downward, and become transmuted into aspiration,—at first aspiration towards the things of mind, and later towards that which is more abstract and synthetic.⁶⁹

In terms of the foregoing symbolism, the magician’s goal is to have a pentagram that has one point in the ascendant, that is closed, and that is a ring of fire. In other words, the goal is

Habakkuk’s book illustrates ceremonial ordering, because it goes back and forth between the human perspective, which is represented by his own speech in the dialog, and the divine perspective, which is represented by God’s speech, thereby comparing and contrasting them. His book also illustrates magic, because it portrays through written words the beauty, goodness, and wisdom of God.

to have a mind that contains the polarization of consciousness, that does not allow this polarization to shift into a lower vehicle, and that is illumined by the soul.

The *East* is the direction from which light rises from the sun. The Bible sometimes uses the sun as a symbol for the soul, such as in Malachi 4:2: “But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings.” Thus, in the Technique, “the East” symbolizes the direction from which light comes from the soul. This directional symbol is used elsewhere. For example, Ezekiel 43:2 states, “And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east,” and Bailey refers to the soul as “the Master in the east.”⁷⁰

Light is a symbol of spiritual or intellectual enlightenment. Bailey speaks of three kinds of light: “the light of matter, the light of the mind and the light of the soul (as a channel for the intuition).”⁷¹ Of these three sources of light, the only one that is everlasting is the last one, which Bailey calls “the eternal omniscient soul.”⁷² Accordingly, “the light which ever shines” denotes the intuition of the soul.

Bailey mentions “the intuitions which are sent to you from your soul.”⁷³ “*The word*” at the beginning of the Technique’s fourth paragraph is taken as an intuition, because it is said to go forth from the soul. Bailey speaks of “the personality or form,”⁷⁴ showing that she uses these two terms as synonyms. Accordingly, the first sentence of the fourth paragraph has this meaning: *An intuition that goes out from the soul to the personality reveals each step of the revelation phase* (“*The word* goes forth from soul to form”). Four steps are described in what follows.

Be receptive to the soul

Hold the highest possible point of consciousness within your mental body and be oriented to receive intuitions from the soul (“Stand in the center of the pentagram, drawn upon that high place in the East within the light which ever shines”). Bailey gives more detailed instructions:

Definitely and with full concentrated interest and attention—you *orient yourself to the soul*; you stand *consciously* ready for impression. What that impression will convey, what thought will come to you or what call to service will sound forth, you know not. Your attitude is one of a radiant, silent, poised expectancy, and nothing else is permitted. This you must work to attain. Note (if it comes) the emergence of some clear thought, the clarification of some bewilderment, the expansion of some mental perception into an intuition, with its consequent expansion of consciousness. You can give as long or as short a time to this as you choose, but never less than ten minutes.⁷⁵

Habakkuk 2:1 treats the same step:

I will stand my watch
And set myself on the rampart,
And watch to see what He will say to me,
And what I will answer when I am
corrected.

This verse describes a meditation process that takes place inside the mind, as indicated by the expanded translation in the *Amplified Bible*:

I will [in my thinking] stand upon my post of observation and station myself on the tower or fortress, and will watch to see what He will say within me and what answer I will make [as His mouthpiece] to the perplexities of my complaint against Him.

Here, “stand my watch” or “stand upon my post of observation” characterizes receptive meditation; “on the rampart” or “on the tower” is taken as the highest point of the mental body; and “watch to see what He will say” indicates orientation to the soul.

Formulate ideals

From your mental body that has been illumined by an intuitive idea of the soul, formulate an ideal embodying that intuitive idea (“From that illumined center work”). Bailey describes this process in more detail:

I. The idea is seen by the mind, “held steady in the light of the soul.”

II. It descends to the higher levels of the mental plane and there clothes itself with the substance of those levels. It remains still an abstraction, from the angle of the lower mind. This point should be carefully noted by the would-be intuitive.

III. The soul throws its light upward and outward, and the idea, nebulous and faint, emerges into the consciousness of the man. It stands revealed, much as an object stands revealed when the bright beam of a powerful searchlight is thrown upon it. The mind, endeavoring to remain in constant steady conscious contact with the soul, seeing into the higher world through the medium of the “soul’s wide-opened eye,” registers the idea with increasing clarity.

IV. The idea, revealed, becomes then an ideal to the attentive mind and eventually something to be desired and materialized. The thoughtform-making faculty of the mind then comes into play; the “mind-stuff” becomes actuated by the energy of the idea, vitalized by the recognition of the soul, and the idea then takes its first real step towards embodiment. An ideal is only an embodied idea.⁷⁶

Habakkuk 2:2 appears to treat the same step:

²Then the LORD answered me and said:
“Write the vision
And make it plain on tablets,
That he may run who reads it.”

This verse could be interpreted in an inner or outer way. The inner interpretation would take the “tablets” as the abstract and concrete levels of the mind, and “he” as the physical brain. The outer interpretation would take the “tablets” as external books, and “he” as a co-worker. With either interpretation, Habakkuk is told to transform the vision from God into words and sentences.

Remain mentally polarized

Remain mentally polarized throughout the day (“Leave not the pentagram”). Bailey describes the results from performing this step:

Increasingly must your inner life be lived upon the mental plane. Steadily and without

descent must the attitude of meditation be held—not for a few minutes each morning or at specific moments throughout the day, but constantly, all day long ... The emotions which are normally self-centered and personal must be transmuted into the realizations of universality and impersonality; the astral body must become the organ through which the love of the soul can pour; desire must give place to aspiration and that, in its turn, must be merged in the group life and the group good; glamour must give place to reality, and the pure light of the mind must pour into all the dark places of the lower nature. These are the results of mental polarization and are brought about by definite meditation and the cultivation of the meditative attitude.⁷⁷

Habakkuk 3:19 provides related instruction:

¹⁹The LORD God is my strength;
He will make my feet like deer’s feet,
And He will make me walk on my high hills.

If “my high hills” symbolize the mental levels of consciousness, then “walk on my high hills” means: remain mentally polarized. Bailey uses the symbol of “the mountain top” in a similar way: “Let the magician stand upon the mountain top.”⁷⁸ A deer hunting guide states, “Deer are sure-footed and can negotiate the steepest hill sides and mountain trails at a gallop.”⁷⁹ Having “feet like deer’s feet” suggests being able to make steady progress on one’s spiritual journey rather than falling down due to distractions, temptations, and glammers. Bailey appears to use the simile of “goat,” which is also said to be “sure-footed,”⁸⁰ in a similar manner: “With joy I climb as doth the goat which scales the precipice and stands upon the mountain top.”⁸¹ Accordingly, verse 3:19 has this meaning: God’s guidance is my strength; it will make my spiritual progress be steady and sure, and it will enable me to remain polarized in my mental body.

Link the mind with both soul and brain

Remain polarized in your mind while linking it with both soul and brain (“Stand steady in the

midst”). Here, “midst” denotes the mind as the middle position, or part, so that alignment is maintained between it and a higher part, which is the soul, and also between it and a lower part, which is the brain. Bailey gives these related instructions:

Just as the mind has been held in the light, and has been receptive to the soul impression so the brain has to be held receptive to impression from the mind.⁸²

You must learn to see the mind as a center of pure light. You must rid your consciousness of any thought of the mind as intellect and must learn to see it as simply a powerful reflector of the light of the soul, transmitting soul wisdom into the world of men. When you have found this center of light, which is the mind, there take your stand in the very center of the sphere and from that point proceed with the rest of the work which you are doing with my group, after duly linking up soul and brain.⁸³

Your objective in alignment will then be the mind, linked with the soul and the brain. This is a little different to the usual presentation of soul-mind-brain. It is mind-soul-brain. Ponder on this.⁸⁴

The foregoing instructions distinguish between mind and brain. Bailey states, “When educators cease to train the brain cells or to deal with the evocation of memory, and when they cease to regard the brain and the mind as one, but learn to differentiate between the two, then great strides forward will be made.”⁸⁵ What is the distinction between mind and brain? Bailey elucidates this distinction with the example of symbolic interpretation:

First of all it is valuable to remember that the study of the symbol *exoterically* involves the use of the brain and the memory. You endeavor to study line and form, number and general external aspects, knowing that each line has significance, all numbers have their interpretation and all forms are symbols of an inner quality and life.

The study of symbols *conceptually* carries you inward from the brain to the mind, into

the realm of ideas. It sweeps into focused activity the mental apparatus. You then become aware of the concept or idea which the sign or symbol embodies. You comprehend its meaning and for what it stands. You grasp the purpose for which the form has been brought into manifestation.⁸⁶

Accordingly, the brain is the instrument of memory and sensory perception, whereas the mind is the instrument of concepts, comprehension, and understanding. In order to convey concepts to other people, we need to use both our mind and brain: our mind to understand the concepts; and our brain to express our understanding in words that evoke the appropriate associative memories in our listeners. The point is that both the mind and brain are needed to convert the impressions of the soul into words of power.

Inspirational writing, which is a type of white magic, requires the three-fold alignment of mind, soul, and brain, as Bailey explains:

They write because they are inspired. Because of their physical equipment, their purity of life, their singleness of purpose, their devotion to humanity and the very karma of service itself, they have developed the capacity to touch the higher sources from which pure truth, or symbolic truth, flows ... Their brains, being receptive transmitters, enable them to express these contacted thoughts on paper—the accuracy of the transmission being dependent upon the receptivity of the instrument (that is, the mind and the brain) of the transmitter. In these cases, the form of words and the sentences are largely left to the writer.⁸⁷

Habakkuk 1:1 states, “The burden which the prophet Habakkuk saw,” which indicates that the contents of his book came as a vision from God. In addition, verse 2:2 tells Habakkuk to “Write the vision And make *it* plain on tablets,” which indicates that he transformed his vision into words and sentences. These two verses suggest that Habakkuk’s book is an instance of inspirational writing, in which case he must have aligned his mind, soul, and brain while writing it.

In summary, Habakkuk's book can be interpreted as illustrating all four steps in the Technique's revelation phase.

Integration

*I*ntegration is the fifth and final phase in the pattern of guidance depicted by Bailey's Technique. This phase refers to uniting personality with soul so that they act in unison and function as a single organism. The Technique's final sentence, which uses the second-person perspective, provides the Seventh Ray pattern for this phase.

Think of yourself as the dispassionate seer of the actions that manifest the divine plan in the outer world, rather than the doer of those actions ("Then draw a line from that which is without to that which is within and see the Plan take form"). The "line from that which is without to that which is within" indicates separation between the observed and the observer, so it suggests dispassionate observation. To "see the Plan take form" suggests passive, rather than active, involvement with the manifestation of the divine plan. Bailey provides related instructions:

The worker in white magic must hold himself free as much as he can from identifying himself with that which he has created or has attempted to create. The secret for all aspirants is to cultivate the attitude of the onlooker and of the silent watcher.⁸⁸

Paramahansa Yogananda (1893-1952), founder of the Self-Realization Fellowship, gives a description of spiritual enlightenment that is similar to our interpretation of Bailey's integration phase:

The man of Self-realization knows that God is the Doer—all power to perform actions flows into us from Him. He that is centered in his Spiritual self feels himself to be the *dispassionate seer* of all actions, whether he is seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling, tasting, or undergoing various other experiences on earth.⁸⁹

John 5:30 appears to express a similar idea:

³⁰ I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, be-

cause I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

Finally, let us examine Habakkuk 2:3, which also uses the second-person perspective:

³For the vision *is* yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry.

This verse is rendered in the following way by the *Amplified Bible*:

³For the vision *is* yet for an appointed time and it hastens to the end [fulfillment]; it will not deceive *or* disappoint. Though it tarry, wait [earnestly] for it, because it will surely come; it will not be behindhand on its appointed day.

Here, God tells Habakkuk to wait for the manifestation of the vision rather than attempt to hasten that appearance. In other words, he is told to be an observer of the manifestation rather than an instigating agent for it, so this verse seems similar to the Technique's integration phase.

Perhaps the foregoing passages can be explained in the following way. According to verse 1:1, Habakkuk "saw" the contents of his book, which means that he had a vision of his role in the divine plan. According to verse 2:2, he then used his mind and brain to "Write the vision And make *it* plain on tablets." If he had followed the instructions in the Technique or verse 2:3, he would have observed the composition of his book in a detached way, which seems equivalent to identifying himself with the soul rather than the personality. In this case, he could have said that "God is the Doer," because he would have viewed the vision from God as performing the composition through mental and physical activities that were external to, or lower than, his evolved sense of self. By not identifying himself with the actual composition of his book, Habakkuk would have avoided any sense of pride, or glamour.

Conclusions

Bailey speaks of “the incoming Seventh Ray,”⁹⁰ thereby indicating that more and more people will be born on that ray. She says that the Seventh Ray has been “in manifestation since 1675 A.D.”⁹¹ and wrote in 1925 that it will not be until “about three hundred years hence, when the incoming Seventh Ray Egos will be numerically strong enough to be recognized as the prevailing type for a certain period.”⁹² Let us suppose that the manifestation cycle for the Seventh Ray is seven thousand years, because Bailey states that “The Seventh Ray controls such similar cycles as seven thousand years and seven million years.”⁹³ Let us also suppose that this manifestation cycle is evenly divided between appearance and disappearance, because Bailey indicates that a similar cycle for the Second Ray is evenly divided.⁹⁴ Accordingly, the Seventh Ray was not in manifestation between 1825 B.C. and 1675 A.D.

Recent archeological evidence indicates that alphabetical writing, which is one of the foremost innovations of civilization, first emerged sometime between 1900 B.C. and 1800 B.C.⁹⁵ Alphabetical writing was revolutionary in a sense comparable to the invention of the printing press around 1440 A.D. Generally the date 500 A.D. is used to divide ancient and medieval history, and the date 1500 A.D. is used to divide medieval and modern history. If our analysis of Bailey’s information is correct, the Seventh Ray was not in manifestation between alphabetical writing’s first emergence in the ancient period and the beginning of the modern period.

Bailey also says that “we find people in incarnation on all the rays at practically the same time,” but “very few” people may be incarnated on a ray not in manifestation.⁹⁶ The term “pre-modern” covers both ancient and medieval history. If it is true that the Seventh Ray was not in manifestation between alphabetical writing’s first emergence and the modern period, then we would expect that very few pre-modern texts can be found that characterize the Seventh Ray method of work.

The *Acts of Thomas*, thought to be written during the second or third century A.D., recounts the adventures of Saint Judas Thomas, who

was one of the twelve Apostles of Jesus. Although the mainstream Christian tradition rejected the *Acts of Thomas* as apocryphal, the Manichaean Church adopted it as a canonical scripture during the third or fourth century A.D. An earlier article shows that the *Hymn of the Bride*, which is part of the *Acts of Thomas*, depicts many *characterizations* that Bailey gives for the Seventh Ray method of work, but this *Hymn* does not illustrate all *phases* of Bailey’s Technique of Integration for the Seventh Ray.⁹⁷

The Book of Habakkuk makes prophecies that illustrate the moral principles that govern human conduct, and the Technique of Integration for the Seventh Ray depicts a pattern of guidance that leads to integration with the soul, so these two texts were written for quite different purposes and time periods. The preceding sections of the present article demonstrate the following: the Book of Habakkuk can be interpreted as illustrating all *phases* of the Technique, but it lacks congruent verses for many *sentences* in the Technique. We have not found another pre-modern text that provides a better match to the Technique, but this absence is consistent with our expectation that very few pre-modern texts can be found that characterize the Seventh Ray method of work.

Can the teachings on the seven rays be transformed into a science? In other words, can these teachings be tested in a scientific way, so that they can be accepted on the basis of empirical evidence rather than a belief in the authority of an external source of information? Any scientific test entails formulating a hypothesis, collecting evidence, and analyzing results, although procedures vary from one field of inquiry to another.

Let us consider the following hypothesis: Bailey’s “Techniques of Integration” for the seven rays depict symbolically the archetypal patterns of integration that aspirants are intuitively directed to apply to themselves. This hypothesis can be tested by comparing Bailey’s ray techniques with various methods of psychological or spiritual integration that are thought to be inspired. The foregoing demonstration, which shows the similarity between the Seventh Ray technique and the Book of

Habakkuk, supports this hypothesis, because of the traditional view that Habakkuk was an inspired prophet.

Previous articles show that the initial chapters of the *Bhagavad Gita* are similar to the First Ray technique,⁹⁸ the *Second Epistle of Peter* is similar to the Second Ray technique,⁹⁹ the *Tao Te Ching* is similar to the Fourth Ray technique,¹⁰⁰ chapter 10 of the *Revelation of St. John* is similar to the Third Ray technique, the *Myth of Isis and Osiris* is similar to the Fifth Ray technique,¹⁰¹ and *Ecclesiastes* is similar to the Sixth Ray technique.¹⁰² Thus, there is increasing evidence that the above hypothesis is correct, namely, that Bailey's ray techniques do symbolically depict the archetypal patterns of integration.

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Christology: Toward a Synthesis of Christian Doctrine and Esoteric Teachings

John F. Nash

Summary

This article compares and contrasts Christian doctrine and modern esoteric teachings on the nature and person of Jesus the Christ and the purpose of his mission. It begins with a detailed examination of the positions taken by the two sides and how those positions have evolved over time. Similarities and differences of substance or emphasis are noted between and within the respective positions. The objective is to explore the possibility of achieving convergence or synthesis of Christological understanding that could be embraced by both practicing Christians and esotericists.

Traditional Christians and esotericists come close to agreement on Christ's divine status, the significance of his Palestinian mission, and his continuing involvement in Christianity. The main area of disagreement lies in esotericists' assertion that Jesus and the Christ had distinct origins and now have distinct responsibilities within the Planetary Hierarchy. Esotericists also reject most western theories of atonement, though they might find Eastern Orthodox theories of redemptive healing consistent with notions of planetary initiation.

Introduction

The life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are the central events defining, authenticating and promoting the world religion we know as Christianity. Early Christians' experiences of the man they remembered as Jesus of Nazareth crystallized over time into mutually reinforcing formats: the New Testament, the liturgy, and an impressive body of theology.

Christology is the area of theology that addresses issues concerning the person and nature of Jesus Christ and the purpose of his

Palestinian mission. Mainstream Christology emerged from a process of exploration, debate, and resolution—or suppression—of controversy. The outcome, after several centuries, was the understanding that Jesus Christ was and remains a single “person,” fully human but also truly divine: the Second Person of the Trinity. That understanding has stood the test of time and is still affirmed as infallible truth by the Roman, Eastern Orthodox, Lutheran, Anglican, and Reformed churches. Over the last 250 years, some liberal theologians have focused on the humanity of Jesus, to the point of denying his divinity.¹ The present article does not consider liberal theological viewpoints, but a companion article focusing thereon would be a worthwhile contribution to the literature, and interested authors are encouraged to explore that theme.

The gospel writers focused on Jesus Christ's teaching and healing ministry. Yet, under Pauline influence, mainstream Christian doctrine has emphasized the redemptive significance of his death and resurrection. Theories of redemption, or atonement, range from blood sacrifice in expiation for man's sins, still popular among evangelical fundamentalists, to the unlocking of latent potential in human nature, favored by certain Eastern Orthodox theologians.

About the Author

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An esoteric tradition emerged in Christianity as early as apostolic times and with it alternative Christological perspectives. Gnosticism was a conspicuous expression of that tradition during the first few centuries of the Common Era. Among the several Christologies it produced, one foreshadowed modern esoteric teachings in distinguishing the human Jesus from the divine Christ. The esoteric tradition continued, despite strenuous efforts to suppress it, and ran parallel with mainstream Christianity throughout its 2,000-year history. But later movements like Hermeticism and early Rosicrucianism focused on issues other than Christology.

New interest in esoteric Christology emerged in the 19th century with the work of New England philosopher and healer Phineas Parkhurst Quimby (1802–1866) and English esotericist and feminist theologian Anna Kingsford (1846–1888).² It continued over the next several decades with the work of Rudolf Steiner, founder of Anthroposophy;³ members of the Society of the Golden Dawn and its derivatives; and members of modern Rosicrucian groups, notably Max Heindel, founder of the Rosicrucian Fellowship.⁴

Esoteric Christology was strengthened by trans-Himalayan teachings on the Bodhisattva and the masters, introduced to the West by the Theosophical Society and its offshoots.⁵ Annie Besant and Charles Leadbeater led a “Christianization” movement within the Theosophical Society, counterbalancing its founders’ indifference or hostility toward Christianity. Besant’s *Esoteric Christianity*, published in 1905, was pivotal in that regard. It combined themes explored by Kingsford with insights from Theosophical teachings.⁶ Trans-Himalayan teachings were also communicated by Alice A. Bailey, former Theosophist and founder of the Arcane School. Bailey’s 24 books, most dictated by the Tibetan Master Djwhal Khul, appeared from 1922 onward. They offer the most detailed esoteric Christological teachings, and we shall quote extensively from them.

Modern esoteric Christology is not diametrically opposed to its traditional Christian coun-

terpart. Yet on critical issues it offers new insights and explanations. It challenges the one-person understanding of Jesus Christ, asserting that Christ was a high initiate and avatar of the Planetary Hierarchy who “overshadowed” Jesus during the Palestinian ministry. Esoteric teachers reject western theories of atonement in favor of more positive accounts of his redemptive mission. Support for esoteric Christology has grown steadily in recognition of its intellectual merit and explanatory power. Former skeptics, turning to some form of spirituality in the backlash against rationalism, are likely to prefer esoteric over traditional Christology. Support is enhanced by the precision with which esoteric teachings define and discuss such concepts as “God,” “divine,” “soul” and “body,” all of which impinge on Christological understanding.

Little effort has been made to reconcile traditional and esoteric Christologies. Authorities in the mainstream churches consider their own Christology to be infallible and unchangeable. The great majority of theologians are either unaware of esoteric Christology or dismiss it as just one more assault on time-honored beliefs. For their part, esoteric teachers reject notions of infallibility and affirm the ongoing revelation of knowledge. Many esotericists identify themselves with other world religions in preference to Christianity, and some have gone on record with the opinion that Christianity is in its death throes, soon to disappear along with other vestiges of the Pisan Age. Of those who write about Christ, most present esoteric Christology with minimal reference to mainstream doctrine.

The present standoff is unsatisfactory and perpetuates separateness. This article seeks to establish a basis for conversations on Christological and related issues between Christians and esotericists. It identifies major areas of agreement but also identifies areas of fundamental disagreement where progress will require further work and new insights. “Christians,” in the present context, refers to adherents to traditional Christian doctrine, and “esotericists” to people who subscribe to modern esoteric philosophy. It should be noted, how-

ever, that we are not necessarily talking about two entirely distinct groups of people. Some traditional Christians are already open to esoteric teachings, and some esotericists are practicing members of mainline churches. What is lacking is a systematic basis for reconciling conflicting beliefs and alleviating the anxiety caused by that conflict.

Many more people could be drawn into this middle ground if a synthesis of understanding became available. The challenges are considerable, and sensitivity is needed on both sides because deeply held beliefs are involved. But, given the large number of Christians in the world and the prospect that Christianity could form a major pillar of a New World Religion, the stakes are high, and some effort to seek synthesis would seem worthwhile.

Traditional Christology

Evolution of Christology

The man we know as Jesus Christ was given the Aramaic name Yeshua by his mother Mary. *Yeshua*, whose Hebrew form was *Yehoshuah*, literally meant “He will save,” or simply “Savior.” Closely related names were Esau and Joshua. The Greek equivalent of Yeshua was *Iesous* from which the English “Jesus” is derived.

Jesus Christ expressed close kinship with God the Father and performed miracles in his own name, including raising three people from the dead. Some people believed he was a prophet, possibly a reincarnation of Elijah.⁷ Various titles were assigned to him during and after his ministry.⁸ His followers drew upon scriptural precedents to describe Jesus as the “Son of David”⁹ and the “Messiah.”¹⁰ “Son of Man” had deep Judaic roots and appears 82 times in the gospels. Sometimes Jesus used it to refer to himself, while on other occasions he seemed to imply a divine manifestation to follow him.¹¹ Occasionally people addressed him as “Lord.”¹² The unclean spirits and eventually his disciples called him the “Son of God.”¹³ Further appellations, applied after his death and resurrection, included “the Last (or Second) Adam”¹⁴ and “the High Priest.”¹⁵

The Greek equivalent of “Messiah” is *Christos*, from which “Christ” is derived. Messiah/Christ was a title, but the apostle Paul, who wrote his epistles between about 49 and 67 CE, shortened “Jesus the Christ” to “Jesus Christ,”¹⁶ essentially making “Christ” Jesus’ last name. “Lord” (Greek: *Kyrios*) could simply be a term of respect.¹⁷ But Paul drew upon the much greater significance of its Hebrew equivalent *Adonai*, which had served as a substitute for the unutterable YHWH “Lord Jesus Christ” became Paul’s favorite appellation and one often used by early Christians.¹⁸ Paul used those titles to proclaim Christ’s divinity: for example:

God also hath highly exalted him [Christ], and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord [*Kyrios/Adonai*], to the glory of God the Father.¹⁹

In so doing he was redefining monotheism. Jewish and Islamic scholars would accuse Christianity of violating monotheistic principles in its Christology and trinitarian doctrine.

An important question debated during the first century was *when* Jesus Christ became divine. According to Paul, Christ was “declared to be the Son of God with power . . . by the resurrection from the dead.”²⁰ *Mark*, written 15–20 years later, suggested that divine sonship was granted at the baptism: “Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”²¹ Paul and *Mark*’s author could be considered *adoptionists*, referring to the belief that Christ was not always divine but was “adopted” by the Father sometime during his earthly life. *Matthew* and *Luke*, which were written even later, did not refute the adoptionist position but implied that Jesus was the Son of God from the time of his conception. “God the Son” appears nowhere in the New Testament.

The *Gospel of John* identified Jesus Christ as the *Logos*, conventionally rendered in English as “the Word.”²² The term had a long, complicated history in Greek philosophy. First discussed by the sixth-century BCE Heraclitus,

logos acquired a range of meanings, including “ratio,” “proportion,” “harmony,” “reason,” even “idea.” The fourth-century BCE Zeno the Stoic viewed *logos* as a divine principle of natural law and rational ethics. His followers came to regard the Logos, now capitalized, as the soul of the universe. Still later, the first-century CE Jewish scholar Philo viewed the Logos as a god-man in the style of the Egyptian Osiris.²³ Separately, *logos* took on the additional meaning of “word” or “speech,” in the sense that speech is the manifestation of an idea. Designation of Christ as “the Word” carried the connotation that he manifested the hidden nature and purpose of the Father. Since Logos has a somewhat different meaning in modern esoteric teachings, from now on we shall use “the Word” in discussing traditional Christology.

In addition to establishing “the Word” as an enduring title, *John* refuted Pauline/Markan adoptionism by declaring that the Word was “in the beginning with God.”²⁴ The fourth gospel was written some 60 years after the crucifixion, and the prologue containing the critical Christological statements may have been added still later. But the concept was in place in time for Platonist philosopher Athénagoras of Athens (c.133–c.190) to profess: “[W]e acknowledge one God, uncreated, eternal, invisible, impassible, incomprehensible, illimitable... we acknowledge also a Son of God. . . . [T]he Son of God is the Logos of the Father, in idea and in operation; for after the pattern of Him and by Him were all things made, the Father and the Son being one.”²⁵

The statement that the Word was “in the beginning with God” called to mind *Proverbs* 8:22, which referred to Wisdom [Hebrew: *Chokmah*, Greek: *Sophia*]. Indeed, in early Christianity, “Sophia” was often applied to Jesus Christ.²⁶ For example the basilica of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople was dedicated to him. Sophia eventually recovered her feminine identity in Eastern Orthodox Christianity.

The Ecumenical Councils

Christological and other theological issues were debated for centuries. When controversy threatened Christian unity, closure was forced

by ecumenical councils, so called because bishops were invited from the whole of Christendom.²⁷ Six ecumenical councils issued Christological decrees, beginning with the Council of Nicaea in 325 CE and ending with the Third Council of Constantinople in 680–681.

The procedure was simple: attending bishops discussed the issues at hand and then voted. The majority opinion was deemed to have been guided and endorsed by the Holy Spirit. Published in the council’s formal proceedings, it became dogma, open to possible clarification but never to be contradicted by later councils. Deliberations did not always follow orderly parliamentary procedures, and outcomes sometimes reflected politics as much as theological insight. For example, the Council of Ephesus in 431 CE pitted Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, against archrival Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople. The latter was condemned and deposed before his delegation even arrived at the council. Upon their arrival Cyril’s faction intimidated the delegation to discourage further consideration. Nestorius himself stayed away in fear for his own safety,²⁸ but the Nestorian “heresy” was named after him.

The Council of Nicaea decreed that Jesus Christ was/is “the Son of God . . . that is from the substance [Greek: *ousia*, Latin: *substantia*] of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God . . . through whom all things came to be, both those in heaven and those in earth.”²⁹ The First Council of Constantinople (381) drew from the fourth gospel to affirm that Jesus Christ was not created in time but was “begotten from the Father before all the ages.” He “came down from the heavens and became incarnate from the holy Spirit and the virgin Mary.”³⁰ Both councils referred to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but “Trinity” was never used by the Council of Nicaea and appeared only once in the proceedings of First Constantinople.³¹ Trinitarian doctrine lagged behind Christology in its development.

The Council of Ephesus proclaimed the doctrine of the *hypostatic union*: that Jesus Christ

had both a divine and a human nature. “[T]he Word from God the Father,” the bishops affirmed, “has been united by hypostasis with the flesh and is one Christ with his own flesh, and is therefore God and man together.”³² *Hypostasis*, customarily rendered in English as “person,” will be discussed in due course. The bishops added that Jesus Christ was “perfect God and perfect man of a rational soul and a body.”³³ And, in a resolution of far-reaching significance, they endorsed the statement that the Son of God suffered and died on the cross. “[A]lthough according to his own nature he was not subject to suffering, [he] suffered in the flesh for us according to the scriptures For that purpose he gave his own body to death.”³⁴

In a backlash against the Alexandrian victory at Ephesus, the Council of Chalcedon (451) affirmed the single personhood of Jesus Christ. His divine and human natures, the council decreed, “undergo no confusion, no change, no division, no separation; at no point was the difference between the natures taken away through the union, but rather the property of both natures is preserved and comes together into a single person and a single subsistent being; he is not parted or divided into two persons, but is one and the same only-begotten Son, God, Word, Lord Jesus Christ.”³⁵

The one-person-two-natures understanding of Jesus Christ—to be discussed in more detail shortly—was now in place, but subsequent councils continued to refine that understanding. The Second Council of Constantinople determined that “the Word of God has two nativities, that which is before all ages from the Father, outside time and without a body, and secondly that nativity of these latter days when the Word of God came down from the heavens and was made flesh of holy and glorious Mary, mother of God and ever-virgin, and was born from her.”³⁶ Worship of Jesus Christ must not distinguish between his divine and human natures; rather, he is due “a single adoration God the Word in human flesh along with his human flesh, as has been the tradition of the church from the beginning.”³⁷

The Third Council of Constantinople declared that Jesus Christ has “equally two natural volitions or wills . . . and two natural principles of action which undergo no division, no change, no partition, no confusion.” The two wills are not in opposition: “his human will following, and not resisting or struggling, rather in fact subject to his divine and all powerful will.”³⁸

By the end of the seventh century the church had created a detailed and consistent—if not totally clear—description of the person, natures, and origin of Jesus Christ. It had distanced itself from Gnostic *docetism* (from the Greek *dokeō*, “to seem”), which asserted that the Word only seemed to take physical form; *Arianism*, which asserted his creation in time; *Nestorianism*, which asserted that Jesus Christ was two distinct persons; *monophysitism*, which asserted that his two natures were merged; and *monophylitism*, which asserted that he had a single will.

Schismatic churches emerged when dissenting bishops, or sometimes their followers, refused to submit to the majority opinion. After the Council of Ephesus a schismatic Nestorian church emerged with its primary base in Persia. Now known as the Assyrian Church of the East, it still exists. A schismatic monophysite church, based in Egypt, emerged from the Council of Chalcedon. Known as the Coptic Orthodox Church, it too remains active. The two churches’ survival, in the face of repression throughout the centuries—and in the present—testifies to the tenacity of faith.

In retrospect the various “isms” seem to have been matters of emphasis rather than substance, and the unity of Christendom could probably have been preserved if cooler heads had prevailed. But the polarized atmosphere of the time did not encourage inclusiveness and consensus-building.

One Person, Two Natures

Arguments over vocabulary plagued the formulation of Christological and trinitarian doctrine from the very beginning. With political or intellectual enemies always ready to pounce, terminology became a minefield into

which theologians—including some of the church fathers—stumbled at their peril. Anyone who understated the distinctions among the persons of the Trinity could be accused of Sabellianism, or modalism, while anyone who overstated them could be accused of tritheism.³⁹ Anyone discussing Jesus Christ could be accused of monophysitism, which failed to distinguish sufficiently between his human and divine natures, or Nestorianism, which implied a division in his personhood.

Eventually East and West each crafted a terminology to provide cover for theologians who stayed within its boundaries. One word had to be redefined for the purpose. The Council of Nicaea used the Greek words *hypostasis* and *ousia* and the Latin *substantia* synonymously; their English translation would be “nature,” “essence,” or “substance.” By the time of the First Council of Constantinople, 58 years later, *hypostasis* had acquired a new meaning, sharply contrasted with *ousia*. *Hypostasis* was now synonymous with *prosōpon* and its Latin equivalent *persona*, from which the English “person” is derived.⁴⁰ In classical times *prosōpon* and *persona* referred to the mask worn by an actor in a play or, sometimes, to the speaking tube through which an actor spoke.⁴¹ They had since come to mean the character portrayed or, more generally, the “face” someone presented to the world. *Hypostasis* now had a similar meaning. Meanwhile, the Latin *substantia* was left in an uneasy position: it was the direct translation of *hypostasis* but continued to mean *ousia*, or “substance.”

Eastern Orthodox theologians customarily use *hypostasis* to refer to Jesus Christ or to the Trinity, even when writing in English. While the term means little to the layperson, its post-Nicene technical meaning is fairly precise, resembling *partzuf* (Aramaic/Hebrew: “face”) in the Kabbalah.⁴² The hypostatic union is formally stated thus: Jesus Christ is one *hypostasis* and two *ousiai*. The Trinity, by contrast, is three *hypostases* and one *ousia*.

In place of *hypostasis* Western theologians use *persona* or “person.” This latter term is deceptively familiar, calling to mind a unique

human being, recognized by the way he or she looks, speaks, acts, and relates to others. Certainly the family and followers of Jesus Christ regarded him as a person. Possibly the term could be stretched to capture the principle that unified Jesus Christ’s two natures. But it would fail to capture the principle that distinguishes the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Instead, theologians define “person,” in a Christological or trinitarian context, as an “individuating principle.” We might suggest “focus of consciousness,” or “self-conscious identity,” but theologians have yet to embrace those terms.

While the divine and human natures were both present in Jesus Christ, the full power of the divine nature was unavailable, or was voluntarily withheld, so that the Word could participate in human affairs. Because of his divine nature Jesus Christ could perform miracles, read people’s minds, and foretell the future. Yet at times his knowledge seemed to be limited. Paul wrote that Christ “made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.”⁴³ This is the doctrine of *kenōsis*, or “self-emptying.” Acceptance of the human condition was expressed most remarkably by the passion and crucifixion. As the Council of Ephesus noted, the Son of God suffered and died on the cross.

That startling conclusion is an example of what theologians call *communicatio idiomatum*, or “interchange of properties.” Other examples would be that Jesus created the universe and Mary was the mother of God. According to Jesuit scholar Gerald O’Collins, the principle “involves *naming* the person of Jesus Christ with respect to one of his natures . . . and *attributing* to him a property that belongs to the other nature.”⁴⁴ The propriety of naming with respect to one or other of the two natures opens up important possibilities, and we shall return to it in due course.

The hypostatic union began in 5 BCE, or thereabouts, when Mary conceived Jesus in her womb. From that moment onward the divine and human natures were combined. The human nature, the ecumenical councils pro-

claimed, consisted of body, soul and will. The soul, it was determined elsewhere, did not pre-exist the body.⁴⁵ Upon Mary's conception, we must understand, a body, a soul, and presumably a human will were created and united with the Word, which existed "in the beginning," "before all ages."

Conciliar discussions of the natures and person of the Jesus Christ focused almost entirely on his Palestinian mission. Apart from the use of "is" rather than "was" in describing the hypostatic union, the councils did not address the issue of whether the union continued after the mission was completed. Notwithstanding, ecclesiastical authorities came to assume that the union will last until the second coming, if not forever. In the Apostles' Creed the believer affirms: "I believe . . . in Jesus Christ . . . [who] ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead." Precisely what "seated at the right hand of God" means is not spelled out.

Atonement

The major questions relating to Jesus Christ's nature and person were settled by the seventh century. But the ecumenical councils did not rule on the purpose of his Palestinian mission, and debate continued for much longer; indeed it continues today, within mainstream churches and elsewhere.

Jesus Christ, the gospels tell us, was baptized in the Jordan, taught the multitudes, and healed the sick. He preached the importance of common-sense morality versus compliance with the minutiae of Mosaic Law. The Sermon on the Mount was a profound statement of ethical ideals. At the transfiguration Christ revealed his divine nature. At the Last Supper he instituted the Eucharist. He rose from the grave to demonstrate the reality of ongoing life. Passages from the gospels are read daily in worship services around the globe.

Within a few centuries, however, institutional Christianity was firmly wedded to the notion that Jesus Christ was the Savior who died for the sins of humanity. Meanwhile, "faith" lost its meaning of *trust*, as in "thy faith has made

thee whole".⁴⁶ Instead it came to mean *belief*, or submission to dogma. The Apostles' Creed, which dates from the fourth century, states tersely that Jesus Christ "was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried." Neither it nor the Nicene Creed of 328/381 mentions the Sermon on the Mount, the transfiguration, or the Last Supper. Yet profession of one or other of the creeds became the prerequisite for baptism and membership of the church.

The focus on Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, as distinct from his life and ministry, can be traced to Paul.⁴⁷ He explored several theories of redemption or atonement in his epistles. Generations of theologians continued the process, producing theories distinguished from one another by the relative weight and interpretation attached to the Greek words *katallagē* ("atonement" or "reconciliation"), *lutrōsis* ("redemption"), and *sōtēria* ("salvation" or "deliverance").

Paul declared that "Christ died for our sins For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."⁴⁸ Christ freed us from the bondage to sin, or perhaps to Satan. According to church father Irenaeus, Christ ransomed, or bought back—*redeemed* in a very literal sense—humanity by the sacrifice of his blood.⁴⁹ Another early theory of redemption emphasized Christ's victory over sin and death. Through sin man brought spiritual, even physical, death into the world; through the resurrection Christ conquered death and the power of evil that lay behind it.⁵⁰

Augustine of Hippo drew upon *Romans* to promote the penal, or judicial, theory of atonement. Humanity was viewed as depraved, hopelessly mired in its own "actual" sins and the inherited, "original" sin of Adam. God the Father sat in judgment upon humanity, and his Son paid the penalty we deserved. Particularly influential was the satisfaction theory proposed by Anselm of Canterbury (c.1033–1109),⁵¹ further developed by Thomas Aquinas, and eagerly embraced by the Protestant reformers. Sin was an affront to God. Aquinas argued that the more exalted

the person injured, the greater the dishonor; to strike a nobleman, for instance, was more serious than to strike a common man.⁵² Since God is infinite, the affront was infinite, and only a person of infinite stature could make amends. Yet only a person who fully embraced human nature could make it on our behalf. The doctrine of the hypostatic union precisely fit that twofold requirement.

Substitutionary atonement is a key belief of modern evangelical fundamentalism. Elsewhere in the West, penal theories have lost ground to theories that emphasize God's love and Christ's moral example. Although the creeds remain in force, attention is finally being transferred from Paul's epistles to the gospels.

Theologians in the eastern churches always subscribed to the Nicene Creed. Yet they attached more importance to Christ's transfiguration and resurrection, in which his divinity was manifested, than to the passion and crucifixion. Correspondingly, they were less influenced by Paul's focus on sin and atonement than were their western counterparts. The eastern theologians also rejected the notion of original sin. Adam, in their view, did not possess the knowledge or will necessary to commit a sin of the magnitude envisioned by Augustine. As a result humanity was not willful and wicked so much as wounded and weak.⁵³

In the first century CE Ignatius of Antioch theorized that the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ—and particularly the divine love that he expressed for humankind—inspired moral transformation. Christ's example and teachings were as important as his death. Seventh-century church father Maximus the Confessor viewed Christ's redemptive act as one of healing. Eastern theologians are fond of pointing out that *sōtēria* can mean

"healing"; "salvation" and "salve" come from the same root.⁵⁴ Citing Maximus' work, 20-century theologian Vladimir Lossky declared: "Christ healed all that belonged to man, but particularly his will."⁵⁵ "The work accomplished by Christ is related to our nature," Lossky continued. "It is a new nature, a re-

stored creature which appears in the world. It is a new body, pure from all taints of sin, free from external necessity, separated from our iniquity and from every alien will."⁵⁶

Redemption, in Eastern theology, was linked to the doctrine of *theosis*, or deification. We find in scripture: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature"⁵⁷ Athana-

sius of Alexandria built upon that passage to declare: "He [the Word] was made man that we might be made god." According to fourth-century church father Gregory of Nyssa, *theosis* was the very purpose of humanity's creation.⁵⁸ Our destiny is to become "priests of the cosmos, rendering by [our] dynamic engagement with the world's order, a degree of divine life, a sacred blessing as it were, to all the fabric of God's created existence."⁵⁹

Christ's incarnation, Gregory of Nyssa and his followers argued, was not a repair mission, a response to humanity's failure, but was a pre-ordained mission to unlock humanity's latent capability. When "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,"⁶⁰ human nature was exalted. Redemption, as a commentator on Gregory's work remarked, meant the refashioning of "the very boundaries of creaturely existences." The decrees of the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon relating to the hypostatic union added weight to Gregory's teachings. While *theosis* received a cool reception in the West, it became a key element of Eastern Orthodox teachings.

Little effort has been made to reconcile traditional and esoteric Christologies. Authorities in the mainstream churches consider their own Christology to be infallible and unchangeable. The great majority of theologians are either unaware of esoteric Christology or dismiss it as just one more assault on time-honored beliefs.

Russian Orthodox priest Sergei Bulgakov (1871–1944) agreed with Gregory of Nyssa that Christ's incarnation was motivated primarily by God's plan to glorify humanity. In response to that plan "Man desires to become a son of God and enter into that glory of creation, and he is predestined to this. Out of natural man, he is called to become a god-man."⁶¹ The glorification of humanity began at the incarnation and was completed when Christ ascended into heaven. Importantly, we are all invited to participate in the hypostatic union.

Esoteric Christology

Historical Background

Late in the first century the Egyptian Gnostic Cerinthus distinguished between Jesus and Christ. Jesus, in his view, was an ordinary man, the son of Joseph and Mary. "The Christ" was a heavenly being who descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove at the baptism in the Jordan.⁶² We recall that *Mark* seemed to suggest that Jesus' divinity was bestowed on him at the baptism. Cerinthus asserted that the Christ imparted to Jesus higher knowledge and the power to perform miracles. Christ withdrew before the crucifixion but will rejoin Jesus at the end of time.⁶³ Cerinthus' views were refuted by the ecumenical councils, which decreed that the Son of God suffered and died on the cross. Attacked in his own time, allegedly by John the Evangelist and others, Cerinthus' influence continued, and suspicions arose that he wrote the *Book of Revelation*.

Calling the higher being "the Christ" was problematic, perhaps reflecting Cerinthus' ignorance of Jewish history. As noted earlier, the term, literally "anointed one" or "messiah," was bestowed on Jesus before his divine associations became apparent; it had also been bestowed on various individuals, like King David, before him. Notwithstanding, modern esoteric writers have adopted the same convention.

Theodore (392–428), bishop of Mopsuestia and spokesperson for the theological school of Antioch applied the full name Jesus Christ to the man "who is from the Jews according to

the flesh." Jesus Christ was to be distinguished from "the Word." Theodore cited Paul to speak of the union between them as a union "of wills, of spirits, of personalities."⁶⁴ Theodore was doing little more than naming the distinct natures, which, we are assured, is permissible. But he challenged the principle of *communicatio idiomatum*, claiming that the title of *Theotokos*, bestowed upon Mary, denied Jesus Christ's full humanity. *Theotokos* literally means "God Bearer," but Cyril of Alexandria interpreted it as "Mother of God." The preferable title, Theodore suggested, was *Christotokos* ("Christ Bearer" or "Mother of Christ").

Theodore was acclaimed "Doctor of the Universal Church." Yet three years after his death the Council of Ephesus condemned Nestorius (c.386–c.451) for taking a similar position. Nestorius's stand on the *Theotokos* may have been as close as he ever came to promoting the heresy that bears his name. But his more extreme followers promoted a two-person Christology, in which Jesus Christ embodied the human nature, and the Word represented the divine nature.⁶⁵

The eastern and western churches went their separate ways in 1054, and the Reformation officially began in 1517. Important theological issues were at stake in both, but neither event was accompanied by any new challenge to mainstream Christology. The Protestant reformers accepted the conciliar decrees without question. A work by the Lutheran mystic and Hermeticist Jakob Böhme (1575–1624) can be read as implying a Cerinthean distinction between Jesus and the Christ.⁶⁶ Otherwise Böhme's references to Christ were surprisingly orthodox.

In the 1860s Phineas Quimby distinguished, as Cerinthus had done, between Jesus and the Christ. He proposed that "Jesus embodied . . . an intelligence called Christ, embracing all the attributes of man, and being a revelation of a higher wisdom than had before appeared on the earth."⁶⁷ Anna Kingsford made a similar claim in the early 1880s and added her own insights. Multiple esoteric teachers soon did the same. Within a few decades a sophisticat-

ed esoteric Christology had emerged, in which trans-Himalayan teachings played the major role.

Jesus

Esoteric teachings portray Jesus as a man who had advanced along the initiatory path through a number of previous incarnations. Alice Bailey noted his incarnations as Joshua the Son of Nun; as Jeshua at the time of Ezra; and as Joshua in the book of Zechariah, where he attained the third initiation.⁶⁸

During his lifetime in Palestine Jesus entered into an intimate relationship with the Christ, allowing the latter to speak and act through his body. Virtually all esoteric teachers agree with Cerinthus that the relationship began at the time of the baptism in the Jordan and ended at or near the time of the crucifixion. Thereafter the two individualities pursued distinct paths. This assertion contrasts with orthodox Christian teachings that the hypostatic union will continue indefinitely.

Annie Besant declared that the “man Jesus yielded himself a willing sacrifice . . . to the Lord of Love, who took unto Himself that pure form as tabernacle, and dwelt therein for three years of mortal life.”⁶⁹ Rosicrucian Max Heindel noted that an “ordinary man's vital body would have instantly collapsed under the terrific vibrations of the Great Spirit who entered Jesus' body.” Because of his initiatory training, Jesus' etheric body was “attuned to the high vibrations of the life spirit.” Even so, “that body, pure and high-strung as it was, could not withstand those tremendous impacts for many years, and when . . . Christ withdrew temporarily from his disciples . . . he drew out of Jesus' vehicles to give them a rest.”⁷⁰

Steiner declared that the descent of the Christ into Jesus' physical vehicles was a gradual process extending throughout the three-year Palestinian ministry: “In the early days [after the baptism], the Christ and the body of Jesus of Nazareth were only loosely connected . . . [I]t was only towards the end of the three years that the Christ spirit and the bodies . . . became one . . . and it only happened completely in the death on the cross, or rather

immediately before it.”⁷¹ Steiner stated that, despite long preparation, Jesus' lower vehicles “were able to accommodate only so much of the Christ's power: “The Christ spirit had all kinds of abilities, but in the bodies of Jesus of Nazareth it had only the abilities that were possible in those bodies.”⁷² Here we see a parallel to Paul's notion of *kenōsis*: Christ's “emptying” of his divine attributes.⁷³

At the end of the three-year ministry, Jesus—Christ journeyed to Jerusalem and there was sentenced to death. It was Jesus who died on the cross, and by that great act of renunciation he attained the fourth initiation. Theosophist Geoffrey Hodson suggested that, because of his training in the mysteries, Jesus could have avoided crucifixion: “His submission to martyrdom when he possessed the occult power easily to have saved Himself and confounded his enemies, is one of the sublime acts of submission and self-restraint in the history of mankind.”⁷⁴

Alice Bailey claimed that Jesus went on to attain the fifth initiation as Apollonius of Tyana.⁷⁵ Thus esoteric writers refer to him as the Master Jesus. Bailey explained that Jesus is not only active in the world but is in physical embodiment. Writing in about 1920 she declared that he is

at present living in a Syrian body, and dwells in a certain part of the Holy Land. He travels much and passes considerable time in various parts of Europe. He works specially with masses more than with individuals, though He has gathered around Him quite a numerous body of pupils. He is upon the Sixth Ray of Devotion, or Abstract Idealism, and His pupils are frequently distinguished by that fanaticism and devotion which manifested in earlier Christian times amongst the martyrs. He Himself is rather a martial figure, a disciplinarian, and a man of iron rule and will. He is tall and spare with rather a long thin face, black hair, pale complexion and piercing blue eyes.⁷⁶

Theosophist Charles Leadbeater added that Jesus “lives among the Druses of Mount Lebanon.”⁷⁷

Trans-Himalayan teachings assert that the Master Jesus now heads the Sixth Ray ashram within the Planetary Hierarchy. Religion is said to span the Second and Sixth Rays. Besant declared that Jesus “took Christianity under His special charge, ever seeking to guide it to the right lines, to protect, to guard and nourish it.”⁷⁸ Jesus’ work, in Bailey’s words, included “fostering the germ of true spiritual life which is to be found amongst members of all sects and divisions, and neutralizing as far as possible the mistakes and errors of the churchmen and the theologians.”⁷⁹ We can assume that Jesus incurred some of the karma of the historical church.

Bailey added: “No one so wisely knows as [Jesus] the problems of the West, no one is so closely in touch with the people who stand for all that is best in Christian teachings, and no one is so well aware of the need of the present moment. Certain great prelates of the Anglican and Catholic Churches are wise agents of His.”⁸⁰ Evidently, Jesus intends to exert more direct guidance in the near future; he “will again take hold of the Christian Church in an effort to respiritualize it and to reorganize it. From the chair of the Pope of Rome, the Master Jesus will attempt to swing that great branch of the religious beliefs of the world again into a position of spiritual power and away from its present authoritative and temporary political potency.”⁸¹ His continued involvement in Christianity would seem to refute claims that Christianity has no future potential

Jesus’ responsibilities extend beyond religion, “for to Him is given the problem of steering the thought of the occident out of its present state of unrest into the peaceful waters of certitude and knowledge, and of preparing the way in Europe and America for the eventual” reappearance of the Christ.⁸²

The Christ

In 1881 Anna Kingsford declared that, at the baptism, Jesus received “into his own spirit” the Logos, whom she equated with the biblical Adonai. “Then,” she continued, “is accomplished the union of the two natures, the divine and the human For the Christ,

having received the Logos, is Son of God, as well as Son of Man.”⁸³ Theosophist Annie Besant also identified the Christ with the Logos. Building on one of Kingsford’s themes, she compared Christ with the sun gods: Mithras, Osiris, Tammuz and others, who either incarnated or sent messengers to Earth.⁸⁴ Rudolf Steiner identified the overshadowing entity as a “Spirit of the Sun” who appeared to Moses in the burning bush.⁸⁵ Max Heindel claimed that the Christ was the highest initiate of the “Sun Period,” an early phase in the planetary evolution. Christ was now an archangel and, like them, could not descend lower than the desire body. Thus he needed the body of Jesus to accomplish his mission in Palestine.⁸⁶

Trans-Himalayan teachings identified the Christ with the Lord Maitreya, the Bodhisattva of Hindu and Buddhist tradition, and even with the Imam Mahdi of Shia Islam.⁸⁷ The Christ is a high initiate of the human lifestream. Annie Besant and Charles Leadbeater placed Maitreya on the Moon Chain.⁸⁸ By contrast, Alice Bailey stated that the Christ achieved individualization on this Earth, in ancient Lemuria. So rapid was his development that “in Atlantean days He found Himself upon the Path of Probation as did also the Buddha” who had individualized on the Moon Chain.⁸⁹ Christ is said to have incarnated previously as “Sri Krishna and as one other who was little known.”⁹⁰ All agreed that the Christ serves as the World Teacher for the fifth root race and Head of the Hierarchy of Masters.⁹¹ The Buddha held the office of World Teacher for the fourth root race, and the Master Kuthumi is expected to assume that role for the sixth root race.⁹²

Besant described the Christ as an emissary of the Solar Logos, the divine entity whose physical body is the solar system. Other Theosophists seemed to agree.⁹³ Indeed, when they speak of “the Logos,” they seem to refer exclusively to the Solar Logos. Bailey, however, linked Christ with the Planetary Logos. She described a hierarchy of Logoi extending from planetary to galactic levels and beyond. Helena Blavatsky also spoke of multiple Logoi,⁹⁴ but it is unclear whether she placed

them in a hierarchical structure. Perhaps the emergence, in our understanding, of the Planetary Logos fills Bishop John Robinson's demand for a "God down here" in place of the conventional "God out there."⁹⁵ Regardless of whether the focus is on the Planetary or the Solar Logos, the Theosophists and Bailey all agreed that "the Logos" is triune, corresponding to Christian notions of the Trinity. And all distinguished their understanding of the Logos from Christian doctrine of "the Word."

By the 1920s more detailed information was becoming available on the Planetary Hierarchy and the seven rays. The Christ was recognized as holding the office of Second Ray Lord of Love-Wisdom and head of a major ashram that incorporates the work of other masters. Bailey described him as "the Great Lord of Love and Son of God"⁹⁶ and as "the great Lord of Love and Compassion."⁹⁷ "Through Him flows the energy of the second aspect [of Deity], reaching Him direct from the heart center of the Planetary Logos via the heart of Sanat Kumara."⁹⁸ Sanat Kumara is the Lord of the World, the one referred to in scripture as the "Ancient of Days," or in esoteric Judaism as the "Ancient of Ancients." He came from the Venus Chain and "incarnated" during the Lemurian Age to serve as the Planetary Logos' "representative" for the present globe.⁹⁹

The Christ, in Bailey's words, is "the absolutely perfect expression of divinity for this cycle."¹⁰⁰ His divinity was not demonstrated by the miracles reported in the gospels. Miracles, Bailey explained, can be performed by any entity, good or evil, who has gained "an intelligent understanding of matter." Rather, divinity is "the expression of the qualities of the second or building aspect of God—magnetism, love, inclusiveness, non-separativeness, sacrifice for the good of the world, unselfishness, intuitive understanding, cooperation with the Plan of God."¹⁰¹

Bailey declared that the Christ was the first member of the human lifestream to achieve the complete realization of divinity: "I and the Father are One."¹⁰² He was a "human-divine

Avatar."¹⁰³ For the first time in human history, the Christ

anchored on earth a tenuous thread of the divine Will, as it issued from the Father's House (Shamballa), passed into the understanding custody of the Kingdom of God, and through the medium of the Christ was brought to the attention of mankind. Through the instrumentality of certain great Sons of God the three divine aspects or characteristics of the divine Trinity—will, love and intelligence—have become a part of human thinking and aspiration.¹⁰⁴

Also for the first time the Christ "transmitted to humanity . . . an aspect and a potency of the nature of God Himself, the Love principle of the Deity."¹⁰⁵ He provided a direct channel from the Logos to humanity. Heindel noted that, through his association with Jesus, the Christ

possessed the twelve vehicles, which formed an unbroken chain from the Physical World to the very Throne of God. Therefore He is the only Being in the Universe in touch with both God and man and capable of mediating between them, because He has, personally and individually, experienced all conditions and knows every limitation incidental to physical existence.¹⁰⁶

We understand that Christ had "a Second Ray soul, a Sixth Ray personality (which accounted for His close relationship with the Master Jesus), plus a First Ray mind."¹⁰⁷ Esoteric writers typically say that Christ *overshadowed* Jesus. The Greek verb *episkiazein*, translated as "to overshadow," appeared in the Septuagint and also in New Testament accounts of the annunciation and transfiguration.¹⁰⁸ Bailey suggested, however, that their relationship was one of "inspiration" that contrasting with overshadowing and with "appearance or manifestation."¹⁰⁹ In inspiration, depicted as the positive counterpart of obsession,

the free will and intelligent understanding of the Master or the disciple is enlisted on the side of the spiritual Agent; the spiritual man, functioning as a soul, becomes the

channel for forces, ideas and activities other than his own but to which he gives full intuitive assent. It is all carried forward with full understanding and consciousness of method, process and results. It is an act of free spiritual cooperation, for the good of humanity, in the work of a great spiritual Force or Being.¹¹⁰

Most esoteric teachers agree that Jesus died on the cross. But they insist that the Christ did not die. Nor, in Bailey's account, did either Jesus or Christ "rise out of a rocky sepulcher and re-assume His discarded body."¹¹¹ How then are we to understand the resurrection? Leadbeater regarded it—along with the crucifixion—in purely symbolic terms.¹¹² Most other esoteric writers have steered clear of the issue. This is a serious deficiency, and we shall return to it later.

Once a distinction is drawn between Jesus and the Christ, the inevitable question is: which one appeared to the disciples and others after the crucifixion? The sayings attributed to him in the gospels suggest that it was the Christ. Further evidence is provided by the reports that his resurrected body could pass through walls but had a measure of solidity.¹¹³ We also note that the disciples did not recognize him, suggesting that he differed in appearance from the Jesus they knew. The post-resurrection body may have been a *mayavirupa*, corresponding closely to Paul's *sōma pneumatikon*.¹¹⁴ Manifestation of a *mayavirupa* is considered to be an ability of fifth- and higher-degree initiates.¹¹⁵ Christ certainly could have manifested one. Assuming that Jesus did not attain the fifth initiation until his incarnation as Apollonius, he would only have been able to appear in his astral body, possibly recognizable by the disciples but lacking solidity.

By the time the Christ entered into the relationship with Jesus he was already a fifth- or sixth-degree initiate. Following the Palestinian mission, according to Bailey, he "passed through the seventh Initiation of Resurrection and returned back to His original state of Being—to remain there throughout all the eternities The Son of God has found His way back to the Father and to His originating

Source, that state of Existence to which we have given the name Shamballa."¹¹⁶ Yet the seventh initiation, "the true and final resurrection," was "left incomplete." The "affirmative Voice," Bailey wrote,

will be heard when the Christ completes His work at the time of the Second Coming. Then the great seventh initiation, which is a dual one (love-wisdom in full manifestation motivated by power and will), will be consummated, and the Buddha and the Christ will together pass before the Lord of the World, together see the glory of the Lord, and together pass to higher service of a nature and caliber unknown to us.¹¹⁷

The Redemptive Mission

Esoteric writers reject any notion of judicial atonement. Anna Kingsford roundly condemned notions of a blood sacrifice, which implied "a God whose just anger was capable of being appeased by slaughter . . . a spotless sin-offering for men, in propitiation of the wrath of God."¹¹⁸ We are saved, "not by any Cross on Calvary eighteen hundred years ago . . . but by the Christ-Jesus . . . redeeming us from the world, and making us sons of God and heirs of everlasting life."¹¹⁹ The crucifixion, Kingsford averred, was significant in four ways: humanity's rejection of the god-man, renunciation of the lower self, Christ's personal sacrifice, and "the Oblation of God for the Universe."¹²⁰

Esotericists agree that Christ did suffer. Charles Leadbeater pointed to the sacrifice he made simply by assuming physical form.¹²¹ Rudolf Steiner explained: "This union of the all-embracing, universal spirit of the Christ with the body of Jesus of Nazareth involved untold suffering that was to continue for the three years."¹²²

For Kingsford the fall and the redemptive sacrifice were not one-time events but are being played out throughout eternity. God "is always making man in the image of God, and placing him in a garden of innocence and perfection. . . . And man is always falling away." Yet man "is always being redeemed by the

blood of the sacrifice always being made for him by the Christ Jesus, who is Son at once of God and of man, and is always being born of a pure virgin—dying, rising, and ascending into heaven.”¹²³

Dion Fortune, writing in the Golden Dawn tradition, declared that the crucifixion had cosmic significance: “The crucifixion of Our Lord at the hands of Roman authority was but the shadow thrown on the material plane by the struggle that was going on in the spiritual world.”¹²⁴ Besant saw the events in Palestine as scenes in a cosmic drama depicted in world mythology in which the Sun-God was born of the zodiacal Virgo, only to be sacrificed in an eternal ritual of death and rebirth. “Why,” Besant asked, “have these legends mingled with the history of Jesus?” She answered her own question thus:

These are really the stories not of a particular individual named Jesus but of the universal Christ: of a Man who symbolized a Divine Being, and who represented a fundamental truth in nature He was, as are all such, the “Son of Man,” a peculiar and distinctive title, the title of an office, not of an individual. The Christ of the Solar Myth was the Christ of the Mysteries.¹²⁵

Alice Bailey placed Christ’s sacrifice in the context of Sanat Kumara’s descent into manifestation during the Lemurian era. Sanat Kumara, in her words, “is the Great Sacrifice, Who left the glory of the high places and for the sake of the evolving sons of men took upon Himself a physical form and was made in the likeness of man.”¹²⁶ Besant placed it in the context of the eternal sacrifice made by the Second Aspect of Deity as it proceeds from the First Aspect. The Deity, she wrote,

by His own will limits Himself, making as it were a sphere enclosing the Divine Life, coming forth as a radiant orb of Deity, the Divine Substance, Spirit, within and limitation, or Matter without. This is the veil of matter which makes possible the birth of the Logos . . . that Deity may manifest for the building of the worlds.¹²⁷

Man is redeemed, Kingsford declared, when the Christ is born in him, for in Christ “the man becomes transmuted from Matter into Spirit.”¹²⁸ The trans-Himalayan teachers emphasized that Christ’s primary mission was to instill the sense of universal love and group consciousness. Prior to his coming little emphasis had been placed on God as Love in any of the world religions. In Bailey’s words the Christ, the Lord of Love, “inaugurated the ‘age of love’ and gave to the people an expression of a new divine aspect, that of love.”¹²⁹ She revealed that the Buddha and the Christ both embodied the energy of Venus, which “is esoterically recognized as that mysterious force which is a blend of love and knowledge, of intelligence and synthesis, and of understanding and brotherhood.”¹³⁰

The trans-Himalayan teachers assert that the Christ continues to be involved in human affairs. As World Teacher, he has planetary responsibility for religion and education. In Bailey’s account, Christ “has never left us but . . . has worked for two thousand years through the medium of His disciples, the inspired men and women of all faiths, all religions and all religious persuasions.” He works through the Christian Church, which “hides in its heart those who vibrate to the great love ray, the Second Ray of Love-Wisdom.” Moreover, he is to be thought of not as “the feeble Christ which historical Christianity has endorsed” but as “a strong and able executive.”¹³¹

As noted, the Christ heads a vast ashram. According to Bailey he “presides over the destiny of the great religions through the medium of a group of Masters and initiates Who direct the activities of these different schools of thought.” She added that one of those masters is Jesus, who has primary responsibility for Christianity:

The Master Jesus, the inspirer and director of the Christian Churches everywhere, though an adept on the Sixth Ray under the department of the Mahachohan, works at present under the Christ for the welfare of Christianity; other Masters hold similar posts in relation to the great oriental faiths,

and the various occidental schools of thought.¹³²

Although they are human inventions and have often failed, the world's religions, according to Bailey, have achieved certain basic goals:

Step by step man has been led through prayer, the voice of desire, through worship, the recognition of deity, through affirmation of the fact of human identity of nature with the divine, to a belief in the divinity of man. [The Christ] has told us (and the New Testament in many places emphasizes it) that we also are divine, all of us are the Sons of God and that . . . we are able to do still greater things than Christ did.¹³³

Trans-Himalayan teachers have discussed Christ's second coming, or "reappearance": he will, in the words of the Great Invocation, "return to Earth." "[T]he Living Christ will walk among men and lead them onward towards the Mount of Ascension."¹³⁴ We understand that, preparation for the reappearance has called for important adjustments: "[T]he entire [Planetary] Hierarchy shifted its location (since 1925 A.D.) from the higher mental levels to the buddhic plane, thereby making direct and unimpeded etheric reception possible."¹³⁵ Moreover, "The Christ can and does function now upon the atmic plane and embodies within Himself the great Point of Revelation which has been expressed by me in the words: 'The Will is an expression of the Law of Sacrifice.'"¹³⁶

By Bailey's description, the reappearance of "Christ, the Avatar of Love" will be profoundly significant for humanity:

Then shall the Coming One appear, His footsteps hastened through the valley of the shadow by the One of awful power Who stands upon the mountain top, breathing out love eternal, light supernal and peaceful, silent Will. Then will the sons of men respond. Then will a newer light shine forth into the dismal, weary vale of earth. Then will new life course through the veins of men So peace will come

again on earth, but a peace unlike aught known before.¹³⁷

The Spirit of Peace will, when the right time comes, vitalize the responsiveness of humanity, via the influence of the Hierarchy, to the will of God which has for basic intent the bringing of peace on earth. What is peace? It is essentially the establishing of right human relations, of synthetic rapport with its resultant cooperation, of correct interplay between the three planetary centers and an illumined, loving understanding of the will of God as it affects humanity and works out divine intent. It is for this reason that the Christ, Who established for the first time in planetary history a contact between the Hierarchy, Humanity, Shamballa and the Spirit of Peace in His Own high place, in His first recorded utterance said that He must be about His Father's business and then at the end of His life, reiterated the same thought in the words: "Father, not my will but Thine be done," thus carrying the thought up to the highest plane for He addressed the Father, the first Aspect of Divinity.¹³⁸

Among the Christ's objectives, when he reappears, will be to restore the Mysteries and thus revive "the churches in a new form."¹³⁹ This project will be part of the broader mission to establish a New World Religion.¹⁴⁰ Man, we understand, "is on the verge of establishing his divinity."¹⁴¹ The New World Religion will provide opportunities to put that new sense of divinity to use: "[T]o our past programs of prayer, worship and affirmation, the new religion of Invocation and Evocation can be added, in which man will begin to use his divine power and come into closer touch with the spiritual sources of all life."¹⁴²

Toward Synthesis

Several issues need to be addressed before any significant progress can be made toward the synthesis of traditional and esoteric Christology. They concern our understanding of God; the manner of the divine incarnation in human form; the hypostatic union; and the

purpose of Christ's Palestinian mission and continued relationship with humanity.

God and the Incarnation

Christian doctrine insists that Jesus Christ was/is the Son of God. But the very concept of "God" needs to be clarified. Theologians speak of God as both transcendent and immanent: infinite, eternal and immutable but also active in space and time. How the transcendent and the immanent are related—and how their relationship can be reconciled with statements by Thomas Aquinas and others that God is "simple," or without parts—is relegated to the category of "mystery." Esotericists speak of an utterly transcendent and unknowable Godhead and a Logos, or hierarchy of Logoi, through which the Godhead manifests and reveals itself. The Godhead is infinite, eternal and immutable, but the Logos ensouls its domain of activity. The Planetary Logos, in Bailey's account, ensouls and interacts with the Earth and its lives.

Christians would scoff at suggestions that the God of scripture can be equated to an entity "at the bottom" of a logoi hierarchy. Yet in fact the biblical Deity resembles the Planetary Logos quite closely. Notions of God gradually expanded from the tribal deities of the patriarchal era to the monotheistic "most high God" and "Lord of heaven and earth" of the gospels.¹⁴³ But early Christians felt comfortable declaring that God took human form and was born of the Virgin Mary. And God ruled a universe that was quite small, consisting of a

flat Earth and a nearby firmament of planets and stars.

Our understanding of Deity must adapt to modern scientific knowledge. The idea that the God of an observable universe 92 billion light-years in diameter, containing an estimated 10^{23} stars, would—or could—take human form stretches kenōsis beyond any possible meaning.¹⁴⁴ The "high God" of scripture, even the "infinite God" of 13th-century scholasticism, must be seen as existing within a larger divine system or structure. Mathematicians speak of different types of infinity, some larger than others.

Esotericists view the Planetary Logos as part of the logoi hierarchy, but they must avoid giving the impression that the Logoi are separate beings, like administrators in a layered bureaucracy. They

should point out that the Logoi serve as channels for the divine essence and energies flowing from the Godhead. In a real sense they are "all One." And the greatness and power of that One—or of the Planetary Logos considered as distinct—is utterly beyond human comprehension.

Esoteric teachings assert that the Logos is triune. The Second Aspect—or what Theosophists somewhat unfortunately call the Second Logos—proceeds from the First¹⁴⁵ in much the same way as the Christian God the Son was begotten by the Father. Moreover, esotericists would readily agree that the Second Aspect was "begotten before all worlds," or, in their own terminology, before the beginning of the *manvantara*.

A potentially divisive issue concerns the relationship between Christ and God. Trans-

For their part, esoteric teachers reject notions of infallibility and affirm the ongoing revelation of knowledge. Many esotericists identify themselves with other world religions in preference to Christianity, and some have gone on record with the opinion that Christianity is in its death throes, soon to disappear along with other vestiges of the Piscean Age. Of those who write about Christ, most present esoteric Christology with minimal reference to mainstream doctrine.

Himalayan teachers assert that the Christ was a high initiate and avatar of the Planetary Hierarchy. Traditional Christians would complain that the appearance on Earth of an avatar fails to capture the enormity of the truth that the Word “came down from heaven” and incarnated in human form. The term “avatar” has become problematic. In Hindu tradition it referred to the incarnation of a deity: like Vishnu’s incarnation as Krishna. Today it is used in a number of contexts, some quite trivial. Esotericists sometimes give the impression that Christ was just one of many avatars who appeared on Earth. Whether or not equivalent events occurred in previous rounds or on previous globes, esotericists should acknowledge the uniqueness of Christ’s Palestinian mission for our present globe and round. Such acknowledgement would go a long way to meeting Christian demands that the incarnation be recognized as the pivotal event in history, effecting changes in humanity’s very nature and potential.

Christian theologians would also reject the esoteric depiction of Christ as “not sufficiently divine.” In response, esotericists should emphasize that the Christ was deified to higher degree than is envisioned by the Eastern Orthodox doctrine of theosis. They should emphasize that the seventh initiation, which Christ attained or is the process of attaining, is the highest possible on this planet. Christhood, to quote Anna Kingsford, “is attained by the reception . . . of the Logos. This accomplished, the two natures, the Divine and the human, combine.”¹⁴⁶ Moreover, the Christ’s planetary role was, and remains, to express the Second Aspect of Deity: the aspect of Love-Wisdom. Bailey explained:

At the sixth and seventh initiations the first, or will, aspect shines forth, and from being a Master of Compassion and a Lord of Love the adept becomes something more. He enters into a still higher consciousness than that of the group, and becomes God-conscious. The great will or purpose of the Logos becomes his.¹⁴⁷

Leadbeater affirmed that the Christ “is so utterly an expression or manifestation of the

Blessed Trinity that, for us at our stage, we can make no distinction between them.”¹⁴⁸

Theologians might complain that, no matter how “divine” the esoteric Christ is purported to be, his relationship with the Father is by adoption. (Adoptionism, we recall, was promoted by Paul but rejected by the fourth gospel and the ecumenical councils.) Yet that complaint may be unfounded. According to esoteric teachings, the Christ possessed a divine monad, a fragment of logoc essence and intent, from the very instant of his individualized existence. Even if that occurred “as late” as the Lemurian epoch, it would still be “before all ages,” as the term was understood in biblical times. Traditional Christians and esotericists can jointly affirm that Christ was and is divine.

Esoteric teachings, of course, assert that *all* human beings have a divine monad, and theologians would question whether enough distinction is being made between the Christ and humanity. The difference is that, by the time of his Palestinian mission, Christ had attained monadic consciousness; we, by the most optimistic assessment, are in the earliest stages of such awakening.¹⁴⁹ Theologians should also remember that the Fourth Council of Constantinople, which stripped us of our innate divinity, never enjoyed the same authority as did the earlier councils, even in the eyes of mainstream Christians. Anglicans and Lutherans, in particular, accept the decrees of only the first four ecumenical councils: Nicaea through Chalcedon.

The Hypostatic Union

The doctrine of the hypostatic union secured a majority vote at the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, but it failed to win consensus or produce clarity. Even after Chalcedon theologians in East and West struggled to understand what had been decided. Not surprisingly the hypostatic union is once again a contentious issue, this time between Christian doctrine and esoteric teachings. But it is not an insurmountable obstacle to synthesis.

Christians might be willing to adopt the convention of *naming* the human nature of Jesus

Christ “Jesus,” and the divine nature “Christ,” without sacrificing belief in a single personhood. Liberal theologians’ almost universal use of “Jesus,” and their near-rejection of the divinity of “Christ,” shows that such a convention is already taking shape. How traditional Christians would react to esotericists’ assertion that Jesus—representing the human nature—pre-existed his conception in Mary’s womb remains to be seen.

Despite what a superficial examination of esoteric Christology might suggest, esotericists are not necessarily Nestorians. Even if, as they insist, Jesus and the Christ had distinct origins, they should agree that there is merit in the notion that the two entities came together into a single person. We have already seen that “person” has a larger meaning in theological discourse than it does in everyday usage. Esotericists could affirm that, during his three-year ministry Jesus–Christ acted, spoke, thought, and reflected on himself as a unified person. By analogy, the solar angel and the human monad had distinct origins, but their present union is so strong that the angel serves as the individual’s higher Self. Few people would regard their solar angels as “someone else.”

The more serious point of contention is the permanence of the hypostatic union. Christian doctrine asserts the continuation of the hypostatic union beyond the resurrection. Yet that assertion has little scriptural support and, as we have seen, only implied support from the ecumenical councils. Thomas Aquinas affirmed that the union was preserved at the crucifixion because it did not depend on a physical body.¹⁵⁰

Christian theologians insist that the hypostatic union was essential to explain the redemption—though that may not be true for all theories of atonement. Esotericists also affirm a “hypostatic union,” albeit with a slight redefinition of that term. They regard Christ as one who combined divine and human natures—before, during and after the period when he overshadowed Jesus. Leadbeater, who emphasized Christ’s identity with the Second Aspect of the Logos also described

Christ as “the head and front of humanity, the highest living man.”¹⁵¹ Whether or not Christians would accept such redefinition, they might be willing to concede that new revelation makes possible revised perspectives on the hypostatic union.

Yet another affirmation of the “hypostatic union” comes from esotericists’ recognition of the gradual awakening of the inner divinity of the monad within every member of the human family. Awakening of that divinity can be explained by the process of theosis or, equivalently, by progress on the initiatory path. And as Sergei Bulgakov suggested, the whole of humanity can participate in the hypostatic union through theosis. Few would doubt that the Master Jesus has already reached that stage.

The Palestinian and Ongoing Mission

The purpose of Christ’s earthly mission never became crystallized in dogma, and the range of theories promoted by segments of traditional Christianity is broad enough that esotericists can find areas of agreement within that range.

Esotericists could endorse the moral influence theory of atonement, but they would see great merit in Eastern Orthodox teaching, in which redemption is seen as a great act of healing and transformation, after which humanity’s divine destiny became attainable. The descent into human form by the Divine, according to the stronger forms of theosis, permanently expanded human nature and consciousness. Kenosis and theosis become complementary consequences of the hypostatic union.¹⁵² Leadbeater applauded the language of the Athanasian Creed that described Christ as “[e]qual to the Father, as touching his Godhead; and inferior to the Father as touching his Manhood. . . . One; not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh; but by assumption of the Manhood into God.”¹⁵³

Esotericists’ reluctance to discuss the resurrection and their silence on the post-resurrection appearance of Christ are impediments to convergence with Christian doctrine. They will have to address those issues and

offer constructive suggestions. Traditional Christians proclaim, with Paul: “[I]f Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.”¹⁵⁴

The notion that Jesus and the Christ parted near the end of the Palestinian mission to perform distinct planetary roles could be unsettling for traditional Christians on two counts. They would be concerned about its impact on worship of the one they consider their risen Lord, “sitting at the right hand of the Father.” And members of sacramental churches might well feel that any suggestion that Christ did not die on the cross would undermine the validity of the Eucharist.

To help alleviate the first concern esotericists need to emphasize that, according to trans-Himalayan teachings, the Master Jesus retains special responsibility for Christianity and the Christ has overall responsibility for world religions. They should also point out the divine stature of the Christ and also the deification of Jesus by virtue of his high initiation. The issue of the Eucharist involves many factors, including whether the real presence should refer to the Christ rather than Jesus, and whether the sacrificial intent of the Eucharist actually requires Christ’s death on the cross. These issues are too complex to be resolved here, but Christians should be reassured by the writings of Leadbeater and Geoffrey Hodson, who were priests in the Liberal Catholic Church as well as Theosophists. They affirmed not only the real presence in the Eucharist but also the concept of transubstantiation.¹⁵⁵

Traditional Christians revere Jesus Christ as head of the church.¹⁵⁶ Yet such a depiction may underestimate the importance of his work. To quote Bailey, the Christ of Christianity

has been for two thousand years a silent, passive Figure, hidden behind a multitude of words written by a multitude of men (commentators and preachers). The church has pointed us to the dying Christ upon the Cross and not to the living, working, active, present Christ Who has been with us in bodily Presence (according to His promise) for twenty centuries.¹⁵⁷

She added:

We need to awaken faith in the factual nature of divine revelation, and galvanize the church of Christ into a truer appreciation of Him and of His work. It is the living, acting, thinking Christ with whom we must deal, remembering always that the Gospel story is eternally true and only needs re-interpreting in the light of its place in the long succession of divine revelations. His Mission on earth two thousand years ago is a part of that continuity and is not an extraordinary story, having no relation to the past, emphasizing a period of only 33 years and presenting no clear hope for the future.¹⁵⁸

Like traditional Christians, esotericists look forward to Christ’s second coming, or “reappearance.” But the two sides are far apart in describing the form it will take and the circumstances in which it will happen. Esotericists reject suggestions that Jesus will reappear, except perhaps in the general externalization of the Hierarchy; it is the Christ who will reappear. They totally discount the apocalyptic scenarios, promoted by “end-times” fundamentalists.

Esotericists reject notions that the Christ will reappear to restore order to an unruly world. Rather, they envision humanity as capable and responsible for responding to the message of Christ’s earlier appearance and taking definite strides towards the implementation of universal love, brotherhood/sisterhood, sharing, and group consciousness. The Christ, esotericists affirm, will reappear only when humanity has put its house in order and can provide an environment in which he could carry out a meaningful mission.

We do not know when or where the Christ will reappear. Nor do we know what specific form the reappearance will take, though there are suggestions that his presence will be expressed in groups of people as well as in an individual body. Moreover, we are told that the Christ will be overshadowed by a still higher entity, the Avatar of Synthesis.¹⁵⁹ Perhaps we can see a parallel here with the de-

scent, foretold by Christ, of the Holy Spirit on the disciples at Pentecost.

Concluding Remarks

This article has examined the depictions of Jesus the Christ and his mission offered by traditional Christian doctrine and by modern esoteric teachings. Comparison reveals areas of fundamental disagreement but also greater consensus than might have been anticipated.

Not surprisingly, a major obstacle to mutual understanding is terminology. Theologians in the early church went to considerable lengths to craft language to express the doctrines being formulated. Their efforts were not entirely successful; differences between Greek and Latin terms were always problematic, and uncertainties remained even within the eastern and western churches. Precisely what the doctrinal formulations meant or implied was never quite clear, and their meaning has not been clarified by the passage of time. Sadly, ecclesiastical authorities locked themselves into notions of infallibility, limiting the opportunity for new insights. As a result the major Christian denominations are committed to dogmas based on a Greco-Roman world view at variance with modern scientific, philosophical, sociological, and psychological opinion.

Esoteric teachings are not homogeneous either. Differences are found between the teachings of Rudolf Steiner and Max Heindel, on the one hand, and trans-Himalayan teachings, on the other; some differences exist between the Theosophists and Alice Bailey. Nevertheless, all agree that Jesus and the Christ had distinct origins and separated at or near the time of the crucifixion. Steiner and Heindel regarded the Christ as a solar spirit or archangel. Trans-Himalayan teachers regarded him as a member of the human lifestream, whose divinity was expressed through high initiation. They also assert that he carried out his Palestinian mission through a mandate from the Planetary or Solar Logos.

Traditional Christians and esotericists can agree that divine and human natures were jointly expressed by Jesus Christ during his

redemptive mission. The meaning of “redemption” is of course debated, and Christians themselves hold widely different views on that issue. While esotericists—along with many modern Christians—regard penal theories of atonement as repugnant, they can find considerable merit in the Eastern Orthodox view that Christ’s mission was one of healing, transformation, and theosis. Some Orthodox theologians have suggested that Christ came to unlock humanity’s latent divinity. Esotericists would go farther to depict Christ’s mission as one of planetary initiation.

Christians and esotericists can agree that Jesus and the Christ—envisioned as united or distinct—continue to guide religion, with special emphasis on Christianity. Although the two sides would differ on detail, they could also agree that a major new intervention in human affairs lies ahead.

Hindering further convergence is the issue of whether divine revelation ended with scripture, capable only of subsequent interpretation and clarification, or whether new knowledge has been revealed as humanity became capable of assimilating and utilizing it. Esotericists take the latter viewpoint, insisting on the possibility of new revelation and new insights. The problem is determining how we can discern authentic revelation. Esotericists believe that modern esoteric teachings flowed from sources high in the Planetary Hierarchy. Yet they struggle, as do many others, to discriminate among competing claims and distinguish meaningful knowledge from dangerous misinformation and trivia.

This article does not claim to supply all the answers relating to Christology. Moreover, Christology is just one area separating traditional Christians from esotericists. But establishing a conversation in this area is essential if more comprehensive bridging endeavors are to succeed. While the challenges should not be underestimated, the benefits could be substantial; some two billion people identify themselves as Christian. The hope is that practicing Christians will feel more comfortable when they venture into esoteric studies, and that esotericists will feel more comforta-

ble expressing their understanding of reality in Christian language and images. The potential for success is particularly great at this time, as Christianity moves beyond its Pauline, Sixth Ray character and esotericism reassesses its own idealism.

The goal should not be to find a lowest common denominator to which each side could grudgingly subscribe. We need to build a larger, more inclusive truth. Synthesis of Christological understanding may not be attainable on the intellectual level, where both Christian doctrine and esoteric teachings currently reside, but it may be possible at the buddhic, or intuitional, level. The fact that esotericists find more in common with Eastern Orthodoxy than with western Christianity may reflect the emphasis placed on mystical theology in the Orthodox churches. Christianity's own esoteric tradition lies primarily in mysticism and mystical theology.

The history of western Christianity can point to examples of important internal synthesis, and perhaps we can find inspiration in the work of the 16th-century Anglican clergyman Richard Hooker. He steered his church onto the *via media*, or "middle road," between Roman Catholicism and continental Protestantism, building on the strengths of each while avoiding its respective weaknesses. "[I]n a time of bitter controversy," his admirers declared, Hooker achieved "not a compromise for the sake of peace, but . . . a comprehension for the sake of truth."¹⁶⁰

¹ A popular view is that Jesus was a social or political activist.

² Anna Kingsford served briefly as president of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society and later founded the Hermetic Society, a forerunner of the Golden Dawn. She did not subscribe to the *mahatmas'* teachings, so valued by the Theosophists in India, and died the year Helena Blavatsky published *The Secret Doctrine*.

³ Steiner served as head of the German section of the Theosophical Society, but he never absorbed much of the Society's teachings, and his

work more closely reflects Rosicrucian tradition.

⁴ Heindel was sometimes accused of plagiarizing Steiner's work, but he attributed his information to "Elder Brothers of the Rose Cross" whom he first encountered in 1908. Moreover, Heindel provided insights not found in Steiner's lectures and books

⁵ "Trans-Himalayan teachings" owe their origins to certain masters, or adepts, in Tibet and India. They were communicated to a western audience by Helena Blavatsky, other members of the Theosophical Society, Helena Roerich, and Alice Bailey.

⁶ The first edition of Besant's *Esoteric Christianity* was published in Adyar, India. Besant's discussion of the symbolism of the incarnation and the atonement owes much to Kingsford.

⁷ *Matthew* 16:14. All scriptural citations are from the King James Bible.

⁸ Since our objective is to capture mainstream Christian beliefs, challenges to the scriptural record are not considered herein.

⁹ For example, *Mark* 10:47; *Matthew* 15:22; *Luke* 19:47.

¹⁰ For example, *Matthew* 16:16.

¹¹ Self-reference is evident in *Matthew* 12:40 and *Luke* 18:31 but less clear in *Mark* 8:38 and *John* 1:51.

¹² For example, *Mark* 7:28; *Matthew* 8:2.

¹³ For example, *Mark* 3:11; *Matthew* 14:33. "Unclean spirits" are customarily interpreted as demons.

¹⁴ *1 Corinthians* 15:45.

¹⁵ *Hebrews* 4:14-5:10.

¹⁶ For example, *1 Thessalonians* 1:1-5; 5:23-28.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 143-145.

¹⁸ Gerald O'Collins, *Christology: A Biblical, Historical, and Systematic Study of Jesus*, 2/e (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2009), 142.

¹⁹ *Philippians* 2:6-11.

²⁰ *Romans* 1:4.

²¹ *Mark* 1:11.

²² *John* 1:1-14. Elsewhere (e.g., *Luke* 4:36; 10:39), "logos" refers to words of power uttered by Jesus.

²³ Christian historian Eusebius of Caesarea was so impressed with Philo that he declared him to be a church father!

²⁴ *John* 1:2.

²⁵ Athenagoras of Athens, *A Plea For the Christians* §X, trans. B. Pratten, Early Christian Writings.

- ²⁶ In a parallel metamorphosis, the grammatically feminine *Chokmah* took on masculine qualities in the Kabbalah.
- ²⁷ Ecumenical councils contrast with regional councils, or synods, attended by bishops in a particular region and whose resolutions were binding only in that region.
- ²⁸ William P. DuBose, *The Ecumenical Councils* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1897), 223-241.
- ²⁹ First Council of Nicaea, "Profession of Faith," §1. Citations from the ecumenical councils are all taken from Norman P. Tanner, ed. & trans. *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, Washington, DC: Georgetown Univ. Press, 1990.
<http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Councils/>, last accessed Nov. 9, 2011.
- ³⁰ First Council of Constantinople, "Exposition of the 150 Fathers."
- ³¹ Ibid., "Letter of the Bishops."
- ³² Council of Ephesus, "Twelve Anathemas."
- ³³ Ibid., "Formula of Union."
- ³⁴ Ibid., "Third Letter of Cyril to Nestorius."
- ³⁵ Council of Chalcedon, "Definition of the Faith."
- ³⁶ Second Council of Constantinople, "Anathemas Against the 'Three Chapters'," §2.
- ³⁷ Ibid., §9.
- ³⁸ Third Council of Constantinople, "Exposition of Faith."
- ³⁹ O'Collins, *Christology*, 177-180.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., 185-186.
- ⁴¹ Ibid., 183. Theologians cite the etymology of *prosōpon/persona* to suggest that a person of the Trinity is the mouthpiece through which a particular quality of the Godhead speaks.
- ⁴² After the primeval catastrophe the divine vessels were not repaired directly. Instead, five divine "personifications," or *partzufim* (singular *partzuf*) were created. In a second stage the *partzufim* were organized into the familiar ten sephiroth.
- ⁴³ *Philippians* 2:7.
- ⁴⁴ O'Collins, *Christology*, 173-174. Italicization in original.
- ⁴⁵ *The Anathematisms of the Emperor Justinian Against Origen*.
http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.xii.x.html#fnf_xii.x-p1.2, last accessed Nov. 9, 2011. The emperor's anathemas of Origen are often attributed to the Second Council of Constantinople, which he convened. But no record exists that they were ever put to a vote, and they do not appear in the council's proceedings. Notwithstanding, the anathemas are routinely cited to refute not only pre-existence of the soul but also reincarnation.
- ⁴⁶ *Luke* 17:19.
- ⁴⁷ Some scholars have argued that Paul either did not know of, or ignored, the real message of Christ. He referred surprisingly little to Christ's ministry prior to the crucifixion. But it should be noted that the gospels were written after Paul's death.
- ⁴⁸ *1 Corinthians* 15:3, 22. See also *1 Peter* 2:21-24.
- ⁴⁹ Some said the ransom was paid to God, others to Satan.
- ⁵⁰ An influential book exploring the notion of Christ's victory over death was Gustav Aulén's *Christus Victor* (London: SPCK, 1931).
- ⁵¹ Anselm of Canterbury, *Cur Deus Homo* ("Why God [Became] Man"), c.1097 CE.
- ⁵² Thomas Aquinas, *Shorter Summa*, trans. C. Vollert (Manchester, NH: Sophia Institute Press) §231, 297.
- ⁵³ Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, 219-220, 223.
- ⁵⁴ "Salvation" and "salve" come from *sōtēria* via the late Latin *salvationem*.
- ⁵⁵ Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, trans. anon., (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1944/1976), 153.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid., 155.
- ⁵⁷ *2 Peter* 1:4.
- ⁵⁸ J. A. McGuckin, "The Strategic Adaptation of Deification," *Partakers of the Divine Nature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 105-107.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid., 107.
- ⁶⁰ *John* 1:14.
- ⁶¹ Sergei Bulgakov, *The Lamb of God*, 1933, trans. B. Jakim (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publ. Co., 2008), 187.
- ⁶² Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, ch. 11, §123. Online:
http://www.ccel.org/s/schaff/history/2_ch11.htm, last accessed Nov. 9, 2011.
- ⁶³ Ibid.
- ⁶⁴ Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Commentary on the Nicene Creed*. trans. A. Mingana.
http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/theodore_of_mopsuestia_nicene_02_text.htm, last accessed Nov. 9, 2011.
- ⁶⁵ Nestorianism is relevant to our theme only because it contributed to the debate over the hypostatic union. Neither it nor monophysitism

- can be considered an esoteric branch of Christianity.
- ⁶⁶ Jakob Böhme, *Four Tables of Divine Revelation*. Reproduced in Robin Waterfield, ed., *Jacob Boehme* (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2001), 214-239.
- ⁶⁷ Phineas P. Quimby, essay, "The Body of Jesus and the Body of Christ," Quimby Resource Center, 1863.
- ⁶⁸ Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation: Human and Solar* (New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1922), 56.
- ⁶⁹ Annie W. Besant, *Esoteric Christianity*, reprint (Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1914/2006), 69.
- ⁷⁰ Max Heindel, *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, 1910, part III, ch. xv.
<http://www.rosicrucian.com/rcc/rcceng00.htm>, last accessed Nov. 9, 2011.
- ⁷¹ Steiner, lecture, Berlin, Nov. 1913.
- ⁷² Rudolf Steiner, lecture, Berlin, Nov. 18, 1913, *The Fifth Gospel*, trans. A. R. Meuss, 3/e (Forest Row, U.K.: R. Steiner Press, 1995), 222.
- ⁷³ *Philippians* 2:7.
- ⁷⁴ Sandra Hodson, ed., *Illuminations of the Mystery Tradition* (Manila, Philippines: Theosophical Publ. House, 1992), 258.
- ⁷⁵ Bailey, *Initiation: Human and Solar*, 56-57. Jesus and Apollonius were close contemporaries; the latter's birth is placed as early as 15 CE, whereas Jesus is believed to have died in 30 CE. So their incarnations may have overlapped. Overlapping incarnations may not be possible for ordinary people, but Tibetan Buddhism speaks of bodhisattvas and even high lamas incarnating simultaneously in two or more bodies.
- ⁷⁶ Bailey, *Initiation: Human and Solar*, 56.
- ⁷⁷ Charles W. Leadbeater, *The Masters and the Path* (Adyar, India: Theosophical Publ. House, 1925/1953), 42.
- ⁷⁸ Besant, *Esoteric Christianity*, 74.
- ⁷⁹ Bailey, *Initiation: Human and Solar*, 57.
- ⁸⁰ Ibid.
- ⁸¹ Alice A. Bailey, *The Destiny of the Nations* (New York: Lucis, 1949), 59.
- ⁸² Ibid.
- ⁸³ Anna B. Kingsford, lecture, London, July 1881, *Clothed with the Sun*, 2/e (London: Watkins, 1889), 103.
- ⁸⁴ Besant, *Esoteric Christianity*, 91ff.
- ⁸⁵ Steiner did not acknowledge the existence of a hierarchy of masters; consequently he assigned higher beings to the angelic hierarchy. Rosicrucians recognize masters like Christian Rosenkreutz but followed Steiner's lead in their depiction of Christ.
- ⁸⁶ Heindel, *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, part III, ch. xv. Trans-Himalayan teachings do not recognize a "Sun period." They identify the previous phases of the planet's evolution as an unnamed Chain 1, the Venus Chain, and the Moon Chain.
- ⁸⁷ Bailey, *Initiation: Human and Solar*, 43. See also Charles W. Leadbeater, *Christian Gnosis* (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publ. House, c.1923/2011), 112. This work was first published in 1983, long after Leadbeater's death.
- ⁸⁸ Besant & Leadbeater, *Man: Whence, How and Wither*, 77.
- ⁸⁹ Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology* II, 210.
- ⁹⁰ Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy* (New York: Lucis, 1957), 557. Elsewhere Bailey seems less sure that the Christ incarnated as Krishna. See *The Reappearance of the Christ* (New York: Lucis, 1948), 107; *The Rays and the Initiations* (New York: Lucis, 1960), 254.
- ⁹¹ See for example Bailey, *Initiation: Human and Solar*, 43.
- ⁹² Annie W. Besant & Charles W. Leadbeater, *Man: Whence, How and Wither* (Adyar, India: Theosophical Publ. House, 1913/1971), 78. See also Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II* (New York: Lucis, 1955), 596. According to early Theosophist Alfred P. Sinnett, Maitreya will become the Buddha for the sixth root race. See his *Esoteric Buddhism* (London: Theosophical Publ. House, 1883/1972), 130.
- ⁹³ See for example Leadbeater, *Christian Gnosis*, 106-107.
- ⁹⁴ Helena P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine I* (Theosophical Univ. Press, 1888), 246.
- ⁹⁵ John A. T. Robinson, *Honest to God* (London: John Knox, 1963). Robinson was the Anglican bishop of Woolwich, England.
- ⁹⁶ Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 397.
- ⁹⁷ Bailey, *Initiation: Human and Solar*, 43.
- ⁹⁸ Ibid., 44.
- ⁹⁹ John F. Nash, "Sanat Kumara," *The Beacon*, March/April 2002, 13-20. John F. Nash, *The Soul and Its Destiny* (Bloomington, IN: Authorhouse), 83-84.
- ¹⁰⁰ Bailey, *The Destiny of the Nations*, 38.
- ¹⁰¹ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology* II (New York: Lucis, 1942), 60.
- ¹⁰² Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II*, 468.
- ¹⁰³ Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 347.

- ¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 605-606.
- ¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 299.
- ¹⁰⁶ Heindel, *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, part III, ch. xv.
- ¹⁰⁷ Bailey, *The Destiny of the Nations*, 39. Parenthesis in original.
- ¹⁰⁸ Luke 1:35; Matthew 17:5.
- ¹⁰⁹ Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 307.
- ¹¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹¹ Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 730.
- ¹¹² Leadbeater, *Christian Gnosis*, 143-147. Leadbeater explained Jesus' death and resurrection in terms of Egyptian initiation rites. He also declared that Jesus was stoned to death, not crucified. Since Leadbeater left the work unpublished, we do not know whether those statements represented his considered opinion.
- ¹¹³ John 20:20-29.
- ¹¹⁴ I Corinthians 15:44.
- ¹¹⁵ Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 697. See also Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (New York: Lucis, 1925), 772.
- ¹¹⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* (New York: Lucis, 1960), 730.
- ¹¹⁷ Ibid., 83-84.
- ¹¹⁸ Anna Kingsford & Edward Maitland, *The Perfect Way, or the Finding of Christ* (London: Field & Tuer, 3/e, 1890), 96-97.
- ¹¹⁹ Ibid., 113.
- ¹²⁰ Ibid., 106.
- ¹²¹ Charles W. Leadbeater, *The Science of the Sacraments* (Adyar, India: Theosophical Publ. House, 1920), especially 198-199.
- ¹²² Steiner, lecture, Berlin, Nov. 1913.
- ¹²³ Kingsford & Maitland, *The Perfect Way*, 176.
- ¹²⁴ Dion Fortune, *Applied Magic* (Wellingborough, U.K.: Aquarian Press, 1962), 20-21.
- ¹²⁵ Besant, *Esoteric Christianity*, 89.
- ¹²⁶ Bailey, *Initiation: Human and Solar*, 28-29.
- ¹²⁷ Besant, *Esoteric Christianity*, 109-110. Echoing one of Kingsford's themes, Besant related the "veil of matter" to the Cosmic Mary, the World Mother.
- ¹²⁸ Kingsford & Maitland, *The Perfect Way*, 188.
- ¹²⁹ Alice A. Bailey, *Education in the New Age* (New York: Lucis, 1954), 53.
- ¹³⁰ Bailey, *The Destiny of the Nations*, 140-141.
- ¹³¹ Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 511-512, 590.
- ¹³² Bailey, *Initiation: Human and Solar*, 46-47. The Mahachohan heads up the great Third Ray ashram, under which are major ashrams expressing the fourth-through-seventh rays.
- ¹³³ Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 400-401. Parenthesis in original.
- ¹³⁴ Bailey, *Initiation: Human and Solar*, 471.
- ¹³⁵ Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II*, 405, 426. Parenthesis in original.
- ¹³⁶ Ibid.
- ¹³⁷ Bailey, *The Reappearance of the Christ*, 13-14.
- ¹³⁸ Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 161-162.
- ¹³⁹ Bailey, *The Reappearance of the Christ*, 122.
- ¹⁴⁰ Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 402ff.
- ¹⁴¹ Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic*, 339-340.
- ¹⁴² Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 401.
- ¹⁴³ Mark 5:7; Matthew 11:25.
- ¹⁴⁴ Scientists even speak of an infinity of other universes, with which we shall never come into contact.
- ¹⁴⁵ Terminology is once again problematic. However, "Second Aspect" does not imply Sabellianism or modalism; nor does "Second Logos" imply tritheism.
- ¹⁴⁶ Kingsford & Maitland, *The Perfect Way*, 297.
- ¹⁴⁷ Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 22.
- ¹⁴⁸ Leadbeater, *Christian Gnosis*, 117.
- ¹⁴⁹ "Consciousness," normally considered to be a soul attribute, may not be the appropriate term to describe monadic awareness. See for example Nash, *The Soul and Its Destiny*, 266-270.
- ¹⁵⁰ See the discussion in Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas: the Person and His Work*, rev. ed. (Washington, DC: Catholic Univ. of America, 2005), vol. 1, 190.
- ¹⁵¹ Leadbeater, *Christian Gnosis*, 116.
- ¹⁵² See the extensive discussion in Bulgakov, *The Lamb of God*, 213-47.
- ¹⁵³ Leadbeater, *Christian Gnosis*, 116-117.
- ¹⁵⁴ I Corinthians 15:14.
- ¹⁵⁵ Leadbeater, *The Science of the Sacraments*, 23, 119, 179. Also Sandra Hodson, ed., *Light of the Sanctuary* (Manila, Philippines: Theosophical Publishers, 1988), 104.
- ¹⁵⁶ Roman Catholics view the pope as Christ's "vicar on Earth" and temporal head of the church.
- ¹⁵⁷ Bailey, *The Reappearance of the Christ*, 64.
- ¹⁵⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁵⁹ Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 303.
- ¹⁶⁰ Collect for Nov. 3, feast of Richard Hooker, *Book of Common Prayer*. The outcome of Hooker's efforts was the emergence of Anglicanism as a distinct branch of sacramental

Christianity. For a discussion of the *via media* and related issues see John F. Nash, *The Sacramental Church* (Eugene OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), especially 47-48, 120.

The Master Rakoczi: An Inquiry Concerning His Identity

Iván Kovács

He is a Hungarian, and has a home in the Carpathian Mountains, and was at one time a well-known figure at the Hungarian Court. Reference to Him can be found in old historical books, and He was particularly before the public eye when he was the Comte de St. Germain, and earlier still when he was both Roger Bacon and later, Francis Bacon.¹

Alice A. Bailey: *Initiation, Human and Solar*

Abstract

This article is an attempt to investigate the claim made by Alice A Bailey in *Initiation, Human and Solar* that the Master Rakoczi is an incarnation of Roger Bacon, Francis Bacon, Francis Rakoczi II and the Comte de St. Germain. This is done by means of a closer examination of the essence of the lives of Roger Bacon, Francis Bacon, Francis Rakoczi II, the Comte de St. Germain, and lastly Master Rakoczi, especially as he is perceived in esoteric circles. The intention is to find an underlying link or pattern between these lives, no matter how flimsy or speculative, and then conclude, even if only hypothetically, with enough evidence that suggests a plausible case that one is, indeed, dealing with an individual progression of lives through several incarnations.

Introduction

To try and trace the history of an individual through several incarnations is, to say the least, a problematic task. Even the strongest indicators to be deduced from biographies and historical records in trying to make one's point can only be hypothetical. All else must remain hidden behind the veils of Akasha, which can only to be penetrated by those whose intuitional faculties are functioning in equal degree to a fully awakened mind. Yet, the introductory quotation by Alice A. Bailey regarding Master Rakoczi gave rise to an idea, which gradually developed into a challenge, and this challenge is now being taken up in the body of this article.

The four short biographies that follow are those of Roger Bacon, Francis Bacon, Francis Rakoczi II, and the Comte de St. Germain, followed by a description of Master Rakoczi in the context in which he is presented by Alice Bailey as an important member of the Spiritual Hierarchy. To find a conclusive thread connecting these incarnations is not possible, but working with the assumption that one may well exist, there is enough putative information that the four biographies may well be the history of a Master in the making.

One can trace certain underlying connections regarding these four incarnations that will provide ample material for the enquiring and contemplative mind. Whereas Roger Bacon can be considered as an advocate for gaining knowledge by means of experimentation, Francis Bacon is indubitably someone who showed the way in which such an idea or theory can be achieved, and developed a methodology on how this was to be realized in actual practice.

Another underlying connection can be made between the highly probable, but officially

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unacknowledged parentage of Francis Bacon as the son of Elizabeth I, and thus potentially legitimate heir to the throne, and the Francis Rakoczi II incarnation. In the latter incarnation his royalty as Prince of Transylvania and Ruling Prince of the Confederated Estates of the Kingdom of Hungary, at least as far as Hungary and Transylvania are concerned, are fully endorsed and acknowledged. As Francis Bacon he was destined to anonymity as far as his royal lineage is concerned. As Francis Rakoczi II, he consciously and willingly assumed his role as Hungary's and Transylvania's chosen ruler.

Finally, the Comte de St. Germain, also fondly known as "Europas Wundermann", often preferred to travel incognito and resorted to various assumed names, including "Graf (Count) Tzarogy", which is but a thin disguise regarding his alleged connection to the Rakoczis.

The above examples are but the most obvious that come to mind. A closer look at these four lives intends to reveal each one as truly remarkable in its own right, and in their totality hopefully show up their complementarity and interconnectedness.

Roger Bacon

Since Roger Bacon is the earliest mentioned incarnation that leads up to the adeptship of Master Rakoczi, its treatment is consequently of lesser importance and thus more concise than the others. Nevertheless this life is an important link in an unfolding chain of events which finally leads an individual out of the human and into the Spiritual Kingdom in which the Masters have their rightful place.

Roger Bacon (c. 1220 – 1292), also known as Doctor Mirabilis ("Wonderful Teacher"), was born in Ilchester, Somerset, into a wealthy family. He first studied and then became a master at Oxford, where he lectured on Aristotle. Roughly between 1237 and 1245 he also started lecturing at the University of Paris, which at the time was considered the center of intellectual life in Europe.²

It was around 1256 that he became a friar in the Franciscan Order, after which he no longer held a teaching post. A Franciscan statute forbade friars from publishing books without special

approval, a restriction which Bacon circumvented through his acquaintance with Cardinal Guy le Gros de Foulques, who in 1265 became Pope Clement IV. It was with the approval of the new Pope that Bacon wrote about the place of philosophy within theology, resulting in his *Opus Majus* ("Great Work"), in which he presented his views on how the philosophy of Aristotle and the new science could be included into a new Theology. *Opus Majus* was shortly supplemented by *Opus Minus* ("Lesser Work"), and the *Opus Tertium* ("Third Work"). The *Opus Majus* is an 840-page treatise that ranges over all aspects of natural science, from grammar and logic to mathematics, physics, and philosophy. *Opus Minus* is a summary of the longer work, and *Opus Tertium* is an introduction of the other two.³

Unfortunately after the death of Clement IV, Bacon's hopes of gaining for the sciences their rightful place in the curriculum of university studies were extinguished, but this did not stop him from starting on yet another encyclopedia, the *Communium Naturalium* (General Principles of Natural Philosophy) and the *Communium Mathematicarum* (General Principles of Mathematical Science), which were written circa 1268. In 1272 yet another work of his appeared, the *Compendium Philosophiae* (Compendium of Philosophy), while his last work, dated 1292, the year of his death, was incomplete.⁴

Although Bacon was an exponent of experimentation, his experiments were restricted to some alchemical work and studies with mirrors and lenses. His writings anticipate later inventions such as microscopes, telescopes, spectacles, flying machines, hydraulics and steamships, but his most notable "experiments" were merely described and never actually carried out.⁵

Bacon stated that "argument is conclusive, but does not remove doubt, so that the mind may rest in the sure knowledge of the truth, unless it finds it by the method of experiment" and then reinforced this statement at another time with little variation by saying that "reason draws a conclusion, but does not make the conclusion certain, unless the mind discovers it by the path of experience." He defined experimental science as "the queen of sciences and the goal of all speculation."⁶

Writers of earlier times have elevated Bacon to the level of a wise and subtle possessor of forbidden knowledge, similar to Doctor Faustus, who had been so dramatically portrayed by Christopher Marlow in his fascinating and highly entertaining play. An interesting, although not vital bit of information is the story about Bacon in which he was alleged to have created a brazen talking head which could answer any question. This legendary story has a central role in Robert Greene's play "Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay" which was written in about 1589.⁷

Francis Bacon

As one considers the life of Francis Bacon, Viscount Saint Alban, (January 22, 1561 – April 9, 1626), controversy already presents itself regarding his birth. A considerable number of people believe that his true parentage is traceable to Queen Elizabeth I and Robert Dudley, 1st Earl of Leicester, and that Sir Nicholas Bacon and Lady Anne Cooke were his appointed foster parents. There are various sources dealing with this controversial issue, but one of the most convincing studies is to be found in Amelie Deventer von Kunow's book, *Francis Bacon, Last of the Tudors*. This study not only deals with Francis Bacon's alleged parentage, but also deals extensively with the Bacon-Shakespeare controversy, positing that the true author of what we know as the Shakespeare plays was, in fact, Francis Bacon himself.⁸

Already in the Foreword to *Francis Bacon, Last of the Tudors*, Willard Parker, the translator of the book and erstwhile President of the Bacon Society of America, writes that: "The fact of Francis Bacon's parentage – the legitimate son of Queen Elizabeth and therefore the legal heir to the throne – is indubitable, supported as it is, not only by a mass of circumstantial evidence, but by such direct testimony as Leicester's letter to Philip of Spain, which Madame Deventer discovered among the Spanish State Archives, begging Philip to use his influence with Elizabeth to secure his public acknowledgment as Prince Consort."⁹

In the first chapter of *Francis Bacon*, entitled *Who was Francis Bacon*, Von Kunow refers to *Leicester's Commonwealth*, and the *Dictionary of National Biography*, and draws attention to

the fact that Queen Elizabeth was secretly married to Robert Dudley on January 21, 1561 in the house of Lord Pembroke, before a number of witnesses, and that on the following day the birth of Francis, called Bacon, was registered "in London." She further states that many years later the words "in York House" was added to the register, but that Francis was, however, not entered in the family genealogy of Nicolas Bacon. It was only the after note "Born in York House" which created the impression that Francis had been born at the official residence of the Lord Keeper (i.e. Nicolas Bacon).¹⁰

On the website, *Bacon's Royal Parentage*, it is further stated that Lady Anne Bacon was to have written in a letter to Anthony Bacon on April 18, 1593 that "... it is not my meaning to treat him (Francis) as a *ward*: such a word is far from my motherly feeling for him. I mean to do him good."¹¹ Furthermore, when Nicholas Bacon died in 1579, he left Francis, his second son, no money in his will, assuming that Queen Elizabeth would provide for him instead. It has also been observed that Francis Bacon bore no resemblance to Sir Nicholas Bacon, but that he did look like the Earl of Leicester, as can be seen from the miniatures of Nicholas Hilliard, a goldsmith and limner, and best known for his portrait miniatures.¹²

One wonders about all the secrecy regarding the Queen's offspring which, as history has shown, had never been publicly acknowledged. The reason given for this is that when the Queen addressed her first Parliament she had said "she desired to appear in the Annals of History as the Virgin Queen, and therefore wished no Tudor as successor to the Throne."¹³

Regarding the Bacon-Shakespeare controversy, there is no concrete proof that the person named William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon had written any of the so-called Shakespeare plays. As far as his intellectual knowledge and interests are concerned, all we have are assumptions that have been arrived at from the content of the plays themselves. This strongly suggests that in his own time he was recognized as no more than an actor without any poetic talent. Also, when one considers his five existing signatures, each of them is in a different and obviously unskilled handwriting with the side note:

“‘bloted’ by William Shakspeare.”¹⁴ “Bloted” signified the same then as it does today, namely the mark in the form of a cross made by an illiterate, which stands in the stead of a signature. In fact, in Shakespeare’s case, this is nothing more than a heavy point with a diagonal stroke. Thus, one can conclude that he was an illiterate who had to make his “mark” instead of a proper signature. Everything else that has been said about him consists of suppositions and conjectures.¹⁵

In support of the view which proposes Francis Bacon as the true author of the Shakespeare plays, the American sage and occultist, Manly P. Hall, shares his enthusiasm in equal measure to Amelie Deventer von Kunow’s, and also expresses his undisguised admiration for Francis Bacon’s genius. In his book *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*, he devotes an entire chapter to this issue, proposing that the Bacon-Shakespeare controversy “involves the most profound aspects of science, religion, and ethics; he who solves its mystery may yet find therein the key to the supposedly lost wisdom of antiquity.”¹⁶ He regards Sir Francis Bacon as unquestionably possessing the range of general and philosophical knowledge necessary to write the Shakespearian plays and sonnets, and states that it is usually conceded that he was a composer, lawyer, and linguist. Hall also states that Francis Bacon’s chaplain, Doctor William Rawley, and Ben Johnson both attest to his philosophic and poetic accomplishments. The former he quotes as having paid Bacon the following remarkable tribute: “I have been enduced (sic) to think that if there were a beame (sic) of knowledge derived from God upon any man in these modern times, it was upon him. For though he was a great reader of books; yet he had not his knowledge from books but from some grounds and notions from within himself.”¹⁷ Hall furthermore writes that the extensive library which was at Sir Francis Bacon’s disposal contained all the necessary literature which he needed for his quotations that were to appear in the Shakespeare plays. Hall suggests that Bacon made use of plots in earlier writings that had not yet been translated into English at the time, but which he had been able to read in their originals because of his extensive scholastic achievements. This is something that William Shakespeare would most likely not have had the ability to achieve.¹⁸

Manly P. Hall also observes that the general tendency of the Shakespeare plays coincides with Bacon’s viewpoints, in particular politically, and that Bacon’s enemies are often caricatured accordingly. He further claims that Bacon’s personal opinions are reflected in the religious, philosophic, and educational undercurrents of the plays. Hall points out that there are obvious similarities of style and terminology between Bacon’s writings and the Shakespeare plays and, in particular, certain historical and philosophical inaccuracies, such as identical misquotations from Aristotle, which are to be found both in Bacon’s writings as well as the plays.¹⁹ Yet, in trying to maintain an unbiased view, it needs to be admitted that an equal number of scholars do not agree that William Shakespeare is a pseudonym for Francis Bacon, but a poet and playwright in his own right.

When all the various talents that are attributed to Francis Bacon, whether scientific, philosophical, juristic, political, or poetic are taken into consideration, it becomes apparent that he was one of the greatest geniuses of his time, and the most appropriate example of a Renaissance man. He had served variously as Attorney General and Lord Chancellor of England, and has been called the father of empiricism. Introducing the inductive method for scientific inquiry, also called the Baconian method, he revolutionized scientific thinking to such an extent that it paved the way for the Age of Enlightenment, and directly influenced the methodology of people like Isaac Newton who, in turn, developed the law of universal gravitation and the laws of motion.

Bacon expounds this new standard for scientific thinking in his *Novum Organum*, or “new instrument”, and as far as his scientific and philosophical writings are concerned, it is his magnum opus. Writing about Bacon’s thought and writing, Anthony M. Quinton has the following to say about his new method:

The core of Bacon’s philosophy of science is the account of inductive reasoning given in Book II of *Novum Organum*. The defect of all previous systems of beliefs about nature, he argued, lay in the inadequate treatment of the general propositions from which deductions were made. Either they were the result of precipitate generalization from one or two

cases, or they were uncritically assumed to be self-evident on the basis of their familiarity and general acceptance.²⁰

More explicitly, Quinton explains the Baconian method as follows: “In order to avoid hasty generalization Bacon urges a technique of ‘gradual ascent’, that is, the patient accumulation of well-founded generalizations of steadily increasing degrees of generality. This method would have the beneficial effect of loosening the hold on men’s minds of ill-constructed everyday concepts that obliterate important differences and fail to register important similarities. The crucial point, Bacon realized, is that induction must work by elimination not, as it does in common life and the defective scientific tradition, by simple enumeration.”²¹

Another important statement about Bacon and his work is made by Loren Eisely in his book *The Man Who Saw Through Time*²² in which he writes: “Bacon was the first great statesman of science; he saw its potentiality in the schools; he saw the necessity of multiplying researchers,

establishing the continuity of the scientific tradition, and promoting government-supported research for those studies which lay beyond private means and which could not be accomplished ‘in the hourglass of one man’s life.’”

Bacon’s own words leave no doubt about his views and intentions when he says: “The universe should not be narrowed down until it fits our vision, but our vision should be expanded until it takes in the universe.”²³ “Science” he writes “is not a belief to be held but a work to be done”²⁴ and “the foundation of learning is to discover, not to suppose or imagine.”²⁵

Francis Bacon died on April 9, 1626 of pneumonia at the age of 65 while at Arundel mansion in Highgate outside London. At his funeral, over thirty great minds collected together their eulogies of him, which was then later published in Latin in a volume entitled *Manes Verulamiani*. His peers referred to him as “a supreme poet” and “a concealed poet”, and also linked him with the theatre, which is but another allusion pointing to the Bacon-Shakespeare controversy.²⁶

Francis Rackoczi II



(Portrait of Francis Rakoczi II by Iván Kovács, 2011; after Adam Manyoki’s original of 1724.)

Francis Rakoczi II, Prince of Transylvania and Ruling Prince of Hungary (March 27, 1676 – 8 April 1735) was born fifty years after the death of Francis Bacon, and in the same astrological sign, Aries, in which Francis Bacon had died. If, indeed, we are dealing with the rebirth of Francis Bacon in the person of Francis Rakoczi II, the astrological data favoring such a claim would not contradict this. Although we have no direct proof that Rakoczi gained adeptship as a Fifth Initiate in this incarnation, Aries is primarily a sign which is the agent of the first Ray of Will or Power, and as such the provider of ideal conditions for an incarnation in which a candidate is about to gain adeptship as a Fifth Initiate or Master. In his capacity as an Imperial Prince, a military leader, and as a member of the Order of the Golden Fleece (which is an order of chivalry, and one of the most prestigious orders in Europe that was founded by Duke Philip II of Burgundy in 1430), Rakoczi can be said to have conformed to the four keynotes of Aries, which are listed in Alice A. Bailey's *Esoteric Astrology* as follows: "express the will to be and do - unfold the power to manifest - enter into battle for the Lord - and arrive at unity through effort."²⁷

When a present-day Hungarian mentions the name Rakoczi, it is self-evident that he is referring to Francis Rakoczi II, because if any other Rakoczi were intended, he or she would specify with a Christian name, or a reigning serial number. After more than two-and-a-half centuries since his death, Rakoczi is still regarded with just as much awe and admiration as when he addressed and inspired his troops before going into battle against Austria to try and throw off the Hapsburg yoke.

His popularity as a national hero and freedom fighter is imbedded in the Hungarian consciousness to such an extent that countless statues have

been erected in his honor; and streets, city squares, schools and villages named after him. In the portrait painted of him by Ádám Mátyóki, Rakoczi looks every bit as imposing as his Indian and princely counterpart, Master Morya,

whose likeness has so artfully been captured by the German artist, Hermann Schmiechen. Rakoczi's portrait can also be seen on the current 500-forint Hungarian banknote. The well-known patriotic tune known as the Rakoczy March, which dates back to the 18 – 19th century, was orchestrated by Hector Berlioz, and was also used by Franz Liszt as the basis for his Hungarian Rhapsody No.15.²⁸

Regarding his parentage and family background, Rakoczi is descended from a line of ruling

princes going back several generations. His father, Francis Rakoczi I, was a leading conspirator who came up against Hapsburg rule, and was married to Ilona Zrinyi, daughter of Peter Zrinyi, a co-conspirator and freedom fighter. Ilona Zrinyi was also the niece of Miklós Zrinyi, who is remembered as a general, politician and the most notable Hungarian poet of the 17th century. Francis Rakoczi II had a brother, George, who died before Francis was born, and a sister, Julianna, who was four years older than Francis. Francis's father died when he was only four months old.²⁹

Having been left fatherless, Rakoczi had various guardians before coming of age, and when he came under the guardianship of Lipót Kollonich, Bishop of Győr, he was sent off to Prague to be educated by the Jesuits. Rakoczi would always remember this period of his life as being cold, unfriendly, and devoid of love.³⁰

While under the guardianship of Leopold I, Holy Roman Emperor, and member of the Hapsburg family, the young Rakoczi lived in Vienna. When he turned 17, he was allowed to own

property. A year later he married the 15-year-old Princess Amelia, daughter of the Landgrave of Hesse-Wanfried, and a descendant of St. Elizabeth of Hungary. They moved to the Rakoczi castle at Sárospatak, where Rakoczi finally took over the management of his estates.³¹

A momentous rebellion against Hapsburg rule broke out in 1703 in the Hungarian region called Tiszahat, and the representatives of the people convinced Rakoczi to stand at their helm. This led to a nationwide war of liberation, where the country's commoners were joined by a significant number of the nobility. The peasant warriors, or Kuruc forces, as they were known, exploited the War of the Spanish Succession, in which the Hapsburgs had a major interest, and thus were forced to withdraw Austrian troops from Hungary, resulting in the liberation of the greater part of Hungary and Transylvania.³²

In 1704, the Transylvanian Diet elected Rakoczi as their Ruling Prince, and in 1706, Rakoczi was elected as the Ruling Prince of the Confederated Estates of the Kingdom of Hungary. This was the time when the previously unknown rebels, Sandor Forgach, Lorinc Pekry, Laszlo Ocskay, and Adam Vay came to the foreground. Another significant representative of the rebellion, and Rakoczi's best friend and right-hand man, was Count Miklos Bercsenyi. The rebellion was successful, and the French king, Louis XIV, gave his support in equal measure militarily, technically and financially. The Buda and Pest regions, the border regions, and Transylvanian towns, however, remained conquered.³³

The Austrian Emperor's forces gradually consolidated, and the rebellion's economic basis started to decline. The time had come for the first serious military defeats, and the rebellion, resulting in the national assembly of Onod in 1707, became radicalized. The crushing of the rebellion came to pass on August 3, 1708, when the Kuruc forces suffered a defeat at Trencseny. After that the Kuruc forces were in decline. Rakoczi tried to unite his troops, still believing in a final victory, but the Emperor's troops gradually conquered historic Hungary's various regions, such as Transdanubia, the central regions of Hungary, and what is today known as the Western and Central Slovakian region. From now on the Kuruc forces suffered successive

defeats. In the years following 1709 the entire Central Europe suffered from an outbreak of the bubonic plague, which slowed down the Austrian conquest of Hungary, and consequently the suppression of the rebellion.³⁴

Rakoczi's war of independence was restricted more and more to the eastern parts of the country, and it became obvious that final defeat was imminent. Louis XIV withdrew his support, and any attempts to engage the help of foreign powers failed. In the spring of 1711 the rebellion petered out, and one of the Kuruc leaders, Count Sandor Karolyi, was already engaged in peace talks with the Emperor. On May 1, 1711, the remaining Kuruc forces surrendered at Szatmarnemeti, which brought the Rakoczi rebellion to its end. The peace conditions extended to the Kuruc by the Emperor were generous.³⁵

Prince Rakoczi, Count Bercsenyi and several of their companions, however, did not accept the Emperor's offered clemency, and even before the complete suppression of the rebellion, went into exile. First they went to neighboring Poland, where they remained until 1712, hoping that the military position might change for the better. Later they visited France, spending some time at the French court in Versailles. Rakoczi also resided in the monastery of Gros Bois, and during his stay, adopted the lifestyle of the resident monks. After the death of Louis XIV, which occurred on September 1, 1715, Rakoczi had lost his significance in the political playing field, and at the invitation of the Sultan of Turkey, he and his entourage left France in 1717, and relocated in Rodosto, a Turkish town situated on the northern coast of the Sea of Marmara. It was there where Rakoczi and his faithful companions in exile found their new home, and where Rakoczi lived out the remainder of his years. He died on April 8, 1735, and was laid to rest in the Christian quarter of Constantinople, in the Church of St. Benedict, next to his mother's tomb.³⁶

Even such a short biography as the present one would be deficient unless some mention was made of Rakoczi as a writer. Born a Roman Catholic and educated by the Jesuits, Rakoczi nevertheless changed his religious ideology to that of a Jansenist, i.e., a Catholic whose beliefs had much in common with Calvinist teachings,

which was also the ideology of the two great French progressives, Blaise Pascal, a philosopher, and Jean Racine, a dramatist. The highly cultured Rakoczi was fluent in Hungarian, Latin, German and French, and was as familiar with antique literature as he was with French classicism. Neither was he lacking in knowledge of the foremost Hungarian writers of the previous generation, which included Zrinyi, Báthori and Lórántffy. Had he not been forced to take command as the head of his nation, he might well have become one of the greatest leading literary figures of Hungary.³⁷

As a writer, he is known for two major works, the first entitled *Prince Rakoczi II's Memoirs of the Hungarian War, from 1703 until its End*, which was originally written in French, and his *Confessiones* or *Confessions*, an autobiographical narrative which took its example from St. Augustine's *Confessions*, and was originally written in Latin. These works, in their Hungarian translations, are now considered as classics in Hungary. Both works were written when Rakoczi was already in exile. His less well-known works consist of his extensive correspondence, meditations, and a political study on power. Among his contemporaries he was undoubtedly the greatest and most important Hungarian writer.³⁸

The Comte de St. Germain

The most comprehensive attempt at a biography concerning the Comte de St. Germain has been made by Isabel Cooper-Oakley (1853 – 1914), a prominent Theosophist and author. In her book *The Comte de St. Germain: The Secret of Kings*, she makes extensive use of references concerning the Comte de St. Germain as they have been recorded by a wide variety of people who knew him. The most eminent among these people were connected to the French court and various European principalities. In rarer cases reference is also made to St. Germain from a Rosicrucian and Freemasonic context.³⁹

There have been various suggestions concerning the Comte de St. Germain's parentage. Among the people claimed to be his parents are the widow of Charles II, King of Spain, a Madrid banker; a Portuguese Jew; an Alsatian Jew; a tax-gatherer in Rotondo; the King of Portugal (natu-

ral son); and Francis Rakoczi II, Prince of Transylvania.⁴⁰

Unfortunately any attempt by the earnest seeker who tries to put a date to his birth, or a definite name to his parentage, will be frustrated, as none of the claims that have been made by various authors can be substantiated. The *New World Encyclopedia* assigns the approximate year of his birth as 1710,⁴¹ yet in Isabel Cooper-Oakley's biography about him the old Countess v. Georgy remembers having met the Comte de St. Germain in the same year in Venice, where he appeared to be about 45–50 years old. Meeting him fifty years later, she was greatly astonished at the fact that his appearance, as far as his age was concerned, had not changed at all.⁴²

The Hungarian Wikipedia website, *Saint-Germain gróf*,⁴³ is likewise misleading when it comes to his alleged parentage. It claims Francis Rakoczi II as his father, and an unnamed woman descended from the Thököly family, allegedly Rakoczi's first wife, as his mother. This is simply not true, because any legitimate biography of Francis Rákoczi II will attest that he was married to Princess Amelia, daughter of the Landgrave of Hesse-Wanfried when he was 18 years old.

As there is no reliable chronological timeline available regarding the life of the Comte de St. Germain, all that the investigator is left with are isolated incidents that bear witness to his extraordinary feats and wondrous existence. It is, however, worth mentioning that he made his first public appearances at the French court in 1735, the same year in which Francis Rakoczi II died. If, indeed, he had picked up the thread where Rakoczi had left off, it still leaves one peculiar factor unexplained, namely the fact that the earliest sighting of his existence was recorded by Countess v. Georgy, who allegedly remembers having seen him in Venice in about the year 1710.

Amongst his many accomplishments, St. Germain was known to have played several musical instruments, one of these being the violin, which he apparently played so superbly that he was favorably compared to Paganini. He spoke several languages fluently, including French, English, German, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese,

as well as Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, Chinese and Arabic.⁴⁴

He was allegedly ambidextrous to such a degree that he could write the same letter with both his right and left hands on two separate pieces of paper, and when these were placed on top of each other and held up against the light, their scripts overlapped with such precision that not the slightest difference between them could be detected. He also painted with great mastery, depicting the precious stones in his paintings in such a way that they had a highly realistic brilliance which he apparently achieved by mixing powdered mother-of-pearl in his pigments. He was also known to have possessed the power to correct the flaws in diamonds which would greatly increase their value.⁴⁵

A friend of princes and kings, St. Germain undertook secret diplomatic missions for Louis XV, which finally resulted in the Treaty of Paris that ended the colonial wars, and was reported to have been actively involved in deposing Peter III of Russia and helping Catherine the Great to the throne. He foresaw the impending danger of the French Revolution and repeatedly warned Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette to take precautions, but unfortunately his words went unheeded.⁴⁶

Although St. Germain's death was recorded in the Church Register of Eckernförde as February 27, 1784, he allegedly appeared at the beheading of Marie-Antoinette and again in 1804, 1813 and 1820. In 1789 he had written to the Comtesse d'Adhemar, a well-known figure at the French court, and author of *Souvenirs de Marie-Antoinette*: "All is lost Countess! This sun is the last which will set on the monarchy; tomorrow it will exist no more, chaos will prevail, anarchy unequalled. . . . Now it is too late."⁴⁷

[T]he Master Rakoczi is a prime example of the flower of humanity, as it is exemplified by all individuals who have striven for human perfection, and are now part of the company of those exalted beings who fall under the authority of the greatest of them all –the Christ—also known as the Master of Masters.

Several writers of the time suspected that St. Germain had been actively involved in an advisory and beneficiary capacity with Freemasonic and secret spiritual societies. His name has been mentioned in connection with the Frates Lucis, the Knights Templar, the Asiatic Brothers, the

Order of Strict Observance, and various Rosicrucian groups.⁴⁸

One book of an esoteric nature survived which is attributed to St. Germain. It is entitled *The Most Holy Trinosophia*, and consists of an obscure text and a series of puzzling illustrations.⁴⁹ In 1933 Manly P. Hall published a parallel French and English edition of *The Trinosophia*, together with his introductory chapters "The Man Who Does Not Die" and "The

Rarest of Occult Manuscripts" and a concluding chapter of "Notes and Commentaries" which follow the text of *The Trinosophia*.

A first reading of this obscure text will most likely leave all but the very few baffled and frustrated, but in his "Notes and Commentaries" Manly P. Hall manages convincingly to make the text intelligible, and to identify it as having been written in three different keys, namely Alchemy, Essenian Cabbalism, and Alexandrian Hermetism.⁵⁰ As he applies these keys to the text it reveals a story of rituals and trials of a high initiation which, once they are successfully passed, welcome the initiate as an equal into the company of Masters.⁵¹

As far as the Rakoczi - St. Germain identity is concerned, the Theosophist and writer E. Francis Udny, in his *Later Incarnations of Francis Bacon*, says the following: "It will be observed that the Commentary on The Comte de Gabalis mentions two kinds of mysterious deaths – one which is merely feigned, the man changing his name (and perhaps his personal appearance as far as may be) and going to live among strangers; the other a true death though not quite an ordinary one." This latter death, Udny claims,

can only be assumed by someone who is a member of the great Brotherhood, the “Order of Philosophers.” Such a person apparently has power to choose the time of his own death, then leave his physical body deliberately, and then enter immediately another body which has previously been prepared for him. Udney surmises that the death of Francis Rakoczi II in 1735 must have been of this kind and not merely a feigned death, as the faces of Rakoczi and St. Germain, reproduced in his book, differ. He seems to have left the Rakoczi body only to immediately enter another in which he called himself the Count St. Germain.⁵²

As Udney gives no valid explanation how such a far-fetched feat might be carried out in practice, this article aims to give an alternative explanation concerning the Rakoczi - St. Germain connection which, no doubt, will raise some eyebrows among more skeptically inclined readers, but one which is nevertheless in accord with esoterically feasible possibilities. Rather than trying to find a physical parentage for the Comte de St. Germain, or even attribute a flesh and blood existence to his person, it is suggested that Francis Rakoczi II's life was the final incarnation of the Master, and that St. Germain was his mayavirupa, or body of illusion, whereby he achieved such tasks on the physical plane that were necessary to his objectives and aims.

The mayavirupa should not be mistaken for what is commonly understood by the ethereal phenomenon known as a ghost, but rather as the deliberate and chosen vehicle of a Master whereby he intends to interact with disciples and co-workers on the physical plane. Thus, for all appearances, it would most likely possess all those lifelike qualities that we would ascribe to a real person, with whom we could converse and interact as if the Master were present in a physical vehicle. As a deliberately created vehicle of energy and power, would it be any wonder that it could perform such extraordinary feats like correcting the flaws of diamonds, exhibit perfect ambidextrousness, or be capable of those sudden and inexplicable appearances and disappearances for which the Comte de St. Germain was so famous? It would also account for the fact of why St. Germain has never been seen eating, even when he was an invited dinner guest, and

rather chose to entertain his fellow guests with interesting anecdotes and stories, which diverted their attention from the fact of his abstinence. The fact that in all those years during which he was known he always appeared to be no older than 45 – 50 years old is also suggestive that the Comte de St. Germain was Master Rakoczi's mayavirupa.

Master Rakoczi and the Spiritual Hierarchy

It is common knowledge that the first definitive mention of the Masters of Wisdom and the existence of the Spiritual Hierarchy dates back to the beginnings of Theosophy and its major exponent, H. P. Blavatsky. The existence of the Masters and the Hierarchy was reaffirmed and elaborated upon by Alice Bailey when she started writing her books for the Tibetan Master, Djwhal Kuhl. All such information had always been free of any sensationalism, and always carefully worded and on a need-to-know basis. This was done to protect the Masters' privacy, and to help people not to form unrealistic or idealized conceptions about them.

Thus, to avoid the cranks and false prophets, and gain a sane perspective about the Masters and the Hierarchy, it is safer to satisfy oneself with less, but more reliable, information. The most practicable manner in which one can assess Master Rakoczi's office and function as a senior member of the Spiritual Hierarchy is to examine those passages in Alice Bailey's books that make direct reference to Him, and then reflect on them in the context of our times, and try to understand how His aims and purposes are to be assisted and realized in terms of the rapidly unfolding objectives of the New Age.

In Alice Bailey's *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, page 667, Master Rakoczi's office and function are defined as follows:

He is the Lord of Civilization and His is the task of bringing in the new civilization for which all men wait. It is a third ray Ashram, and therefore enfolds within its ring-pass-not all the Ashrams to be found upon the third Ray of Active Intelligence, upon the fifth Ray of Concrete Science and upon the seventh Ray of Ceremonial Order. All these

Ashrams are working under the general direction of the Master R. He works primarily through the Masters of these three types of ray energy. He Himself at this time is occupied with seventh ray energy, which is the order-producing energy upon the planet.⁵³

In this brief passage alone there is a wealth of information which, provided that one takes the needed effort, will yield not only material for serious reflection, but also provide several signposts by which one's insights may be increased. The Mahachohan, or Lord of Civilization, is a Distributor of the Hierarchy's Intelligence Aspect, thus a focus point of the Third Ray, and as such, in a ruling position in relation to the Heads of the Ashrams governed by the Fifth Ray and the Seventh Ray. As one of the three Department Heads, Master Rakoczi is known to work in close collaboration with the Christ, also known as the World Teacher, and Distributor of the Love- Wisdom Aspect, and the Manu, the Distributor of the Will Aspect, and thus occupied with the science of divine government, and with politics and law. Master Rakoczi's involvement with the Seventh Ray is elaborated by Alice Bailey in *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, pages 667-668, as follows:

This is the ray of Ceremonial Order, and through the activity of this energy, when correctly directed and used, a right rhythm is being imposed upon all aspects of human living. All effort is being constantly made to arrest the ugly chaos of the present and to produce the ordered beauty of the future. The major weapon now being used by the combined Forces of Evil is chaos, disruption, lack of established security, and consequent fear. The potency of these evil forces is exceedingly great because they belong to no one group of people and to all the ideologies. The chaos produced by indifference, the chaos produced by uncertainty, the chaos produced by fear, by starvation, by insecurity, by watching others suffer innocently, and the chaos produced by the warring and conflicting ambitious elements in every nation (without exception) – these are the factors with which the Master R. is attempting to deal; the task is one of supreme difficulty. The entire rhythm of international thinking

has to be altered, and that constitutes a slow and arduous task; the evil personalities which, in every country, are responsible for the chaos and uncertainty, have eventually to be replaced by those who can work in cooperation with the rhythm of the Seventh Ray, and thus produce ordered beauty.⁵⁴

The relevance of the above words is spelt out in no uncertain terms, and the drama is being played out before our very eyes. "The entire rhythm of international thinking" is gradually being changed with each passing day. The masses the world over are starting to awaken and making their voices heard, whether instigated by economic or political reasons, and with one voice insisting on a fairer deal. What currently is known as the Arab Spring is but a united appeal to overthrow long-entrenched dictatorships in Muslim countries, while organized demonstrators marching on Wall Street, representative of the 99%, demand justice from the 1%. Caution, however, needs to be exercised whereby those points of tension which inevitably lead to points of crisis do not lead to anarchy and chaos, but points of resolution, and thereby replace what is unwanted and obsolete, with what is new and viable. Therefore, Alice Bailey concludes with the following words (*The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, page 668):

The task is further complicated by the fact that in the substitution of order for chaos, national cultures must be preserved and the outline of the new civilizations presented to the people. This major Ashram is therefore confronted with two elements in every land and nation: those people who hold on to the bad old things of the past, and those who work for the extreme opposite of this point of view and for that which is new. Under the influence of this Seventh Ray energy balance has to be brought about and preserved, so that the "noble middle way" of right action and of right human relations can be safely trodden. The task of Master R. is, however, lightened by the fact that the Seventh Ray is now coming into activity and its potency is increasing year by year. His task is also aided by the intelligent work done by the Ashram of the English Master Who works consistently with the awakening of the masses.⁵⁵

Besides its order-producing quality the Seventh Ray is an expression of the Divine Will which drives through into outer manifestation and thereby creates an unimpeded and harmonious relationship between “that which is above and that which is below” so that the concrete world of manifestation can mirror the “good, the beautiful, and the true” in all its glory. Such a stupendous task the skeptic might well write off as a goal that is impossible to achieve, but those who keep faith and are able to read the signs of our times know that the Spiritual Hierarchy is there to inspire and guide. All those who maintain the link with their subjective selves know that a new age is dawning and that the gateway to that new age is the ever widening portal of Aquarius.

Conclusion

In light of the above biographies it becomes apparent that each one of them in turn contributes to a more rounded out picture of what is to be understood by a Senior Member of the Spiritual Hierarchy, or a Master. In the Roger Bacon incarnation we have a person who is an exponent of scientific experimentation, but not necessarily its active practitioner. He is someone with high aspirations and far-reaching ideas, but nevertheless restricted to a life wherein his aspirations have to remain potential projects only to be realized in an unspecified future.

In the Francis Bacon incarnation much of the emphasis was laid on intellectual accomplishments and the full awakening of the mind as it is inspired by abstract concepts and consequently developed in the field of science, and the utility of the intuition as it manifests in philosophical pursuits and literary excellence. Hence we have his comprehensive methodology of induction regarding scientific experiments, and his literary genius as it allegedly manifests in the Shakespeare plays.

The Francis Rakoczi II incarnation allowed the surfacing of the leader, whose charisma affected, besides his countrymen, everyone that he came into contact with, whether in Hungary, France, Poland or Turkey.

As the Comte de St. Germain his field of influence extended even further, because apart from England and the continent, he was known to

have been familiar with Russia, Persia, India and China, while his present office as the Lord of Civilization emphasizes his significance on a global and international scale.

Seen in this light, the Master Rakoczi is a prime example of the flower of humanity, as it is exemplified by all individuals who have striven for human perfection, and are now part of the company of those exalted beings who fall under the authority of the greatest of them all—the Christ—also known as the Master of Masters.

¹ Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, (1951; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1977), 58.

² “Bacon, Roger.” *Encyclopedia Britannica. Encyclopedia Britannica Ultimate Reference Suite*, Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 2010.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ <http://www.crystalinks.com/bacon.html> , (accessed November 22, 2011)

⁶ Roger Bacon, *Opus Tertium*. Translated as quoted in *Popular Science* (August, 1901), 337.

⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roger_Bacon, (accessed November 21, 2011)

⁸ <http://www.sirbacon.org/vonkunow.html> , (accessed August 4, 2011.)

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ <http://www.sirbacon.org/links/parentage.htm>, (accessed August 8, 2011.)

¹² Ibid.

¹³ <http://www.sirbacon.org/vonkunow.html> , (accessed August 4, 2011.)

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Manly P. Hall, *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*, (New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2003), 542-543.

¹⁷ Ibid, 543.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid. 546.

²⁰ “Bacon, Francis, Viscount Saint Alban (or Albans), Baron of Verulam.” *Encyclopedia Britannica. Encyclopedia Britannica Ultimate Reference Suite*, Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 2010.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Loren Eiseley, *The Man Who Saw Through Time*, (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1973), 37.

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- ²³ Basil Montagu, *The Works of Francis Bacon*, vol. III (Philadelphia, Pa: Hart, Carey and Hart 1852), 428.
- ²⁴ Francis Bacon. 1960. *The New Organum*. Ed. by Fulton Anderson New York: Macmillan (reprint of translation of *Novum Organum* in Bacon 1874) *The Works of Francis Bacon* (14 vols.). Ed by J. Spedding, D.D. Heath , and R.L. Ellis. (London : Longman, 1620), 16.
- ²⁵ Ibid., 178.
- ²⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_Bacon , (accessed August 8, 2011)
- ²⁷ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, (1951; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1976), 93.
- ²⁸ Alan Walker, *Franz Liszt: The Final Years* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1997), 92.
- ²⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰ http://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/II._R%C3%A1k%C3%B3czy_Ferenc, (accessed August 16, 2011.)
- ³¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_II_R%C3%A1k%C3%B3czy , (accessed October 7, 2011.)
- ³² <http://www.rakoci.webex.sk/hu/rakoci.php> (accessed October 7, 2011.)
- ³³ Ibid.
- ³⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁵ Ibid.
- ³⁶ Ibid.
- ³⁷ <http://mek.oszk.hu/01100/01149/-html/rakoczi-.htm> , (accessed August 19, 2011.)
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- ³⁸ Ibid.
- ³⁹ Isabel Cooper-Oakley, *The Comte de St. Germain, The Secret of Kings: A Monograph*, (1912; reprint; Forgotten Books, 2008).
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., 5-6.
- ⁴¹ http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry-/Saint_Germain_Count_of , (accessed August 21, 2011.)
- ⁴² Cooper-Oakly, *The Comte de St. Germain*, 15-16.
- ⁴³ <http://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/SaintGermain-gr%C3%B3f> , (accessed August 21, 2011)
- ⁴⁴ <http://theosophytrust.org/tlodocs/articlesTea-cher.php?d=SaintGermain.htm&p=111> , (accessed August 23, 2011.)
- ⁴⁵ Ibid.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid.
- ⁴⁹ Comte de Saint-Germain, *The Most Holy Trinitosophia*, (1933; reprint; Forgotten Books, 2008).
- ⁵⁰ Ibid., 24.
- ⁵¹ Ibid., 70-110.
- ⁵² E. Francis Udney, *Later Incarnations of Francis Bacon*, (Kessinger Legacy Reprints, Kessinger Publishing), 12.
- ⁵³ Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, (1957; reprint, New York: The Lucis Publishing Company, 1972), 667.
- ⁵⁴ Ibid., 667-668.
- ⁵⁵ Ibid., 668.

Great Esotericists of the Past

Anna Bonus Kingsford (1846-1888)

Anna, née Bonus, Kingsford grew up in a middle class English family. A sickly but precocious child, she wrote her first poem at age nine. At thirteen she wrote a 114-page history of Christianity, published four years later. When she turned twenty-one she married her cousin Algernon Godfrey Kingsford, an Anglican clergyman who took a position in the county of Shropshire. They had one child, a daughter Eadith.

Anna's father died the year of her marriage, and his estate provided her an income of £700 a year, a considerable sum for the time. From the funds she bought *The Lady's Own Paper* in 1872 and became its editor. The work brought her into contact with prominent women of the day and stimulated her feminist instincts. An article on vivisection sparked her interest and led to a lifelong campaign for animal rights.

To enhance credibility in her anti-vivisection campaign, Anna Kingsford resolved to acquire a medical degree. Since women were not admitted to British medical schools at the time, she enrolled at the Faculté de Médecine in Paris. After six years of study she graduated in 1880. Her thesis, *L'Alimentation Végétale de l'Homme*, promoted the benefits of vegetarianism. It was published in English as *The Perfect Way in Diet*. Dr. Kingsford established a medical practice, only the second female physician to do so in Great Britain.

Kingsford converted to Roman Catholicism in 1872, but her Christianity was anything but conventional. She had mystical experiences, including what she believed to be visitations by Mary Magdalene. In later years she would sometimes be referred to by her confirmation name of Mary. In 1873 Anna came in contact with English novelist Edward Maitland, and—apparently with her husband's consent—the two developed a lifelong platonic relationship. Maitland, twenty-two years older, became her constant companion, serving as chaperone in

Paris and accompanying Kingsford on her many lecturing tours. When she began to experience trance-like states and lucid dreams in 1875, Maitland transcribed and helped interpret her impressions. His name appears as co-author on her two major books.

Armed with her growing esoteric knowledge, Anna Kingsford drew appreciative audiences to her lectures. A series of lectures given in 1881 was published the following year as *The Perfect Way, or the Finding of Christ* (not to be confused with her medical thesis). This, her most important work shared her vision of a new Christianity, unburdened by what she considered the superstition and materialism of the institutional church. Scripture, as Anna interpreted it, was mainly symbolic in nature; for example, she considered the creation story in *Genesis* to be a parable. *Clothed with the Sun*, another collection of lectures, together with some transcripts of her dreams, was published posthumously.

Early in 1883 Anna Kingsford was appointed president of the British Theosophical Society, which she promptly renamed the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society. Ever at her side, Maitland served as vice-president. Anna agreed to the appointment because she approved of the Society's charter, whose idealistic goals included: "To form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color; to encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science; and to investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man."

Kingsford had misgivings about the Theosophical Society from the start, however. Despite the nonsectarian ideals of its charter, she perceived a strong anti-Christian bias among the Society's leaders in India. Helena Blavatsky announced her embrace of Buddhism, and co-founder Henry Alcott became a prominent ex-

ponent of the Buddhist revival movement in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). Meanwhile the mahatmas were serving as the Society's main sources of esoteric teachings. Alfred Sinnett, author of *Esoteric Buddhism*, returned to London in the summer of 1883 and began to compete with Kingsford and Maitland for the hearts and minds of the London membership.

Kingsford concluded that the Society's leaders were committed to eastern religions, to the deliberate exclusion of Christianity. She also regarded the mahatmas—later identified as including the Masters Morya, Kuthumi, and Djwhal Khul—as inferior to her own sources. Anna and Maitland resigned their positions in December 1884. By that

time they had formed a new organization, the Hermetic Society. One of its stated goals was to study “Christian mysticism,” and it was advertised as having “no Mahatmas, no miracles.” The Hermetic Society was short-lived, but it served as a model for the influential Hermetic Society of the Golden Dawn, co-founded by William Westcott, McGregor Mathers, and William Woodman in 1888.

The animal-rights campaign was Anna Kingsford's passion. She was appalled by the experiments conducted in Paris and London on animals without anesthetic. When the campaign failed to stop the practices, she turned in desperation to other means. Her diary records that she cursed the offending physicians. Drs. Paul Bert and Claude Bernard died, and Louis Pasteur became seriously ill. Whether the deaths actually resulted from the curses remains an open question.

In any event Anna's own, already frail, health took a turn for the worse, and she died of pneumonia at age forty-one. Shortly before her death she wrote in her diary: “I had hoped to have been one of the pioneers of the new awakening of the world. . . . Is it, perhaps, all

premature? Have we thought the time nearer than it really is? Must I go, and sleep, and come again before the hour sounds?” Westcott, who along with Mathers had lectured in Kingsford's Hermetic Society, eulogized her as “indeed illuminated by the Sun of Light.” Maitland devoted the next several years to writing the two-volume *Life of Anna Kingsford* (1896).

Kingsford's achievements, in a mere two decades of adult life, were enormous. In addition to her pioneering work in medical practice and her tireless work for animal rights, she set the course of western esotericism for decades to come. Trance work is often criticized, but Kingsford clearly understood the difference between the passive trance of the spiritualist mediums and ac-

tive trance, in which the will is retained and information is received in full consciousness.

Kingsford read widely, and her work reflects Platonic, Neoplatonic, Gnostic and Kabbalistic influence. She quoted Emanuel Swedenborg and Eliphas Lévi and seems to have been familiar with the writings of Jakob Böhme. Reportedly, she studied Buddhism and Hinduism, and from them she may have acquired her firm belief in reincarnation.

The latter half of the 19th century saw the emergence of occult studies from the secretive lodges and private salons of Europe into open discussion. The Hermetic revival was underway in France, and the Rosicrucian revival in Britain. No doubt Anna Kingsford had contacts with the flourishing occult salons in Paris. The Martinist movement, associated with Frenchman Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, expressed a form of Christian Kabbalism. She probably learned from, as well as contributed to, the programs of the Theosophical Society's London Lodge. Because of her brief involvement, however, she may have had little contact with the Society's work in India and elsewhere. Blavatsky moved from New York City to

No one teacher stands out to whom Kingsford seems indebted. She affirmed that her esoteric work represented a “recovery and.... a discovery... independent of any prior knowledge.” “... our knowledges [sic] were derived directly from celestial sources, the hierarchy of the Church Invisible in the holy heavens.”

Adyar in 1879, two years after *Isis Unveiled* appeared. *The Secret Doctrine* was published the year Anna died.

No one teacher stands out to whom Kingsford seems indebted. She affirmed that her esoteric work represented a “recovery and.... a discovery...independent of any prior knowledge.” Maitland added: “our knowledges [sic] were derived directly from celestial sources, the hierarchy of the Church Invisible in the holy heavens.” Some of her esoteric knowledge may have come from examination of the akashic records, a method later used extensively by Rudolf Steiner and others. Most of it probably came from entities whom writers in the western tradition called “Elder Brothers,” “Inner Chiefs,” or “Secret Chiefs.” The information she received has to be regarded as among the first that the Planetary Hierarchy revealed to humanity in the modern age.

Some of Anna Kingsford’s esoteric teachings now seem dated, but much is of continued relevance. Her descriptions of the soul and the guardian (solar) angel are remarkably close to what Alice Bailey provided fifty years later. Her feminist theology anticipated work a century later. Her description of the denizens of the astral plane remains unequaled.

Kingsford’s influence can be seen in the work of Mathers; Rudolf Steiner, founder of Anthroposophy; Max Heindel, founder of the Rosicrucian Fellowship; Dion Fortune, founder of the Fraternity of the Inner Light; and Annie Besant, who succeeded Olcott as president of the Theosophical Society in 1907. *The Perfect*

Way’s influence on Besant’s *Essay on the Atonement* and *Esoteric Christianity* is striking.

The Theosophical Society, the Golden Dawn, and French Hermeticism dominate published histories of esotericism of the period. Sadly, and unfairly, Anna Kingsford is all but ignored; few people today even know her name. Now that reprints are becoming available, her books can be read more widely. Kingsford needs to be recognized as the pivotal figure she was in the development of esoteric philosophy in the 19th century.

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Contributed by John F. Nash

The Awakening

William Meader

Introduction

Humanity is on the verge of unprecedented crisis and change. In every country there is a rising tide of fear as we witness our economic and social institutions seemingly fail. To many people, the world predicament feels hauntingly ominous and even insurmountable. Yet, it must be realized that this is not a crisis that foretells the end. Instead, it is the antechamber to a new beginning. For the first time in history, the *Soul of Humanity* is awakening.

The awakening of the Soul of Humanity can initially be recognized in many ways. For example, due to the advent of the internet and global communications, we are able to witness the many rich and diverse expressions of human culture at every corner of the globe. This has been a great gift. Through it, our commonality is more easily seen. It has helped us recognize that, while cultural differences can be wide and varied, fundamental human needs and desires are essentially the same. We all yearn for happiness, peace and the opportunity to grow, and we want to see our children experience joy and prosperity as well. This is true regardless of differing cultural or socioeconomic backgrounds. Realizing this is important. In this way, we begin to see ourselves within others—which is the first step in the recognition of humanity's essential oneness.

Oneness as Essence

An acceptance of humanity's oneness is the first step in trying to navigate through the global crises we currently face. Of course, the idea that we are one is not something new. It has been a tenet advocated by world religions for uncounted centuries. Usually our oneness is rooted in the commonality of being human, yet this is only the first phase in its recognition. We must understand that we are not just one in kind, but more importantly, we are one in es-

sence. Beyond (and behind) the sameness of our human experience there is an inner dimension where we are fused as one soul—the Soul of Humanity. This collective soul can be understood as a transcendent unified consciousness overshadowing the entire human family. And it is this that is awakening from its long historic slumber.

Humanity's soul is awakening, and is learning to see itself through the numerous garments of its external expression. These garments manifest as cultural and racial differences, religious variations, and socio-political distinctions throughout the world. Each is an aspect of the Soul of Humanity as it incarnates itself in (and as) the human condition. In this regard, it is oneness manifesting through diversity—the one becoming the many. Looked at esoterically, it means that humanity, as a single being, is learning how to recognize the many parts of itself. Herein is found an essential clue to recognizing humanity's collective soul. It is through an appreciation of human diversity that inner unity can be sensed. Contrary to conventional thought, our oneness is not recognized through ethnic or cultural similarities, but instead via the richness of our differences.

The Duality of Social Systems

To sense the Soul of Humanity requires that we examine the nature of the many social systems used by a culture and civilization. Though we typically consider government, the

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arts and science (to name just a few) as institutions designed to facilitate various societal functions, they are actually much more than this. Social systems must be understood as living beings. They are living categories of human thought evolving over the vastness of time. Each provides humanity with an essential ingredient in support of its evolution. And, just as a human being has a higher and lower nature, a soul and personality, so too do the social systems used by every civilization and culture throughout the world.

An understanding of the livingness of social systems is essential when considering the many crises facing humanity today. Indeed, the difficulties we now face stem largely from the inadequacies of many of our social institutions. While this is true, we often cast the net of blame too broadly, not realizing that social systems are dual in nature. We overlook the fact that they are living entities in their own right, and that they have both a soul and personality. At times of crisis, we tend to only see the worst of our institutions and their failures, forgetting that it is only the lower nature (personality) of an institution that is the culprit.

World Crisis and the Burning Ground

From a certain perspective, world crisis represents the out-pictured state of humanity's consciousness. For the first time in history, the Soul of Humanity is deliberately seeking expression through our collective personality, *en masse*. This can be recognized by the fact that, around the world, more and more people are beginning to sense the need to live by a higher set of values. It is an awakening to a spiritual dimension deep within—a loftier potential. These values are the promise of the future, and are being planted into the minds of people by this greater soul.

The crises we face are caused by the shadowy aspects of our collective personality arising in defiance. The difficulties now playing out on the world stage are therefore predictable. Fundamentally, it is a developmental pattern woven into the evolution of human consciousness itself. Darkness naturally emerges before the dawning hour.

Paradoxically as this awakening begins, many dark aspects of consciousness, hidden within our collective personality, tend to resist the soul's downward gaze. This accounts for the rise of such things as spiritual intolerance

found within various world religions, the shameful motives that drive many business tycoons and the unscrupulous practices of assorted governments around the world. These are symptoms of radical change. They are the shadowy aspects of our collective consciousness rising in defiance of the Soul of Humanity, as that soul seeks to infuse a higher set of values into us. When society's higher consciousness is inwardly recognized, we

immediately become aware of various attitudinal and psychological traits that seem to prevent it from fuller expression. Stated metaphorically, when the door to the soul is discovered, the devil is found standing in front of it.

During the last several years, we have seen the worst of human nature becoming more visible to us. We have witnessed unparalleled corruption within our economic and business structures; we have seen dark and primitive behaviors violently express themselves through fundamentalist theology; and we have observed blatant genocide in Africa and elsewhere. At first glance, it is easy to conclude that humanity is on a path to self-destruction. Yet this is not so. We are not witnessing the end of civilization. Instead, humanity has entered a crisis period that foretells of a promising future. Again, it is the devil poised in front of the door of opportunity.

Collectively we have entered what has been called the *burning ground* phase of our evolutionary journey. This is a period of painful adjustments. Yet, at the same time it is ushering humanity into a more enlightened era. You may ask, what is arousing humanity to traverse this fiery burning ground? It is the Soul of Humanity seeking expression through the na-

tions of the world and the social institutions that we utilize. Indeed, we are awakening to our collective soul. The crises we face are caused by the shadowy aspects of our collective personality arising in defiance. The difficulties now playing out on the world stage are therefore predictable. Fundamentally, it is a developmental pattern woven into the evolution of human consciousness itself. Darkness naturally emerges before the dawning hour. Wise optimism is therefore well founded.

Oneness Earned Through Crisis

As human consciousness evolves, we are beginning to understand that the means to navigate through world crisis requires that humanity's essential oneness be recognized and lived. This we can certainly do, but it doesn't come without a price. It must be earned. Proclaiming that humanity is one is not the same as living it. The key to understanding this moment in history is to realize that the human kingdom evolves through crisis, not by trying to avoid it. It is through the resolution and harmonization of our differences that our oneness will truly be sensed and lived. Crisis is therefore a prelude to all expansions of consciousness. Indeed, evolution demands that this be so.

The larger question to be asked is what can we do to support the Soul of Humanity as it seeks to externalize itself? There are a few suggestions that can be offered. First, be an advocate of pluralistic ideas. Initiatives based on multiculturalism, ecumenicalism, and egalitarian ideas are specifically oriented toward bringing divergent perspectives together. Each seeks to create an amalgamation, and therefore supports humanity's oneness through an honoring of diversity. Realistically speaking, because of the complex nature of modern civilization, it is only through diversity that we have any hope of uniting as one.

Secondly, begin to see nations and social systems as dual, each having a higher and lower

nature, a soul and personality. This is an essential step in order to discern the soulful qualities arising from people and circumstances versus those that are impelled by the personality. Life takes on new meaning when you can see this duality expressing through world events. It is a process that involves looking beyond the outer form (personality) in order to sense the golden thread of truth (soul) that it conceals. This is made easier when we remember that no person, institution, or nation has found the Truth, but each has found a piece of it. Herein is a philosophic truism of enormous import.

Finally, move away from the tendency to see things as right or wrong, good or evil. When we are able to perceive the duality of people and events, we begin to see that nothing in the world is purely good or purely evil. Instead we start to realize that everything is a mixture of both. The question to be asked is not what is right versus what is wrong? Instead we should be asking ourselves, what is the proportion of light and dark playing out within a particular person, nation or circumstance? From such a perspective, wiser decisions can then be made.

Concluding Remarks

Humanity has entered a major crisis period on the road to enlightenment. We are confronted by enormous challenges that have staggering implications for all people and nations throughout the world. Yet it is not a time for fear and despair. Rather, it is a period of testing and adjustment needed in order that we may move forward into a more enlightened existence. The Soul of Humanity seeks greater expression in the outer world, and is forcing our lower tendencies to the surface so that they may be seen and transformed. As such, we are walking across the burning ground toward a door beyond which is found a dawning age of opportunity and promise. Yet, to walk through that door requires that we do so arm-in-arm. At times of global transformation, peril and opportunity always emerge as companions.

Book Review

The Mark, by Maurice Nicoll, 1954, reprint; London, England: Shamballa Publications, Inc., 1985.

Written as a sequel to *The New Man*, this book by Maurice Nicoll presents an accessible and perceptive interpretation of the teachings of Jesus Christ as found in the Gospels and parables. Dr. Nicoll, a noted psychologist, student of Carl Jung, Gurdjieff and Ouspensky, and a leading Fourth Way teacher, brings a psychospiritual approach to the Gospels that is down-to-earth yet exceedingly memorable. Like all authentic spiritual works, Nicoll contends that the teachings of Christ, some of which are quite complex and paradoxical, contain both an exoteric and esoteric meaning. Behind the literal, sense-based interpretation there lays a wider, deeper range of significances that can only be grasped by a shift in perspective away from the “mind of the flesh,” as the apostle Paul termed it, to higher psychological understanding. The Gospel narratives were not a historical report, nor are they concerned with moral precepts, rules or religion. They are an ordered set of esoteric teachings based on the self-evolution of the individual into a “new man.”

The book begins by showing that the Gospels and parables draw a clear distinction between the physical and spiritual man, the human being guided by the lower level of the senses, as exemplified by the feet, and one guided by a higher psychological or esoteric understanding, i.e., the heart and head. To illustrate this point Nicoll draws upon a number of biblical verses, such as the passage in Exodus 3:5 where an angel appears before the burning bush and says to Moses: “Draw not hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet,” or in Mathew 10:10 where Christ tells his disciples to go out and preach the Gospels without shoes on their feet. Nicoll goes on to explain that just as we must remove our shoes before entering a sacred place, so too must we move beyond our habitual, sense-given views, opinions and attitudes to comprehend higher levels of truth. The well-known passage in John

13:5-10 where Christ washes the feet of his disciples, further typifies the purification and transformation of thought, feeling and desire that is necessary for entry into the sphere of knowledge above the world of the senses.

The concept of transformation is seen as one of the dominant ideas of Christ’s teachings. In the Gospels, humans are regarded as “an experiment in self-evolution”—a seed sown into the earth whose latent power and potential can be brought to fruition. This idea is expressed in the parable of the Sower and the Seed (Mathew 13: 18, 19). The method involved is “self-creation”—prompted by contact and receptivity with the “word,” or a teaching such as the one given by Christ and by one’s own thoughts, insights and intuitions. Such a method is, in Nicoll’s words, the highest form of “Organic Chemistry:” a self-chosen alchemical process brought about by the search for truth combined with application of the will toward that which is good.

These ideas are also conveyed in the Gospels’ numerous exhortations about the need for a *metanoia* or change in thinking (from the Greek *μετάνοια*: *meta*, a transference of meaning and *noia* from the Greek *nous* or mind), which as Nicoll points out, is almost always completely mistranslated as repentance. (Unless ye repent, ye shall likewise perish, Luke 13: 2-5). It is not a moralistic repentance or a feeling of remorse that is called for, but the need to eliminate wrong thinking based on sense perceptions, personal attitudes and judgments about what is right or wrong. However, this paradigm shift, which reconciles the opposites and penetrates to the deeper meaning behind the world of appearances, is not possible if the physical, tangible world of everyday life is seen as all that exists. Therefore, the Gospels speak again and again about the possibility of turning around, of discovering a higher Good, an inner Kingdom or subjective Self as well as the greater Whole which lies beyond the subtle realms.

One of the more notable allegories exploring this theme is the “Parable of the Prodigal Son,” also

known as the “Parable of the Lost Son” (Luke 15: 11-32). Nicoll’s interpretation of this story goes well beyond the literal interpretation of the profligate son who, after wasting his early inheritance “repents” of his “sins” and returns home where he is welcomed by his merciful father and begrudged by his more responsible older brother. The real meaning according to Nicoll, lies in the fact that parables are transforming devices that “bridge between two levels of meaning; the literal and the psychological. The psychological meaning transcends the words and images used, which have their own lesser meaning.” Thus the lost younger son does not merely repent of his “sins,” which in the original Greek (ἁμαρτία: *harmatia*) means “missing the mark.” Rather, he begins to *come unto himself*; he escapes from the power of the external world and undergoes a *metanoia*, a transformation of thinking and a reversal of direction in life. The lost son returns or goes back to Life.

This vertical shift in perspective sets the stage for Christ’s supreme teaching on re-birth, which Nicoll says, is not the same as the idea of cyclic return and incarnation. Although Nicoll certainly accepts these age old concepts and thinks that the notion of eternal recurrence in John 3: 2-10 was probably intentional, he does not want us to confuse these ideas with Christ’s teachings about dying to oneself in order to be born again. In answer to how one comes to be born anew, the Gospels proclaim that the individual must die to the “flesh” before he is born of the “spirit.” The “flesh” spoken of here is usually thought to refer to bodily and earthly pleasures and to the idea of setting one’s self against them. From an esoteric or psychospiritual viewpoint, such an interpretation, as Nicoll states, is absurd, for no spiritual heights can possibly be reached from ascetic and external disciplines alone. To follow Christ’s teaching of re-birth means to die in the right way to the little self. But this requires that one must discover one’s self in the Self and know that this is the object of the search.

A key aspect of the process involves the quest for truth, since there can be no re-birth unless the individual begins to grasp what is, in Nicoll’s words, “essential, real and good.” The

word “truth” (ἀλήθεια), which is used countless times in the Gospels, is always connected to Christ teachings, which come from an inner and higher order of truth, and not from any ordinary contact or knowledge of the outer, physical world. The person who begins to realize the truth about him or herself and who is receptive to Christ’s teaching (or any other authentic spiritual teaching) begins to awaken from the hypnosis and limited “logic of the senses.” Such a one is healed and becomes wholly one’s self. And it is this idea that lay behind the many miracles that are attributed to the Jesus Christ, such as his healing of the blind and the deaf as well as his raising of the dead (Mark 7:31-37 and John 11: 1-45).

For Nicoll, the greater object of the Gospels and all esoteric teachings, is to connect a person to God’s Will, or as one reads in the *Lord’s Prayer*, to have God’s “will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Mathew 6: 9-13). He describes this as beginning with the marriage of understanding and will. The union of the two, however, from Nicoll’s point of view, can only come about when one sees the *good* of truth and lives it through one’s own efforts or volition. “Truth then is no longer simply truth but becomes full of meaning.” It serves as the basis for every thought, word and action and the means by which the individual will and God’s will are brought to fruition in “a new heaven and a new earth.”

Although *The Mark* focuses almost exclusively on the New Testament, the book is not about Christianity per se. Its inspired interpretations, which eclipse the idolatrous dead-letter worship of the Bible, show that these teachings are both esoteric and universal in character. Indeed, the teachings of Christ are exposed as a set of ordered instructions on how human beings overpowered by the outer world and unconsciously driven by the senses, can awaken, seek freedom and complete themselves. *The Mark* illuminates the hopeful message of the Gospels in a way that transcends and expands traditional religious boundaries. It is a book that will engage every spiritual seeker.

Donna M. Brown

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