

Summer 2012, Volume 8, Number 2



# *The Esoteric Quarterly*

*A publication of the School for Esoteric Studies*

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**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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# *The Esoteric Quarterly*

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

traditions. We also encourage feedback from readers. Comments of general interest will be published as Letters to the Editor. All communications should be sent to: [editor@esotericstudies.net](mailto:editor@esotericstudies.net).



## **ALICE BAILEY TALKS**

**I**n the course of her many activities as an esoteric teacher and writer, Alice Bailey presented a series of regular Friday evening talks to students of the Arcane School. Fortunately, about 100 of these talks were transcribed and archived at the School for Esoteric Studies, and they include the informal discussions that took place during these talks. Thus they offer a fascinating glimpse of the personality of the co-worker with whom Master DK chose to work for 30 years – during which time we can see history being made.

The School for Esoteric Studies has published nearly 40 of these talks, covering 1943 and 1944, online at their website:

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## Editorial

# Hidden Motifs and their Spiritual Significance

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Esoteric philosophy teaches us that there is a hidden motif behind all outer appearance. Behind the world of external form lies an inner world of meaning that “is spread like an intricate network over all activity and every aspect of the phenomenal world.” Our responsibility, as esotericists and especially as educators in the New Age, is to seek out this world of veiled patterns and to glean something of their spiritual import for the group. Penetrating this world of subjective forces with its manifold layers of veiled truth, requires, among other things, an inquiring and flexible mind, the ability to accept the relativity of truth, and the fortitude to find the inner meaning in oneself and in terms of the larger whole. With these thoughts in mind, we offer several articles in this issue of the Quarterly that provide a unique and illuminating look behind the world of generally accepted interpretations and widely-held beliefs to reveal new levels of meaning and significance.

Our first offering is the final article in a seven-part series by Zachary Lansdowne comparing Alice Bailey’s Techniques of Integration for the Seven Rays with ancient texts and other inspired writings depicting archetypal methods of integration. Previous articles explored the parallels between the *Bhagavad Gita* and First Ray Technique, the *Second Epistle of Peter* and the Second Ray Technique, the *Revelation of St. John* (chapter 10) and the Third Ray Technique, the *Tao Te Ching* and the Fourth Ray Technique, *Ecclesiastes* and the Sixth Ray Technique, and the *Book of Habakkuk* and the Seventh Ray Technique. This article compares Alice Bailey’s Technique of Integration for the Fifth Ray with the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson, the famed American Transcendentalist, essayist, poet and philosopher. Lansdowne’s analysis clarifies Bailey’s symbolic formula and illuminates the subtle

yet rich spiritual sustenance of Emerson’s work to give each a new and added weight.

Our next offering, from the Istituto di Ricerche Urusvati, seeks to reintegrate astrology and astronomy into a synthetic whole in an effort to create a “new science of the stars” for the Aquarian Age. *Reading of the Heavens: Astrological Perspectives towards an Astrosophy* explores four astrological perspectives for the 2012 June solstice and beyond. Using both geocentric and heliocentric charts, the article focuses on four aspects of the One Heart, “the altar and the very unity of Life,” which “like a Sun can orient in all directions of Space to recognize its collective destiny.” The hierarchical points of view considered in this reading of the Heavens are: the *solar system in the cosmos*, the *solar system in the zodiac*, the *planetary system in the zodiac* and the *planetary system in the cosmos*; in other words, the interpenetrating solar, planetary and galactic “heart centers” receiving particular emphasis at this time.

The last full-length feature in this issue explores the seemingly inexplicable phenomena of religious stigmatism, its authenticity and spiritual significance. The article, written by John Nash, examines the lives and accomplishments of six notable stigmatics—Francis of Assisi, Anne Catherine Emerich, Therese Neumann, Padre Pio (Francesco Forgione), Dorothy Kerin, and one living esotericist, Judith von Halle—all of whom experienced the appearance of bodily lesions or wounds like those suffered by Jesus during his crucifixion. Also discussed are the various theories that have been put forward to explain stigmata, including those suggesting that the phenomena may be “an outer manifestation of an inner transformation.” Nash concludes by placing the physical, etheric, emotional and mental changes

associated with stigmata, i.e., its exoteric and esoteric aspects within the framework of the initiatory process up to and including the Great Renunciation. As such, he demands that we abandon previously held notions regarding stigmata's emergence.

In this issue we offer a short paper on "Meditation with Seed Thought," by Gail Jolley, as well as a book review of two works written by Judith Von Halle, one of the stigmatic's touched upon in the featured article mentioned above. Also included are three *Festival Talks* on the Full Moons of Aries, Taurus and Gemini.

We also draw your attention to our "Quotes of the Quarter," many of which are related to the featured articles in this issue, and to a new poem: *In the End: The Beginning*, by Jay Ramsey, who has been described as one of England's foremost transformational poets. Ramsay, a healer and psychospiritual psychotherapist, has created a rare synthesis between poetry and personal development. For further information on his poetry and other work visit: <http://www.jayramsay.co.uk/>.

The transcendent painting featured in the "Picture of the Quarter" is from the "Mandala Series" by the Israeli artist, Ron Gang. Gang's *Seven Point Blue-Gold Mandala* is built up mainly from Arabic Calligraphy, specifically the well-known sentence from the Hadith or authenticated aphorisms of Muhammad: "He who knows his self knows his Lord (*Man `arafa nafsuhu `arafa rabbuhu*)." The artist makes use of quotes from several different traditions to emphasize the universality of Truth and the idea that "we are all children of the Creator, no matter to what culture or nation we belong." For more information on these mandalas and artist's other inspired works visit: <http://www.iarc.org/~4x1mk/index.html> or [www.rongang.net](http://www.rongang.net).

We are sorry to announce Joann Bakula's retirement from the Editorial Board. Since 2008, Joann has served as the *Esoteric Quarterly's* Review Editor where she managed the peer review process and served as a member of the Review Board. Her experience, dedication and adherence to the standards of

scholarly excellence are sincerely appreciated. We miss Joann and wish her the very best in her future endeavors.

Donna M. Brown

### **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.

## Poem of the Quarter

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### **In the End: The Beginning** by Jay Ramsay

There is something in the end there is no avoiding  
That is more present than breath, than self, than distraction  
More present than this moment? Yes, even that --

Even than all those birds perched high in the Tree of Heaven  
That broke into all your wondering -- even than  
That huge exotic shrine at the center of your heart,  
Your voice, your whole face turned inward...  
Or mine now -- as I cut it back, back  
From my thoughts: to my being; then my breath  
And then, not even that

And across the gulf of silence from before  
Names, images -- before whiteness was even born --  
And now, at the heart of emptiness  
Where there is no I, nor breathing even  
Or only this suspended pause

‘There is only Love that made us, only Love’  
And you in the vast silence like an ocean without water,  
Like rain before rain --  
like an unbroken mirror

You in the Womb of Love.



***Seven Point Blue-Gold Mandala “2003”***

by Ron Gang

[www.rongang.net](http://www.rongang.net)

## Quotes of the Quarter

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God offers to every mind its choice between truth and repose. Take which you please, — you can never have both. Between these, as a pendulum, man oscillates. He in whom the love of repose predominates will accept the first creed, the first philosophy, the first political party he meets, — most likely his father's. He gets rest, commodity, and reputation; but he shuts the door of truth. He in whom the love of truth predominates will keep himself aloof from all moorings, and afloat. He will abstain from dogmatism, and recognize all the opposite negations, between which, as walls, his being is swung. He submits to the inconvenience of suspense and imperfect opinion, but he is a candidate for truth, as the other is not, and respects the highest law of his being.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Intellect*, Essay XI  
(New York, NY: Thomas Y. Crowell Co. Inc.  
1951, 229.)

Of that ineffable Essence which we call Spirit, he that thinks most will say least. When we try to describe it, both language and thought desert us. That Essence refuses to be recorded. Language cannot paint it with colors. It is too subtle. It is undefinable, unmeasurable, but we know that it pervades and contains us.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, The Complete  
Prose Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson  
(Whitefish, Mont: Kissinger Publications,  
2006), 325.

The seers of all times believe that wisdom is ageless and impersonal. The intensity and vastness of wisdom is dependent upon the vision of the observer of this universe. The point of view decides the nature of the horizon that surrounds the observer of *Māyā*. The whole universe is only one, in the sense that it is one among the series of universes. A

universe is defined by a unity of wisdom in which there is a diversity of levels. What we see around us is a huge globe of space with the observer at its geometrical center. The center of consciousness of the observer is the key to unlock the secrets of wisdom. By this process of unlocking, the individual pervades into the whole universe. Only when there is an individual, with the objectified self as the universe before him, there is the process of unfolding wisdom. Therefore, it is propounded that the individual and the universe put together form the two complementaries of the *one whole*. This double unit is called wisdom.

As we observe the horizon around us we realize that it is a horizon relative to the observer. To itself there is no horizon. The earth and the heaven appear to meet along the horizon. In fact they do not meet, but in truth they meet to form a symbol through which the individual derives wisdom. The space represents the subtle state of matter and the earth represents the gross state. The union which is apparent produces the state of the individual. Here we find the birth of symbolism and the beginning of the process through which the individual unfolds wisdom. This process is said to have six approaches which serve as the keys to wisdom. Astrology is among them and forms the true key.

E. Krishnamacharya, *Spiritual Astrology*  
(Madras, India: The World Teacher Trust,  
1966, xiii.)

Meditate upon the structure of the heavens, so that thou may praise the “Truth” in its theophanies. Behold the world from end to end within thyself. Whatever comes at the end, thou may see beforehand. The world of Adam appeared last of all, Yet the two worlds became depend upon his essence. Thou art the kernel of the world, situated at its center; Know thyself for thou art the soul of the Universe. Thou knowest all the Names of God, because thou art the reflection

of the “Named.” O first who art identical with the last! O inward who art identical with the outward! Thou are cogitating about thyself day and night, It is better that thou shouldst think no more of the self.

Sa'd ud Din Mahmud Shabistari, *The Secret Rose Garden*. Translated from the Persian by Florence Lederer (1250 CE: reprint; Phanes Press: Grand Rapids, Mich. 2002.)

**F**rom the traditional point of view, there is of course no legitimate domain which can be considered as completely profane. The universe is the manifestation of the Divine Principle and there is no realm that can be completely divorced from that Principle. To participate in the realm of the Real and to belong to that which is real also implies being immersed in the ocean of the sacred and being imbued with the perfume of the sacred. The metaphysical and cosmological sciences of traditional civilizations are certainly sacred in that they are based on knowledge of manifestation not as a veil or *Māyā* but as symbol and “signature” of the Divine, as the *vestigia Dei*.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *The Need for a Sacred Science* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press. 1993), 96.

**D**eep, unspeakable suffering may well be called a baptism, a regeneration, the initiation into a new state.

George Elliot, Adam Bede (1859) ch.42.

**S**ouls such as these, to whom it has been given to tread the Transcendental Way of the Unitive Life, no longer live and work of themselves, but God lives and works in and through them. The Divine Energy which burns as the Living Flame of Love in their hearts drives them with unrelenting pressure, in the fullness of God’s timing for them, into the world of men to live lives of creative, fertile and active participation in Christ’s redemptive sacrifice for creation. The arduous travail of their contemplative years brings forth spiritual fruits which they feel constrained to use in the service of mankind.

The dual capacity for suffering and a fullness of joy beyond the normal is the hallmark of their attainment. To them is granted to gather up in the crucible of their souls, the pain, the sorrows, the cruel strains and stresses of those whom life has crucified. Through the transforming alchemy of their Christ-like love, God often releases in men and women who come within the influence of their ministry the hidden springs of the Divine Life in which we live, move and have our being.

Dorothy M. Arnold, *Dorothy Kerin: Called by Christ to Heal*, (London: Hodder and Stroughton, 1965, 21-22.)

**T**he essential character of Supermind is Truth-Consciousness that knows by its own inherent light: It has not to arrive at knowledge but possess it. It may, indeed, especially in its evolutionary action, keep knowledge behind its apparent consciousness and bring it forward as if from behind a veil; but even then this veil is only an appearance and does not really exist: the knowledge was always there, the consciousness its possessor and present revealer.

Sri Aurobindo, *The Mind of Light* (New York, NY: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1971) 114.

**C**onsciousness is the fabric from which we fashion the tapestry of our lives. Each thought, each emotion weaves a pattern, which in time, takes visible form. Thought by thought, feeling by feeling—like a spider spinning its web—we create the world in which we live.

This is Power beyond measure, but seldom realized. For it is easier to blame others, or fate, for the unwanted circumstances that imprison us. But the same Creative Power, which is a primary impulse of Consciousness, can also fashion a world of beauty, bounty, and benevolence, a world in which the full potential of God in man is both realized and expressed.

Donald Craig - 2012, Arden, North Carolina.



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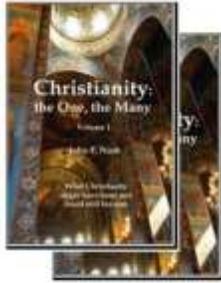
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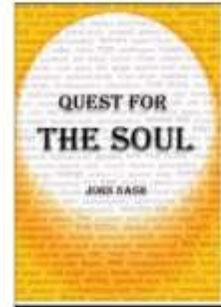
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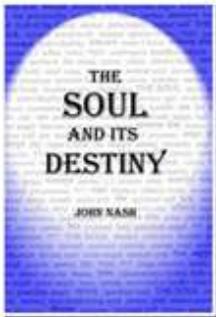
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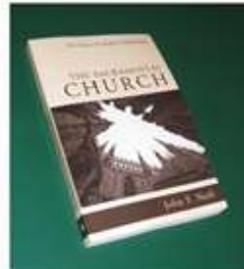
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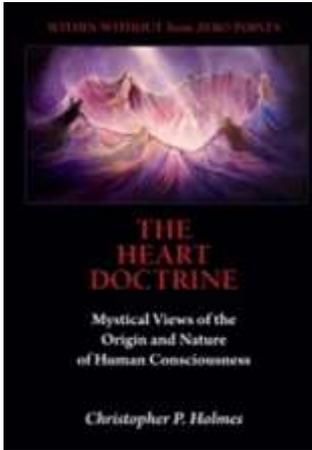
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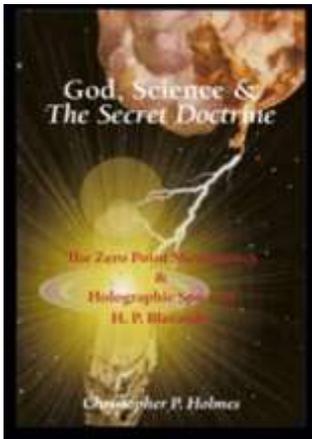
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# Emerson's Essays Compared to Bailey's Technique of Integration for the Fifth Ray

Zachary F. Lansdowne

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## Summary

Ralph Waldo Emerson, one of the most influential writers of nineteenth-century America, could be regarded as the chief forerunner of Helena Blavatsky, founder of the Theosophical Society, who in turn could be regarded as the chief forerunner of Alice Bailey, a prominent theosophical writer during the twentieth century. Emerson's essays are often criticized for being difficult to understand, and Bailey's "Technique of Integration for the Fifth Ray" is written with abstruse symbols, so it is also difficult to understand. This article clarifies both sources by showing that they have passages that are similar in meaning, and it is part of a series of articles that corroborate 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.

## Ralph Waldo Emerson

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882) was an American essayist, lecturer, and poet. Rather than developing a unified system of thought, he produced a series of linked reflections on various topics. His writing greatly influenced the authors, thinkers, and poets who followed him, and his *Collected Essays* is often cited as one of the top 100 books in the English language. He wrote in his journal the following summary of his work: "In all my lectures I have taught one doctrine, namely, the infinitude of the private man."<sup>1</sup>

Emerson led the Transcendentalist movement that began in New England and flourished during the early to middle years of the nineteenth century, about 1836 to 1860. The publication of his essay *Nature* in 1836 is usually considered the key moment when Transcendentalism became a major cultural force. The Transcen-

dentalists based their philosophy on principles derived from what they believed was the inner spiritual essence of a human being. In Emerson's words, "The Transcendentalist ... believes in miracle, in the perpetual openness of the human mind to new influx of light and power; he believes in inspiration, and in ecstasy."<sup>2</sup>

Emerson helped prepare the way for Helena Blavatsky (1831–1891) to launch the Theosophical Society in New York City in 1875. Blavatsky acknowledged Emerson's contributions by incorporating some quotations of his into her own writing and by citing "his superb Essay on *The Over-Soul*."<sup>3</sup> Mitch Horowitz, a publisher and writer, reports, "Emerson ... familiarized the reading public with esoteric ideas in a way that later made it possible for Theosophy and other occult movements to be understood in America."<sup>4</sup> Alvin Kuhn, a religious scholar, writes:

It may seem ludicrous to suggest that Emerson was the chief forerunner of Madame Blavatsky, her John the Baptist. Yet seriously, without Emerson, Madame Blavatsky could hardly have launched her gospel when she did with equal hope of success. There is every justification for the assertion that Emerson's Orientalistic contribution to the general Transcendental trend of thought was preparatory to Theosophy.<sup>5</sup>

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## About the Author

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Emerson made his reputation in the areas of literature, religion, philosophy and social reform, but he also was a lifelong student of both natural and social science—including astronomy, physics, geology, botany, anthropology, and sociology—and befriended many of the leading scientists of his age. Emerson welcomed scientific activity and findings, even if they seemed to challenge traditional religious beliefs. He wrote,

Science corrects the old creeds; sweeps away, with every new perception, our infantile catechisms, and necessitates a faith commensurate with the grander orbits and universal laws which it discloses. Yet it does not surprise the moral sentiment. That was older, and awaited expectant these larger insights.<sup>6</sup>

Emerson's approach to gaining knowledge about himself and the world was to combine the perspectives of both poet and scientist. The poetic vision, which shows things in their right connection and procession, is needed because, in Emerson's words, "He only can derive all the advantage from intimate knowledge who forces the magnified objects back into their true perspective; who, after he has searched the proximate atoms, integrates them again, as in nature they are integrated."<sup>7</sup> The scientific method, which tests all hypotheses and theories against observed facts, is needed because, again in Emerson's words, "It is certainly true that the tendency of imaginative men is to rash generalization and to the confounding of intuitive perception with conjecture."<sup>8</sup> Peter Obuchowski, a Professor of English Literature, concludes, "The Poet-Scientist, the Emersonian ideal, is ... the man who is able to wed the facts of science to the spiritual dimension of experience without violating the validity of those facts."<sup>9</sup>

Emerson's son, Dr. Edward Emerson, gave this account of his father's method of composing essays:

All through his life he kept a journal ... This book, he said, was his "Savings Bank." The thoughts thus received and garnered in his journals were indexed, and a great many of them appeared in his pub-

lished works. They were religiously set down just as they came, in no order except chronological, but later they were grouped, enlarged or pruned, illustrated, worked into a lecture or discourse, and after having in this capacity undergone repeated testing and rearranging, were finally carefully sifted and more rigidly pruned, and were printed as essays.<sup>10</sup>

Emerson's writing is often criticized as difficult to understand. For example, David Maulsby, author of *Emerson: His Contribution to Literature*, reports,

To turn now to the more formal qualities of style, one of the favorite complaints of those who have read a little Emerson, and who perhaps are impatient of any reading that requires concentration, is that he is difficult to understand. The difficulty grows mainly out of the frequent lack of obvious connection in the course of his thought.<sup>11</sup>

This "frequent lack of obvious connection" may be due to Emerson's method of composition that was just described, as Oliver Wendell Holmes, a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, explains: "We can easily understand that in adjusting his mosaic fragments to each other there are likely to be occasional misfits which puzzle weary eyes and brains."<sup>12</sup> Charles Rubin, a Professor of Political Science, reports from another standpoint,

Emerson's thought is notoriously difficult to understand. For a writer of such tremendous popularity, his prose is complex and nuanced to an extent that impressed even his contemporaries, who were accustomed to complexity and nuance far beyond what would be acceptable today for any literary production speaking to more than a highly specialized audience.<sup>13</sup>

This "complexity and nuance" may be due to Emerson's building into his composition the perspectives of both poet and scientist.

Vince Brewton, a Professor of English, provides this overall assessment:

Emerson remains the major American philosopher of the nineteenth century and in some respects the central figure of Ameri-

can thought since the colonial period. Perhaps due to his highly quotable style, Emerson wields a celebrity unknown to subsequent American philosophers. The general reading public knows Emerson's work primarily through his aphorisms, which appear throughout popular culture on calendars and poster, on boxes of tea and breath mints, and of course through his individual essays. Generations of readers continue to encounter the more famous essays under the rubric of "literature" as well as philosophy, and indeed the essays, less so his poetry, stand undiminished as major works in the American literary tradition.<sup>14</sup>

### Bailey's Technique of Integration for the Fifth Ray

Teachings on the seven rays were part of the ancient Hindu *Rig Veda*, often dated between 1700 and 1100 BCE, and were introduced into the modern era by Blavatsky.<sup>15</sup> Alice Bailey (1880–1949), who was a member of the Theosophical Society and wrote extensively on the seven rays, 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.<sup>16</sup>

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.<sup>17</sup>

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.<sup>18</sup> 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."<sup>19</sup> 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."<sup>20</sup>

For Bailey, the term "personality" denotes the mental, emotional, and physical bodies; and "soul" denotes the "superconscious self," because she speaks of "The downflow of the superconscious self, the soul, carrying inspiration, higher knowledges and intuitions."<sup>21</sup> For Emerson, the term "soul" denotes a similar faculty, because he writes in a letter: "Reason is the highest faculty of the soul, what we mean by the soul itself; it never reasons, never proves; it simply perceives, it is vision."<sup>22</sup> Thus both Bailey and Emerson appear to use the term "soul" in a similar manner.

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 Fifth Ray, which is called "the ray of concrete knowledge or science." Bailey's Technique of Integration for the Fifth Ray is as follows:

"Towards me I draw the garment of my God. I see and know His form. I take that garment, piece by piece. I know its shape and color, its form and type, its parts component and its purposes and use. I stand amazed, I see naught else. I penetrate the

mysteries of form, but not the *Mystery*. I see the garment of my God. I see naught else.”

*Love of the form* is good but only as the form is known for what it is—the veiling vase of life. Love of the form must never hide the Life which has its place behind, the *One* who brought the form into the light of day, and preserves it for His use,—The *One Who* lives, and loves and serves the form, the *One Who Is*.

*The Word* goes forth from soul to form: “Behind that form, I am. Know Me. Cherish and know and understand the nature of the veils of life, but know as well the *One Who* lives. Know Me. Let not the forms of nature, their processes and powers prevent thy searching for the *Mystery* which brought the mysteries to thee. Know well the form, but leave it joyously and search for Me.”

“Detach thy thought from form and find Me waiting underneath the veils, the many-sided shapes, the glammers and the thought-forms which hide my real Self. Be not deceived. Find Me. Know Me. Then use the forms which then will neither veil nor hide the Self, but will permit the nature of that Self to penetrate the veils of life, revealing all the radiance of God, His power and magnetism; revealing all there is of form, of life, of beauty and usefulness. The mind reveals the *One*. The mind can blend and fuse the form and life. Thou art the *One*. Thou art the form. Thou art the mind. Know this.”<sup>23</sup>

The words “know” or “known” appear ten times in the foregoing Technique, which is consistent with it being associated with the “ray of concrete knowledge.” The purpose of this article is to demonstrate that the foregoing Technique is similar in meaning to passages in Emerson’s essays. 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*.”<sup>24</sup> 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 personality—consisting of their mental, emotional, and physical bodies—into increased *alignment* with their soul. As a result, their personality becomes slightly responsive to their soul.

Throughout this article, our interpretation of each segment of Bailey’s Technique of Integration for the Fifth Ray is given in *italic* and followed by parentheses that contain the corresponding words of the Technique. 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.

The first part of the first paragraph characterizes the practice of scientific research: *I investigate material forms based on two key assumptions* (“Towards me I draw the garment of my God”): *empiricism, which is the belief that sensory experience is the only valid source of knowledge* (“I see and know His form”); and *reductionism, which is the belief that understanding is acquired by reducing phenomena to more elementary ones* (“I take that garment, piece by piece”). *With these assumptions, I accumulate knowledge about material shapes and colors, structures and classifications, components, interrelations, and applications* (“I know its shape and color, its form and type, its parts component and its purposes and use”).

Bailey makes this comment: “For the Fifth Ray, the method of approaching the Path is by scientific research, pushed to ultimate conclusions, and by the acceptance of the inferences which follow these.”<sup>25</sup>

The second part of the first paragraph characterizes the alignment that is achieved through the practice of scientific research: *I stand amazed at my inference of a vitalizing force that is non-material* (“I stand amazed”), *because I cannot see it* (“I see naught else”). *I have penetrated the mysteries of the material world but not the mystery of life* (“I penetrate the mysteries of form, but not the *Mystery*”). *I see that nature is a symbol, or indication, of a deeper reality* (“I see the garment of my God”), *but I do not see that reality* (“I see naught else”).

“I stand amazed” in the Technique could be construed as “I wonder,” because “stand amazed” and “wonder” are synonyms. The word “stand,” however, also signifies alignment, as in Romans 5:2, “this grace wherein we stand.”<sup>26</sup> Bailey supports this association by speaking of an aspirant who “can take his stand and there align himself.”<sup>27</sup> Accordingly, increased alignment with the soul brings about the inference that a purely materialistic account of nature is inadequate. Put differently, this inference is actually, in Bailey’s words, “illumination, coming through the medium of the feebly established soul contact.”<sup>28</sup> Elsewhere, Bailey describes the viewpoint of people who have this inference:

Men everywhere are recognizing the accuracy of ... material science, yet at the same time they feel innately that there is, underlying the proven objective manifestation, some vitalizing force, and some coherent purpose which cannot be accounted for in terms of matter alone.<sup>29</sup>

Emerson also considers both parts of the alignment phase. He treats the first part by characterizing the practice of scientific research:

Our dealing with sensible objects is a constant exercise in the necessary lessons of difference, of likeness, of order, of being and seeming, of progressive arrangement; of ascent from particular to general; of combination to one end of manifold forces.<sup>30</sup>

He treats the second part by describing the viewpoint of scientists who have reached the above inference:

In all animal and vegetable forms, the physiologist concedes that no chemistry, no mechanics, can account for the facts, but a mysterious principle of life must be assumed, which not only inhabits the organ, but makes the organ.<sup>31</sup>

### 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.”<sup>32</sup> 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 the Fifth Ray of Concrete Knowledge or Science, 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 treats this crisis, which also uses the first-person perspective, as explained next.

The first sentence of the second paragraph characterizes the achievement of a balanced vision: *Appreciation of the material world is good but only if it is known for what it is: a form for life* (“Love of the form is good but only as the form is known for what it is—the veiling vase of life”).

Emerson’s balanced vision is as follows:

We learn that ... spirit creates; that behind nature, throughout nature, spirit is present; one and not compound, it does not act upon us from without, that is, in space and time, but spiritually, or through ourselves: therefore, that spirit, that is, the Supreme Being, does not build up nature around us, but puts it forth through us, as the life of the tree puts forth new branches and leaves through the pores of the old. As a plant upon the earth, so a man rests upon the bosom of God; he is nourished by unending fountains, and draws, at his need, inexhaustible power.<sup>33</sup>

The rest of the second paragraph describes the new inquiry that arises from the balanced vision: *Inquiry into the material world must never supplant inquiry into occultism, defined as the intelligent study of what is hidden* (“Love of the form must never hide the Life which has its place behind”), *such as teleology, or the idea that an overall design or purpose in nature has caused material phenomena and is directing that phenomena toward a definite end* (“the One who brought the form into the light of day, and preserves it for His use”); *holism, or the idea that a greater irreducible whole is responsible for life, love, and activity*

in the material world (“The One Who lives, and loves and serves the form”); and mysticism, or the idea that ultimate reality can be directly apprehended (“the One Who Is”).

According to the pattern of thought depicted above, the aspirants conclude that their inquiry into the material world must be balanced with their inquiry into occultism. This conclusion brings them to an inner crisis, or predicament, because they do not know how to proceed with their new inquiry. Bailey indicates that modern scientists are increasingly making this shift in emphasis: “Already, the trend of modern science is shifting into the realm of the intangible and into the world of the non-material. Hence also the fact that the opposition to occultism is waning and its day of power approaching.”<sup>34</sup>

Emerson was a scientific forerunner during the nineteenth century, because he concluded that the “preponderance of the senses,” which characterizes inquiry into the material world, must be balanced with “the lightnings of thought which ... reveal the moral order,” which characterizes inquiry into occultism:

This preponderance of the senses can we balance and redress? Can we give permanence to the lightnings of thought which lick up in a moment these combustible mountains of sensation and custom, and reveal the moral order after which the earth is to be rebuilt anew? Grave questions truly, but such as to leave us no option. To know the facts is already a choosing of sides, ranges us on the party of Light and Reason, sounds the signal for the strife, and prophecies an end to the insanity and a restoration of the balance and rectitude of man.<sup>35</sup>

Emerson proceeded with his inquiry into occultism, as shown by his writings on the three topics mentioned in the Technique. Emerson’s teleology can be found in this quotation, which

encourages us to interrogate nature and learn its purpose:

Undoubtedly we have no questions to ask which are unanswerable. We must trust the perfection of the creation so far, as to believe that whatever curiosity the order of things has awakened in our minds, the order of things can satisfy. Every man’s condition is a solution in hieroglyphic to those inquiries he would put. He acts it as life, before he apprehends it as truth. In like manner, nature is already, in its forms and tendencies,

describing its own design. Let us interrogate the great apparition, that shines so peacefully around us. Let us inquire, to what end is nature?<sup>36</sup>

Emerson’s holism can be found in his view of the world, in which each part is a reflection of the whole:

Herein is especially apprehended the unity of Nature, — the unity in variety, — which meets us everywhere. All the endless variety of things make an identical impression. Xenophanes complained in his old age, that, look where he would, all things hastened back to Unity. He was weary of seeing the same entity in the tedious variety of forms ... A leaf, a drop, a crystal, a moment of time is related to the whole, and partakes of the perfection of the whole. Each particle is a microcosm, and faithfully renders the likeness of the world.<sup>37</sup>

Emerson’s mystical vision is part of his essay *Nature*:

Standing on the bare ground, — my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space, — all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eye-ball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God. The name of the nearest friend sounds then foreign and accidental: to be brothers, to be acquaintances, — master or servant, is then a trifle and a disturbance. I am the lover of uncontained and immortal beauty.<sup>38</sup>

## Light

The aspirants begin their pursuit of occult knowledge by asking themselves questions about the unseen world. Bailey says, “asking of intelligent questions is the occult method of focusing the mind, of synthesizing knowledge, and of becoming aware of the field of inquiry, and of possible expansions of consciousness.”<sup>39</sup> According to Emerson, this process of questioning evokes subtle guidance: “But when, following the invisible steps of thought, we come to inquire, Whence is matter? and Whereto? many truths arise to us out of the recesses of consciousness.”<sup>40</sup> Eventually the aspirants enter the phase of *light* and see clearly the approach that they need to take. The Technique’s third paragraph treats this phase.

Bailey mentions “the intuitions which are sent to you from your soul.”<sup>41</sup> “*The Word*” at the beginning of the third paragraph is taken as an intuition, because it is said to go forth from the soul. Bailey speaks of “the personality or form,”<sup>42</sup> showing that she uses these two terms as synonyms. Thus the first sentence in the third paragraph has this meaning: *Intuitive guidance, which shows how to pursue occult knowledge, goes forth from the soul to the personality* (“*The Word* goes forth from soul to form”).

Emerson also describes the activity of inner guidance that shows how to pursue occult knowledge:

But the best read naturalist who lends an entire and devout attention to truth, will see that there remains much to learn of his relation to the world, and that it is not to be learned by any addition or subtraction or

other comparison of known quantities, but is arrived at by untaught sallies of the spirit, by a continual self-recovery, and by entire humility. He will perceive that there are far more excellent qualities in the student than preciseness and infallibility; that a guess is often more fruitful than an indisputable affirmation, and that a dream may let us deeper into the secret of nature than a hundred concerted experiments.<sup>43</sup>

## Learn about your self

The rest of the third paragraph, which uses the second-person grammatical perspective, depicts the series of intuitive instructions that are given. The first instruction is: *Behind the personality is your super-conscious self* (“Behind that form, I am”), and *the time has come to study that self* (“Know Me”).

Bailey writes, “The study of the super-conscious must be undertaken, and not simply the study of the self-conscious or of the subconscious. Through this study, carried forward with an open mind, modern psychology will eventually arrive at a recognition of the soul.”<sup>44</sup>

Emerson also tells us to study ourselves:

Our ignorance is great enough, and yet the fact most surprising is not our ignorance, but the aversion of men from knowledge ... Tell men to study themselves, and for the most part, they find nothing less interesting. Whilst we walk environed before and behind with Will, Fate, Hope, Fear, Love, and Death, these phantoms or angels, whom we catch at but cannot embrace, it is droll to see the contentment and incuriosity of man. All take for granted, — the learned as well as the unlearned, — that a great deal, nay, almost all, is known and forever settled. But in truth all is now to be begun, and every new mind ought to take the attitude of Columbus, launch out from the gaping loiterers on the shore, and sail west for a new world.<sup>45</sup>

## Study each veil of life

*Cherish and know and go beyond each veil of life that you inwardly discover* (“Cherish and know and understand the nature of the veils of

life”), *until you reach the indwelling life* (“but know as well the One Who lives”).

Bailey writes about this inward journey:

The veils are discarded one by one; the sheaths are dropped and superseded; the vehicles are dispensed with and the forms are no longer required, but the life ever remains ... When the man does this *consciously*, when he willingly and with full comprehension of what he has to do endeavors to set the indwelling life free from the veils that hide, and from the sheaths that imprison, he discovers that the method whereby this is accomplished is by the subjective life of occult meditation, and the objective life of service. In service is renunciation, and, under the occult law, therefore, in service the subjective finds liberation, and is set free from objective manifestation.<sup>46</sup>

Emerson describes the same journey:

Within every man’s thought is a higher thought,—within the character he exhibits to-day, a higher character. The youth puts off the illusions of the child, the man puts off the ignorance and tumultuous passions of youth; proceeding thence, puts off the egotism of manhood, and becomes at last a public and universal soul. He is rising to greater heights, but also rising to realities; the outer relations and circumstances dying out, he entering deeper into God, God into him, until the last garment of egotism falls, and he is with God,—shares the will and the immensity of the First Cause.<sup>47</sup>

### **Gain knowledge of the soul**

*Know the soul to be a fact in your experience* (“Know Me”).

Bailey says, “the true Fifth Ray person is apt to negate and refuse to admit, the fact of the Higher Self. He feels self-sufficient.”<sup>48</sup> Here, the “Higher Self” is a synonym for the soul.<sup>49</sup> She also says that there are people who know the soul as a fact in their experience:

The soul is as yet an unknown quantity. It has no real place in the theories of the academic and scientific investigators. It is un-

proven and regarded by even the more open-minded of the academicians as a possible hypothesis, but lacking demonstration. It is not accepted as a fact in the consciousness of the race. Only two groups of people accept it as a fact; one is the gullible, undeveloped, childlike person who, brought up on a scripture of the world, and being religiously inclined, accepts the postulates of religion—such as the soul, God and immortality—without questioning. The other is that small but steadily growing band of Knowers of God, and of reality, who know the soul to be a fact in their own experience but are unable to prove its existence satisfactorily to the man who admits only that which the concrete mind can grasp, analyze, criticize and test.<sup>50</sup>

Emerson describes how self-study can broaden into knowledge of the soul:

If we consider what happens in conversation, in reveries, in remorse, in times of passion, in surprises, in the instructions of dreams, ... we shall catch many hints that will broaden and lighten into knowledge of the secret of nature. All goes to show that the soul in man is not an organ, but animates and exercises all the organs; is not a function, like the power of memory, of calculation, of comparison, but uses these as hands and feet; is not a faculty, but a light; is not the intellect or the will, but the master of the intellect and the will; is the background of our being, in which they lie, — an immensity not possessed and that cannot be possessed. From within or from behind, a light shines through us upon things, and makes us aware that we are nothing, but the light is all.<sup>51</sup>

### **Avoid glamour**

*Let not the forms of nature, with their unfolding details and glammers, prevent an investigation of the deeper mystery of life that is responsible for the mysteries of the material world* (“Let not the forms of nature, their processes and powers prevent thy searching for the Mystery which brought the mysteries to thee”).

Bailey writes, “Fifth Ray people ... respond so easily and with such satisfaction to the power of thought; pride in their mental competence is their besetting sin and they are, therefore, set in their purposes and preoccupied with the world of the concrete and the intellectual.”<sup>52</sup> Bailey gives this definition, “*Glamour*, in its turn, veils and hides the truth behind the fogs and mists of feeling and emotional reaction,”<sup>53</sup> and lists seven glammers that are specifically related to Fifth Ray people and that tie them to the world of the concrete and the intellectual:

- The glamour of materiality, or over-emphasis of form.
- The glamour of the intellect.
- The glamour of knowledge and of definition.
- The glamour of assurance, based on a narrow point of view.
- The glamour of the form which hides reality.
- The glamour of organization.
- The glamour of the outer, which hides the inner.<sup>54</sup>

Emerson speaks about how empirical science can block an aspirant’s poetic vision, or contemplation of the whole:

Empirical science is apt to cloud the sight, and, by the very knowledge of functions and processes, to bereave the student of the manly contemplation of the whole. The savant becomes unpoetic.<sup>55</sup>

He also speaks about the need to guard against the enchantments of nature:

Every star in heaven is discontented and insatiable. Gravitation and chemistry cannot content them. Ever they woo and court the eye of every beholder. Every man who comes into the world they seek to fascinate and possess, to pass into his mind, for they desire to republish themselves in a more delicate world than that they occupy. It is not enough that they are Jove, Mars, Orion, and the North Star, in the gravitating firmament: they would have such poets as Newton, Herschel and Laplace, that they may re-exist and re-appear in the finer world of rational souls, and fill that realm with their fame ... Therefore man must be

on his guard against this cup of enchantments, and must look at nature with a supernatural eye. By piety alone, by conversing with the cause of nature, is he safe and commands it ... You will not understand it as when understanding some particular thing, but with the flower of the mind.<sup>56</sup>

### Practice Raja Yoga

*Practice Raja Yoga: during the concentration stage, analyze a form of nature* (“Know well the form”); *during the meditation stage, discover the abstract content being veiled by that form* (“but leave it joyously”); *and during the contemplation stage, identify with the soul of that form* (“and search for Me”).

*Raja Yoga*, which in Sanskrit means “royal union,” is a method of spiritual development that was first systematized in the ancient Hindu *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, often dated shortly after the beginning of the Common Era. Bailey writes, “*Raja Yoga* ... completes the work of development in the human kingdom. It is the science of the mind and of the purposeful will, and brings the higher of man’s sheaths in the three worlds under the subjection of the Inner Ruler.”<sup>57</sup>

The *Yoga Sutras* (Book III, Sutras 1, 2, and 3) describe the stages of concentration, meditation, and contemplation, which in Sanskrit are called *dharana*, *dhyana*, and *samadhi*:

1. Concentration is the fixing of the chitta (mind stuff) upon a particular object. This is *dharana*.
2. Sustained concentration (*dharana*) is meditation (*dhyana*).
3. When the chitta becomes absorbed in that which is the reality (or idea embodied in the form), and is unaware of separateness or the personal self, this is contemplation or *samadhi*.<sup>58</sup>

Bailey distinguishes between the first two stages: “Prolonged concentration upon some form or another eventually becomes meditation upon that which is *not* of the nature of form.”<sup>59</sup> The Technique’s phrase for the meditation stage, “but leave it joyously,” is taken as the discovery of the abstract content being veiled

by the concrete form, because Bailey speaks of “the joy of discovery.”<sup>60</sup> She also describes the contemplation stage in more detail:

In contemplation, ... all the emotional reactions of the desire-mind (kama-manas) vehicle are subdued and the yogi is unaware of them. He is, however, intensely alive and alert, positive and awake, for the brain and the mind are held by him in a steady grip, and are used by him without any interference on their part ... All sense of separateness or of the lower personal self are lost sight of, and he becomes identified with the *soul* of that form which has been the object of his meditation.<sup>61</sup>

Emerson emphasizes the following principle in several essays: “Man is such as his affection and thought are ... As he is, so he sees.”<sup>62</sup> He applies this principle to explicate the state of science:

Therefore, science always goes abreast with the just elevation of the man, keeping step with religion and metaphysics; or, the state of science is an index of our self-knowledge. Since everything in nature answers to a moral power, if any phenomenon remains brute and dark, it is that the corresponding faculty in the observer is not yet active.<sup>63</sup>

As an illustration of this principle, Emerson describes three ways of perceiving the world that correspond to the three stages of Raja Yoga:

1. *Concentration Stage*. “Some men classify objects by color and size and other accidents of appearance; others by intrinsic likeness.”<sup>64</sup>
2. *Meditation Stage*. “The progress of the intellect is to the clearer vision of causes, which neglects surface differences. To the poet, to the philosopher, to the saint, all things are friendly and sacred, all events profitable, all days holy, all men divine. For the eye is fastened on the life, and slights the circumstance. Every chemical substance, every plant, every animal in its growth, teaches the unity of cause, the variety of appearance.”<sup>65</sup>

3. *Contemplation Stage*. “But when a faithful thinker, resolute to detach every object from personal relations, and see it in the light of thought, shall, at the same time, kindle science with the fire of the holiest affections, then will God go forth anew into the creation.”<sup>66</sup>

## Revelation

By applying the foregoing intuitive instructions 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. The first part of the Technique’s fourth paragraph, which uses the second-person grammatical perspective, depicts the revelation phase.

### Act as if you were controlled by the soul

*Detach your thought from your personal concerns* (“Detach thy thought from form”), *act as if you were controlled by the soul* (“and find Me”), *and the result in your daily life will be as if all deceptive veils that hide your soul were non-existent, including your identifications with the lower self, glamours that distort perceptions, and thought-forms based on ignorance* (“waiting underneath the veils, the many-sided shapes, the glamours and the thoughtforms which hide my real Self”).

Acting “as if” is part of the psychotherapy developed by Alfred Adler (1870–1937), founder of the school of individual psychology, as psychologists Jon Carlson and Len Sperry explain:

For example, the Adlerian technique, *acting “as if,”* reflects the constructivist perspective. When someone has difficulty acting prosocially, that is, speaking assertively or responding with some measure of empathy, the clinician might encourage them to act “as if” they were assertive or empathic several times a day until the next session. The rationale for this reconstruction strategy is that as someone begins to act differently and to feel differently, they become a different person.<sup>67</sup>

Bailey describes how acting “as if” can be applied to bring in the soul’s activity:

There comes a time in the disciple’s life when he must assume that he knows; he must take the position that he comprehends, and must proceed to act upon the comprehended knowledge ... Govern yourself always “as if” your divine comprehension was perfected and the result in your daily life will be “as if” all concealed glammers and all hiding deceptive veils were non-existent ... The *as if* type of behavior (for the disciple) brings in a still higher factor than that of thought; it involves the constant attempt to live *as if* the soul (not the mind but through the mind) is in constant control and the dominating aspect of expression.<sup>68</sup>

Emerson also describes how acting “as if” can bring in the soul’s activity:

A certain wandering light appears, and is the distinction, the principle, we wanted. But the oracle comes, because we had previously laid siege to the shrine. It seems as if the law of the intellect resembled that law of nature by which we now inspire, now expire the breath; by which the heart now draws in, then hurls out the blood, — the law of undulation. So now you must labor with your brains, and now you must forbear your activity, and see what the great Soul showeth.<sup>69</sup>

Here, Emerson tells us to act “as if” the law of the intellect resembles nature’s law of undulation, so that we first labor with our brains and then forbear mental activity, while waiting to see what the soul shows.

### Overcome illusion

*Be not deceived by illusion when your reactions call forth criticism, separateness, or pride (“Be not deceived”); instead act as if you were controlled by the soul (“Find Me”) and then know the soul’s intuition (“Know Me”).*

Bailey says, “Fifth Ray people suffer the least from glamour but are primarily the victims of illusion.”<sup>70</sup> Victims of illusion have difficulty in recognizing that they are such victims, as

Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895–1986), a spiritual philosopher, explains:

Ignorance of the ways of the self leads to illusion; and once caught in the net of illusion, it is extremely hard to break through it. It is difficult to recognize an illusion, for, having created it, the mind cannot be aware of it.<sup>71</sup>

The illumination of the soul enables illusion to be recognized in the mind, because, in Bailey’s words, “It is the soul itself which dispels illusion, through the use of the faculty of the intuition.”<sup>72</sup>

Bailey writes, “The concept of separateness, of individual isolation, is an illusion of the unilluminated human mind,”<sup>73</sup> and calls it “the great illusion which has held, and still holds, the sons of men in thrall.”<sup>74</sup> The presence of this illusion can be inferred by its effects, so Bailey advises, “A deep distrust of one’s reactions to life and circumstances, when such reactions awaken and call forth *criticism, separateness or pride*, is of value.”<sup>75</sup>

Emerson emphasizes the extent of illusion: “I find men victims of illusion in all parts of life. Children, youths, adults, and old men, all are led by one bawble or another.”<sup>76</sup> He also indicates that illusion is involved in reactions of separateness and pride:

We live by our imaginations, by our admirations, by our sentiments. The child walks amid heaps of illusions, which he does not like to have disturbed. The boy, how sweet to him is his fancy! ... In the life of the dreariest alderman, fancy enters into all details, and colors them with rosy hue. He imitates the air and actions of people whom he admires, and is raised in his own eyes. He pays a debt quicker to a rich man than to a poor man. He wishes the bow and compliment of some leader in the state, or in society; weighs what he says; perhaps he never comes nearer to him for that, but dies at last better contented for this amusement of his eyes and his fancy.<sup>77</sup>

Emerson describes how to overcome illusion: “The one miracle which God works evermore is in Nature, and imparting himself to the

mind. When we ask simply, ‘What is true in thought? what is just in action?’ it is the yielding of the private heart to the Divine mind.”<sup>78</sup> Here, “true in thought” indicates freedom from illusion; “the yielding of the private heart to the Divine mind” indicates receiving an intuition from the soul, because Emerson also speaks of “the announcements of the soul” as “an influx of the Divine mind into our mind.”<sup>79</sup>

As Emerson explains, knowledge of the soul actually signifies knowledge of the soul’s intuition: “For the soul’s communication of truth is the highest event in nature, since it then does not give somewhat from itself, but it gives itself, or passes into and becomes that man whom it enlightens; or, in proportion to that truth he receives, it takes him to itself.”<sup>80</sup> Bailey expresses a similar idea: “The intuition is in reality only the appreciation by the mind of some factor in creation, some law of manifestation and some aspect of truth, known by the soul.”<sup>81</sup> Thus, in the interpretation given above, “Know Me” in the Technique is construed as “know the soul’s intuition,” because “Me” denotes the soul.

### **Express the nature of the soul outwardly**

*Then use the mental, emotional, and physical bodies as transparencies* (“Then use the forms which then will neither veil nor hide the Self”) *that permit the nature of the soul to be expressed outwardly* (“but will permit the nature of that Self to penetrate the veils of life”), *revealing the full shining forth of the divine nature* (“revealing all the radiance of God, His power and magnetism”), *bringing about a more beautiful and useful life in the material world* (“revealing all there is of form, of life, of beauty and usefulness”).

This part of the Technique is similar to Bailey’s description of “The process of ‘unveiling’ so that one by one those bodies which veil the Self are brought to a point where they are simply transparencies, permitting the full shining forth of the divine nature.”<sup>82</sup>

**What we commonly call man, the eating, planting, counting man, does not, as we know him, represent himself, but misrepresents himself. Him we do not respect, but the soul, whose organ he is, would he let it appear through his action, would make our knees bend. When it breathes through his intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through his will, it is virtue; when it flows through his affection, it is love.**

Emerson also describes the effects of expressing the soul’s nature outwardly:

A man is the façade of a temple wherein all wisdom and all good abide. What we commonly call man, the eating, planting, counting man, does not, as we know him, represent himself, but misrepresents himself. Him we do not respect, but the soul, whose organ he is, would he let it appear through his action,

would make our knees bend. When it breathes through his intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through his will, it is virtue; when it flows through his affection, it is love.<sup>83</sup>

### **Serve humanity**

*Use the mind to receive a revelation from the soul, such as a new idea, discovery, invention, or account of divine purpose* (“The mind reveals the One”), *and then use the mind to manifest that revelation in the material world so that human beings will live a more spiritual life* (“The mind can blend and fuse the form and life”).

Bailey describes Fifth Ray servers carrying out this form of service:

*Ray V.* The servers on this ray are coming rapidly into prominence. They are those who investigate the form in order to find its hidden idea, its motivating power, and to this end they work with ideas, proving them

either true or false ... From the sensed spiritual ideas, lying behind the form side of manifestation, from the many discoveries in the ways of God with man and nature, from the inventions (which are but materialized ideas) and from the witness to the Plan which law portrays, they are preparing that new world in which men will work and live a more deeply conscious, spiritual life.<sup>84</sup>

Emerson also describes this form of service but uses the term "Revelation," which is the past participle of the verb appearing in the Technique:

We distinguish the announcements of the soul, its manifestations of its own nature, by the term *Revelation*. These are always attended by the emotion of the sublime. For this communication is an influx of the Divine mind into our mind. It is an ebb of the individual rivulet before the flowing surges of the sea of life. Every distinct apprehension of this central commandment agitates men with awe and delight. A thrill passes through all men at the reception of new truth, or at the performance of a great action, which comes out of the heart of nature. In these communications, the power to see is not separated from the will to do, but the insight proceeds from obedience, and the obedience proceeds from a joyful perception.<sup>85</sup>

Bailey states, "Fifth Ray methods carry through to the physical plane; there they engender conflict and eventually produce a physical precipitation of the desired nature."<sup>86</sup> The Technique illustrates this principle by depicting the server's effort to receive a revelation and then to carry it through to the physical plane. In the above quotation, Emerson states that "the power to see is not separated from the will to do," which explains why a server is motivated to carry his or her revelation into the outer world.

## 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 final

part of the Technique's fourth paragraph, which also is written with the second-person perspective, depicts the integration phase.

*You are the soul, which is the knower* ("Thou art the One"); *you are the personality, which is the field of self-knowledge* ("Thou art the form"); *and you are the mind, which is the agent of knowing* ("Thou art the mind"). *Know the conjunction of these three factors, and thereby become illumined* ("Know this").

The Technique's integration phase is similar to an aphorism (Book IV, Sutra 23) in the *Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*: "Then the mind stuff, reflecting both the knower and the knowable, becomes omniscient."<sup>87</sup> Here, "mind stuff" is a translation of the Sanskrit word *chitta* and denotes the mental body, or mind.<sup>88</sup> Thus this aphorism includes the same three factors listed in the Technique and indicates that integration of these factors leads to omniscience.

Bailey provides her commentary on this aphorism:

This sutra is in the nature of a summation and emphasizes the fact that the mind, being stilled and quiescent through the practice of concentration and meditation, becomes the reflector of "that which is above and of that which lies below." It is the transmitter of the knowledge of the self to the physical brain of the man in incarnation, and the transmitter also of all that which the self knows and perceives. The field of knowledge is seen and known. The knower is also perceived, and the "perception of all objects" becomes possible ... Thus the knower, the field of knowledge and knowledge itself are brought into conjunction and the medium of this union is the mind.<sup>89</sup>

The foregoing aphorism and commentary are somewhat obscure, so let us try to clarify the integration phase. Bailey writes, "It must be remembered that each ray embodies an idea which can be sensed as an ideal."<sup>90</sup> An ideal is the mind's concrete formulation of an abstract idea known by the soul. Bailey speaks of the "seven groups of ideas and their resultant ideals,"<sup>91</sup> indicating that each of the seven rays embodies multiple ideas that are transformed

into multiple ideals. These ideas are similar to the concepts in Plato's ethical and metaphysical philosophy that are often translated as "Forms" or "Ideas," because they are unchanging, abstract yet substantial, and blueprints for emulation, and because they are independent entities whose existence and nature are graspable by the mind but are not dependent on being so grasped in order to exist.<sup>92</sup>

Bailey speaks of the progress that occurs when "your ideals have been superseded by greater and more spiritual ones,"<sup>93</sup> which suggests that each ray embodies a *sequence* of ideas that forms a *sequence* of ideals. According to the Technique's revelation phase, the sequence of ideals formed by the Fifth Ray includes the following: act *as if* you were controlled by the soul, overcome illusion, express the nature of the soul outwardly, and serve humanity. When the mind has transformed an idea into an ideal and made the personality conform to that ideal, the mind is able to grasp the next idea in its sequence. Thus increased illumination occurs through the conjunction of the soul's idea, the mind's ideal, and the personality's activity.

Our interpretation of the integration phase is as follows: the conjunction of the soul's idea, the mind's ideal, and the personality's activity is progressively attained for even higher, or more evolved, ideals than were explicitly depicted for the revelation phase. Bailey describes the illumination towards which this series of conjunctions progresses:

The mode or method of development for humanity is self-expression and self-realization. When this process is consummated the self-expressed is the One Self or the ray Life, and the realization achieved is the revelation of God as the quality of the manifested world and as the Life behind appearance and quality. The seven ray Lives, or the seven soul types, are seen as the expression of one Life, and diversity is lost in the vision of the One and in identification with the One.<sup>94</sup>

Emerson describes a similar experience of illumination, mentioning "soul," "energies," and "thoughts," which correspond to the three factors listed in the Technique:

I am somehow receptive of the great soul, and thereby I do overlook the sun and the stars, and feel them to be the fair accidents and effects which change and pass. More and more the surges of everlasting nature enter into me, and I become public and human in my regards and actions. So come I to live in thoughts, and act with energies, which are immortal. Thus revering the soul, and learning, as the ancient said, that "its beauty is immense," man will come to see that the world is the perennial miracle which the soul worketh, and be less astonished at particular wonders; he will learn that there is no profane history; that all history is sacred; that the universe is represented in an atom, in a moment of time. He will weave no longer a spotted life of shreds and patches, but he will live with a divine unity.<sup>95</sup>

## Conclusions

What are the purposes of the two authors that we have been comparing? David Robinson, a Professor of American Literature, considers the case of Emerson: "We find the author who reports his experience and observations, building from them a vantage point from which to engender the work of self-culture in himself and in others."<sup>96</sup> Bailey's "Technique of Integration for the Fifth Ray" depicts a pattern of guidance that is said to lead to integration with the soul. Thus both Emerson and Bailey had the same purpose: encouraging the work of self-culture.

Emerson's essays and Bailey's Technique are often thought of as difficult to understand. By showing that Emerson's essays have passages that are similar in meaning to those in Bailey's Technique, the foregoing demonstration clarifies both sources. Emerson's essays are clarified, because we can see how cardinal points in his essays fit together to form a coherent technique. Bailey's Technique is also clarified, because we can see how her symbolic statements can be expressed in a more comprehensible way and be applied.

Our comparison of Emerson's essays to Bailey's Technique is related to some earlier work. Newton Dillaway (1904–1973), a con-

tributor to the New Thought movement, believed that Emerson's spiritual gospel was hidden within many essays, poems, and letters. He wrote *The Gospel of Emerson* as a digest to highlight that gospel with virtually all of the text consisting of direct quotations. Dillaway described his objectives:

The main objectives were to bring out the cardinal points of the subject under consideration, and to arrange the quotations in some semblance of order and progression.<sup>97</sup>

Our comparison is related to Dillaway's book, because we used Bailey's Technique to bring out the cardinal points in Emerson's essays and to arrange Emerson's quotations in the associated order.

Although Emerson's essays often use the term "inspiration," we could not find in them any explicit experiential definition of this term, but did infer the following implicit definition: *Inspiration denotes an involuntary perception of the mind.* This definition is implied, because one essay prescribes leaning on inspiration ("I believe that nothing great and lasting can be done except by inspiration, by leaning on the secret augury"<sup>98</sup>), while another essay prescribes a perfect faith in involuntary perceptions ("Every man discriminates between the voluntary acts of his mind, and his involuntary perceptions, and knows that to his involuntary perceptions a perfect faith is due"<sup>99</sup>). Evidence that Emerson was an inspired writer, in the sense that he converted his involuntary perceptions into words, is as follows:

First, in the essay entitled "Self-Reliance," he included himself as part of the "we" who receive truth: "We lie in the lap of immense intelligence, which makes us receivers of its truth and organs of its activity. When we discern justice, when we discern truth, we do nothing of ourselves, but allow a passage to its beams."<sup>100</sup>

Second, in the essay entitled "Powers and Laws of Thought," he described his discipline of studying his mind to learn its laws, including that of inspiration: "I wish to know the laws of this wonderful power that I may domesticate it [the mind]. I observe with curiosity its rising and its settings, il-

lumination and eclipse; its obstructions and its provocations, that I may learn to live with it wisely, court its aid, catch sight of its splendor, feel its approach, hear and save its oracles and obey them. But this watching of the mind, in season and out of season, to see the mechanics of the thing, is a little of the detective."<sup>101</sup>

Third, in the essay entitled "Instinct and Inspiration," he described the traits of the "inspired state," which suggests that he had knowledge of that state. For example, one such trait is "incessant advance": "For it is the curious property of truth to be uncontainable and ever enlarging."<sup>102</sup>

Fourth, in the essay entitled "Inspiration," he lamented, "We cannot make the inspiration consecutive." Consequently, he answered the question "Are these moods in any degree within control?" by discussing nine ways of inducing inspiration.<sup>103</sup>

Fifth, as reported earlier, Emerson kept a journal all through his life in which he carefully set down the thoughts just as they came to him, and composed each essay by assembling together some of those thoughts. Emerson wrote, "All men are inspirable. Whilst they say only the beautiful and sacred words of necessity, there is no weakness, and no repentance. But the moment they attempt to say these things by memory, charlatanism begins."<sup>104</sup> Emerson's method of composition suggests that his essays incorporate his inspired thoughts in roughly the form in which they came, and it is consistent with his notion that reliance on memory could distort those thoughts.

Bailey, in her autobiography, claimed that her writings were inspired by what Theosophy calls the "Masters of the Wisdom."<sup>105</sup> If her teachings on the seven rays were accepted on the basis of that claim of authority, then her teachings would be like a revealed religion, because they would be regarded as based on revelations given to humankind from superhuman beings. Can Bailey's teachings 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 Fifth Ray technique and Emerson's essays, corroborates this hypothesis, because of the evidence that Emerson was an inspired writer.

Previous articles show that the initial chapters of the *Bhagavad Gita* are similar to the First Ray technique,<sup>106</sup> the *Second Epistle of Peter* is similar to the Second Ray technique,<sup>107</sup> chapter 10 of the *Revelation of St. John* is similar to the Third Ray technique,<sup>108</sup> the *Tao Te Ching* is similar to the Fourth Ray technique,<sup>109</sup> *Ecclesiastes* is similar to the Sixth Ray technique,<sup>110</sup> and the *Book of Habakkuk* is similar to the Seventh Ray technique.<sup>111</sup> Thus there is increasing evidence that the above hypothesis is valid, namely, that Bailey's ray techniques do symbolically depict the archetypal patterns of integration.

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<sup>1</sup> Julius H. Ward, "Emerson in New-England Thought," *The Andover Review*, vol. VIII, October 1887, 389.  
<sup>2</sup> Ralph W. Emerson, "The Transcendentalist," from *Lectures*, published as part of *Nature; Addresses and Lectures*, collected in *Essays and Lectures* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1983), 196.  
<sup>3</sup> Helena P. Blavatsky, "What is Theosophy?" *The Theosophist*, vol. I, no. 1, October 1879, 2-5; reprinted in H. P. Blavatsky, *Collected Writings*, vol. II (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Society in America, 2002), 87-97.  
<sup>4</sup> Mitch Horowitz, *Occult America* (New York: Bantam Books, 2009), 50.  
<sup>5</sup> Alvin B. Kuhn, *Theosophy: A Modern Revival*

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*of Ancient Wisdom* (New York: Henry Holt, 1930), 27.  
<sup>6</sup> Ralph W. Emerson, "Progress of Culture," *Letters and Social Aims* (London: Macmillan, 1903), 204.  
<sup>7</sup> Ralph W. Emerson, "The Naturalist," *The Early Lectures of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959), 81.  
<sup>8</sup> Ralph W. Emerson, "Humanity of Science," *The Selected Lectures of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2005), 30.  
<sup>9</sup> Peter A. Obuchowski, *Emerson and Science* (Great Barrington, MA: Lindisfarne Books, 2005), 2.  
<sup>10</sup> Oliver W. Holmes, "Emerson," *Chambers's Encyclopaedia: A Dictionary of Universal Knowledge*, vol. IV (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1889), 325.  
<sup>11</sup> David L. Maulsby, *Emerson: His Contribution to Literature* (Tufts College, MA: Tufts College Press, 1911), 29.  
<sup>12</sup> Holmes, "Emerson," 325.  
<sup>13</sup> Charles T. Rubin, "The Mystery of Nature and Culture: Ralph Waldo Emerson," *Conservation Reconsidered: Nature, Virtue, and American Liberal Democracy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), 161.  
<sup>14</sup> Vince Brewton, "Ralph Waldo Emerson," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/emerson/#H3> (accessed May 20, 2012).  
<sup>15</sup> Zachary F. Lansdowne, "Vedic Teachings on the Seven Rays," *Esoteric Quarterly*, Spring 2010.  
<sup>16</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I (1936; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1979), 316.  
<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.  
<sup>18</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II (1942; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1981), 345, 352.  
<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 346-347, 378.  
<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 351.  
<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 439.  
<sup>22</sup> Barry M. Andrews, *Emerson as Spiritual Guide: A Companion to Emerson's Essays for Personal Reflection and Group Discussion* (Boston: Skinner House Books, 2003), 14.  
<sup>23</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 368-369.  
<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 347.  
<sup>25</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I, 208.  
<sup>26</sup> King James Version.  
<sup>27</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 373.

- <sup>28</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem* (1950; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1973), 55.
- <sup>29</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Consciousness of the Atom* (1922; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1973), 13-14.
- <sup>30</sup> Ralph W. Emerson, "Discipline," Chapter V from *Nature*, published as part of *Nature; Addresses, and Lectures*, collected in *Essays and Lectures* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1983), 26.
- <sup>31</sup> Ralph W. Emerson, "The Method of Nature" from *Addresses*, published as part of *Nature; Addresses, and Lectures*, collected in *Essays and Lectures* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1983), 119.
- <sup>32</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I, 42.
- <sup>33</sup> Ralph W. Emerson, "Spirit," Chapter VII from *Nature*, published as part of *Nature; Addresses, and Lectures*, collected in *Essays and Lectures* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1983), 41.
- <sup>34</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology* (1951; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1979), 216.
- <sup>35</sup> Ralph W. Emerson, "The Senses and the Soul" from *Dial Essays*, published as part of *Uncollected Prose*, collected in *Essays and Lectures* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1983), 1195.
- <sup>36</sup> Ralph W. Emerson, "Introduction" from *Nature*, published as part of *Nature; Addresses, and Lectures*, collected in *Essays and Lectures* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1983), 7.
- <sup>37</sup> Emerson, "Discipline," 29-30.
- <sup>38</sup> Ralph W. Emerson, "Nature," Chapter I from *Nature*, published as part of *Nature; Addresses, and Lectures*, collected in *Essays and Lectures* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1983), 10.
- <sup>39</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing* (1953; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1978), 307.
- <sup>40</sup> Emerson, "Spirit," 41.
- <sup>41</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. I (1944; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1976), 476.
- <sup>42</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 187.
- <sup>43</sup> Ralph W. Emerson, "Prospects," Chapter VIII from *Nature*, published as part of *Nature; Addresses, and Lectures*, collected in *Essays and Lectures* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1983), 43.
- <sup>44</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I, 100.
- <sup>45</sup> Emerson, "The Senses and the Soul," 1191.
- <sup>46</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation* (1922; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1974), 239-240.
- <sup>47</sup> Ralph W. Emerson, "Immortality," *Letters and Social Aims* (London: Macmillan, 1903), 257.
- <sup>48</sup> Bailey, *Glamour*, 223.
- <sup>49</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (1925; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1973), 48.
- <sup>50</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic* (1934; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1979), 17.
- <sup>51</sup> Ralph W. Emerson, "The Over-Soul," *Essays: First Series*, collected in *Essays and Lectures* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1983), 386-387.
- <sup>52</sup> Bailey, *Glamour*, 223.
- <sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 241.
- <sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 122.
- <sup>55</sup> Emerson, "Prospects," 43.
- <sup>56</sup> Emerson, "The Method of Nature," 126.
- <sup>57</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Light of the Soul* (1927; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1978), 120.
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 237.
- <sup>59</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. II (1955; reprint. New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1972), 213.
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 655.
- <sup>61</sup> Bailey, *The Light of the Soul*, 249.
- <sup>62</sup> Ralph W. Emerson, "Swedenborg; or, the Mystic," *Representative Men*, collected in *Essays and Lectures* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1983), 678.
- <sup>63</sup> Ralph W. Emerson, "The Poet," *Essays: Second Series*, collected in *Essays and Lectures* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1983), 453.
- <sup>64</sup> Ralph W. Emerson, "History," *Essays: First Series*, collected in *Essays and Lectures* (New York: Literary Classics of the United States, 1983), 241.
- <sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 241-242.
- <sup>66</sup> Emerson, "Prospects," 47.
- <sup>67</sup> Jon Carlson and Len Sperry, "Adlerian Psychotherapy as a Constructivist Psychotherapy," in Michael F. Hoyt (ed.), *The Handbook of Constructive Therapies: Innovative approaches from leading practitioners* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), 73.
- <sup>68</sup> Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. II, 554-556.
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# Reading the Heavens: Astrological Perspectives Towards an Astrosophy, June 2012

Istituto di Ricerche Urusvati

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*The perfect inspiring model of government is exercised by the unfathomable Heaven, the unmatched symbol of total and ordered freedom, true source of the cosmic Law, unwritten but recognizable.<sup>1</sup>*

## Abstract

This study presents four main perspectives for the evolution of an *astrosophy* (etymologically, *the wisdom of Stars*), which envisions the reunification of astrology and astronomy, of the subjective and objective aspects of the *Science of Spatial Relationships*, into only one science-religion-art of the *Reading of the Heavens*. The *Signs of the Heavens* for the 2012 June solstice and Cancer-Capricorn direction attempts to provide an interpretative and practical portrait of the energies that are *active* in the four perspectives/charts of the One Heart, the point of Light which goes forward and unifies all the worlds.

## Introduction

The basis for decoding and “singing” the celestial sounds is esoteric astrology. Esoteric astrology rules, has ruled and will rule (in proportion to the degree of connection with the Hierarchy of Masters) any reading of the general and individual “heaven,” as well as any astronomical discovery. As we know, it was mainly (and is still unceasingly) revealed to humanity by the Tibetan Master Djwhal Khul only about a century ago.

It is a fact that all science is based on the occult knowledge of real models or archetypes, and that humanity gradually recognizes this is another fact. So it is for astrology, called the “primary science” in the Ageless Wisdom teachings and the *Science of Spatial Relationships*.

As originally presented, the matrix of esoteric astrology is geocentric because it is directed to terrestrial humanity in its three degrees of re-

sponse to energies, i.e., global and individual initiate, disciple and aspirant. Ordinary humanity reacts to exoteric astrology, a mostly unreliable veil of the esoteric one. On the other hand, the heliocentric model,<sup>2</sup> a more recent perspective, offers humanity the possibility of serving as a “solarized group” on Earth, who can also begin to direct its focus to the greater Whole.

The boundaries of the Cosmos touch us, and the teachings, which serve as the launch site, guide us by heavenly leaps, to co-measure different points of view and various entities of Space. It is like marking, on the causal plane, the layout of the cosmic Temple guarded by those unities of Life who can recognize and apply, at all levels, the heavenly decrees. The foundations of the Temple have been placed by the Masters, by those Hearts who are the Temple itself. Emblematic of this is what the Tibetan Master reports of the Zodiacal Signs, being the values of the Zodiac that guide and support all astrological interpretations, both in the geocentric and heliocentric perspectives, either tropical or sidereal, set by the planetary Hierarchy on the mental plane millions of years ago. The accuracy of

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## About the Author

The Urusvati Institute of Researches (*Istituto di Ricerche Urusvati*) is an international group with a large membership in Italy. The group works with the laws and models of Sound & Light in resonance with the energies of the Third Ray as indicated by DK for Italy and France. Each member seeks to embody a divine Number/Interval/Color and express its power *as if*. Our shared aim involves working with the Sciences of Harmonics, Astrology and Cycles in alignment with the Plan for Earth and in an effort to imitate the hierarchical Model. [www.urusvati.org](http://www.urusvati.org).

astrological prediction and interpretation will be based, in part, upon the following factor:

The potency of the thoughtforms which have *been built up in connection with the twelve signs*.

These thoughtforms were originally constructed or anchored upon the mental plane by the Hierarchy in Atlantean days and they have steadily gained in power ever since. They serve as focal points for certain forces.<sup>3</sup>

## Astrological Perspectives Towards an Astrosophy

On these cornerstones, established by those who are able to think at least as a solar humanity, the Temple of the human Heart grows stable and well oriented by the *Ritual of the Mysteries*. This Temple is established and works, currently, according to a triad of Fires, or “tension points” listed below:

- The *synthetic* one of the solar Hierophant, who at the altar, raises his eyes to the Heavens, to the lantern of the central dome, the summit of the pyramid, and anchors the celestial energies into the Temple (electric fire).
- The *unitary* one of the solar Hierophant, who before the altar, distributes the Eucharist to the assembly, the sacrament of Communion (solar fire).
- The *differentiated* one of the participants (the planets, the creatures) who can give back what they receive and react to (fire by friction).

These “tension points” correspond to four main “points of view” to be considered in the “Readings of the Heavens,” the four perspectives of the Heart established on the *plan of love and light* of the ecliptic (the Temple), pulsating in united breath and unified rhythm with:

1. The solar system in the cosmos
2. The solar system in the zodiac
3. The planetary system in the zodiac
4. The planetary system in the cosmos

The Heart, the altar and the very unity of Life, like a Sun, can orient in all directions of Space

to recognize its collective destiny and trace the trails of the “point of light that moves forward.”

We look at the main features of these four perspectives:

1. **The solar system in the cosmos** (first heliocentric sidereal chart). The *solar Heart* is identified with the Sun at the center of the cosmic sphere, and directs its centers/luminaries to the higher stellar centers:<sup>4</sup>

- The origin or starting point on the ecliptic is identified with the alignment between the Sun and the Galactic Center, *the cosmic ascendant* of the solar system between the **Constellations** (the focus of sidereal astrology while **Signs** are of the tropical one) of the Archer and of the Scorpion. Approximately every 12500-13000 years, this cosmic Gate is close to the direction of the current solstices,<sup>5</sup> or to the Door of Initiation (Capricorn) and the Door of Incarnation (Cancer).
- Significantly, from the “point of view” of the central Sun, *the ecliptic alignments between Stars and Planets*, such as vital impulses to the solar Temple and Plan, especially from the three main Stars of the Constellations of the cosmic Triad (1. Merak/Great Bear; 2. Sirius; 3. Alcyone/Pleiades).
- The Initiate-Humanity, at the center (Heart) and at the top (Head), serves the perspective of *universal or cosmic life and consciousness as if it were—here and now—the planetary head center of Shamballa*.

2. **The solar system in the zodiac** (second heliocentric chart). The *planetary Heart* is identified with the “Heart of the Sun” at the center of the twelve zodiacal signs.

- The origin of divine manifestation begins with the first Zodiacal **Sign of Aries**, the *solar ascendant*. This “subjective” starting point coincides with the Sun-Earth alignment at the “objective” March Equinox, or *planetary ascend-*

*ant*, which is currently rising among the astronomical Constellations of the Fishes and of the Water-Bearer, in the coming Age of Aquarius.

- Significantly, from the Sun's "point of view," the *psycho-geometries of the solar Plan created by the Luminaries in the Signs*, the 12 "petals" of the Heart of the Sun.
- The Disciple-Humanity, at the center, serves the perspective of *group or solar consciousness*, as if it were—*here & now*—the planetary heart center, the Hierarchy.

3. **The planetary system in the zodiac** (third geocentric tropical chart). The *human Heart* is identified with the Planet at the center of the 12 Signs:

- The origin of planetary manifestation is the starting point of the equinoctial 0° (degrees) of Aries, *the direction of the planetary soul* (the cornerstone of the vision defined as *tropical*).
- The human Heart at the center, identified with its planet (the person-**Earth**), looks at and follows the soul-**Sun**, whose influence is colored by the 12 signs/qualities of the golden 12 petalled Lotus of the planetary Logos. Compared to the heliocentric view, what changes is above all the aspects, the positions or values of the other Luminaries in the Signs, especially those of "fast" planets (Mercury, Venus, Mars).
- The Aspirant-Humanity serves as the perspective of *the individual or planetary consciousness*.

From the geocentric perspective, the full moons<sup>6</sup> are considered especially favorable periods of approach between Hierarchy and

Humanity. We could also consider the full moons from the perspective of unification or synthesis between Highest and Lowest. In other words, assuming the point of tension of the

**Ordinary humanity reacts to exoteric astrology, a mostly unreliable veil of the esoteric one. On the other hand, the heliocentric model, a more recent perspective, offers humanity the possibility of serving as a "solarized group" on Earth, who can also begin to direct its focus to the greater Whole.**

"central spiritual presence," the Heart redirects the general human invocation-evocation to the putative cosmic ruler of the current Zodiacal Sign – as it happens for example, in the connection between Sirius and Leo: "*Leo, in the cosmic sense (and apart from our solar system altogether) is ruled by Sirius*" –

thus consciously carving in Space the synthetic direction:

*Cosmic entity-Zodiacal axis-Sun-Earth-Moon.*

4. **The planetary system in the cosmos** (fourth geocentric sidereal chart). The *human & planetary Heart* is identified with the Cosmic Sphere, just *where & when* It is, whether it be on Earth, on Jupiter, on Sirius, on Andromeda, etc.:

- The origin or starting point of the 12 sacred sectors/petals on the ecliptic is also identified with the alignment between the Sun and the Galactic Center, as it is for the heliocentric sidereal perspective. This supernal direction is *the cosmic ascendant* of all the creatures of the solar system, darting between the Constellations of the Archer and of the Scorpion. In the wheel of Becoming or manifestation, the cosmic ascendant actually *rises* on the local horizon, to release its abstracting and initiating power, at a different time for each terrestrial horizon corresponding to the location of the individual Heart. But the *direction* is the same in each case. What is unceasingly changing is the elusive but *real* time of each local or *here & now* alignment. Heart can look for and find this *cosmic ascend-*

ant in each day or minor planetary breath.

- The human Heart at the center, *identified* with every being including the Heart of the planet (the monad-**Earth**), “oriented” to and through the cosmic Origin, follows the infinite and qualified Sphere of the Heavens, stars, planets, directions, plans, etc. Each Heart is one of them and One with them. He has the Heavens in the Heart and his Heart IS the Heavens, in the eternal and infinite here & now.
- The infinite *Idea* of Humanity serves Be-ness and all It’s perspectives immersed in the individual *universal consciousness*.

As the Tibetan Master Djwhal Khul states:

Much has been given in the occult books of which the average astrologer remains profoundly unaware. It is essential that he

learns to think in larger Wholes and to be more deeply concerned with the emanating Sources and with the eternal persistent Causes than with the effects of these Sources upon that ephemeral creation, a human being and his temporary existence upon a most unimportant planet. As he seeks to do this, he will discover for himself the signs of the essential divinity of man—a divinity which is to be found in the infinite grasp of man's consciousness when illumined by the light of the soul and in his power to project his thought into the consciousness of those manifold Lives Whose “energetic movements” he must perforce share because his small modicum of energy is an integral part of Theirs.<sup>7</sup>

Therefore, let us raise our eyes to the Heavens and listen to the scintillating numbers and harmonious paths of Fire. (Figure 1 follows)



In the first heliocentric sidereal chart, the Heart, immersed in its highest depths, lost in the supernal Light of the firmament, in the cosmic horizon of the Sun, can join, *even in the relative but real cycle of Becoming*, the electrical impulses coming from the Stars (solar and cosmic Logoi), through the *directions* created by Their alignment with the solar Luminaries (planetary Logoi), vibrations that stir and move “the entire solar system considered as a unit.”

The Heart co-vibrates with these primary impulses both in the deep silence of its work and through the radiant light of understanding. We know something about the qualities of the Stars and the Constellations and their relationship to our solar system through the Teachings, as well as from the Rays or the solar functions of the planets. The Hierarchy imparted the *Science of the Spatial Relationships* to teach us the sublime order of spiritual Sources. It unveiled the *Science of Cycles* to teach us the art of following the solar Plan, so that the Purpose of our planetary Logos could be revealed from out of the “fiery sea” of higher solar and cosmic energies.

“Do not miss the date” is written in letters of fire, and humbly but boldly we look into the Heavenly Heart for the directions and signs that will guide us toward the vital sources of Being. Thus, *well-oriented*, we lightly proceed, on this our globe so crucified, but nestled in the deepest flight of Life.

We can honor and try to suggest the possible quality of some of these events which the solar Eye, turned toward its Cosmic Abode, traces. And in accordance with these cosmic events, we can begin to orient the Centers of the *human central Presence*, the *Jewel of Synthesis* at the center of Humanity, to the guiding Stars of the firmament. Now is the time to plant the seed of the future Humanity who will recognize its own universal dignity and will consciously collaborate with their cosmic Brothers, already glorious Servants of Freedom. As the eye sees what the Heart knows, Humanity can see what Hierarchy knows.

The first chart (Figure 1) highlights the Stars of the cosmic Triad and, in particular, the ecliptic projection of those primary Stars which *live* and

*pulsate* in the celestial segments magnified by the Stars of the **Twins** (Gemini) and of the opposite **Archer** (Sagittarius).

In this chart the cosmic “horizontal” orientation corresponds to our (normally vertically represented) terrestrial solstices’ axis. This occult double impulse restarts the whole breath/revolution around the Sun, which is currently very close to the alignment with the Galactic Center, the great cosmic Origin, Source and Goal. Across the June solstice, the Sun points to the Galactic Center Magnet through the Earth as a viewfinder, intersecting one of the primary heavenly planes perpendicular to the ecliptic, the one vitalized and qualified by the Stars **Polaris** (Little Bear/Ursa Minor), **Betelgeuse** (Orion) and **Eltanin** (Dragon).

The Direction is fixed at another time (Polaris) at all levels (Earth) in the solar system, driven by the supernal Life energy (Galactic Center, Dragon) and held by the “septenary clairvoyance” and Heart sensitiveness (Betelgeuse-Orion).<sup>8</sup>

Everything resurrects at each of the four discontinuities (solstices and equinoxes) of the planetary annual cycle. The four sacred Doors of the *Cross of Life*, of the Heart, are strengthened by these highest Fires, and in the Cross solstices’ arm the planetary spine (the rotation polar axis) functions as an initiatory Rod that liberates the relentless and solving power of the planetary Heart.

This 2012 solstice shows a wonderful solar triangle starting from the peak guarded by Betelgeuse and Polaris and drawn by Saturn (Third Ray the solar Architect and Thinker) very close to Mars (Sixth Ray, the solar Desire put into Action) and flying together between the Stars of Balance, and by Neptune (Sixth Ray, the Lord of spatial Waters) in the Water Bearer. The resultant triangle or bow of energies creates a tension that spreads outward in creative and reunifying vortexes, via the immense energy of the galactic Arrow.

The proximity of Jupiter (Second Ray, the solar Master of Love) to **Alcyone** (the evidence of the *Central Spiritual Sun* in the Pleiades constellation) opens the Heart to higher or deeper worlds, namely to our “local” cosmic Magnet.

Many other extra-solar connections should be considered, as many as the visible (and invisible) Stars “touched” by the solar Centers/Luminaries during Their orbital revolution. For now, it will suffice to mention the “meetings,” or better “identifications,” occurring in the celestial channel being magnified by Sun-Earth direction through the Stars of the **Twins** and of the **Archer**. (The exact alignment between Earth-Sun axis and the Two Twins, **Castor** “the mortal” and **Pollux** “the immortal”, the personal and soul Mind, occurs between July 12 and 15.) In this heavenly hourglass pulsates another primary stellar direction, i.e., the polarity between **Sirius**, the Son of Suns and **Isis**, and **Vega** (Lyra), the player of the sevenfold lyre, crossed at every turn by our Planet on July 7 and now also by Venus on June 25, 2012.

It is worth noting that Earth always intersects the fiery points of cosmic Stars on the ecliptic, that is, at a certain *degree* of its annual cycle. For all the other Luminaries (either faster or slower), to have the same constancy of *date/grade* you must consider the individual daily and yearly cycles of each Planet. This allows us to recognize that some *days/degrees* of the *year* of each Planet are sacred to certain *stellar directions*, as if this might be their primary cosmic archetype characterizing that influence within the solar system of reference (heliocentric perspective) or planetary (geocentric perspective). Thus, in the heliocentric point of view or point of tension for the Earth, it is important that the following dates (which pertain to certain primary Stars) are duly noted:

January 5 to Sirius (Canis Major)  
 January 14 to Pollux (the Twins)  
 February 7 to Merak (Great Bear-Ursa Major)  
 February 18 to Regulus (Leo)  
 April 13 to Spica (Virgo)  
 May 1 to Acrux (Southern Cross)  
 May 20 to Rigil/Alpha Kentauri (Centaurus)  
 May 31 to Antares (Scorpio)  
 June 18 to Eltanin (Dragon) and to the Galactic Center  
 July 7 to Vega (Lyra)  
 August 26 to Fomalhaut (Piscis Austrinus)  
 November 22 to Alcyone (Pleiades)  
 December 1 to Aldebaran (Taurus)  
 December 18, sacred to Polaris (Little Bear)  
 December 20 to Betelgeuse (Orion)

These dates signify supreme appointments with very high and deep sources, as well as infinite directions for the solar Heart qualified by the Units of cosmic Life. They are cyclic and directional moments whose inspirations interpenetrate and refract through the various cosmic, solar, planetary and human spheres of influence.

The “objective” sphere is not all of reality, likewise the “subjective” sphere, but the key which is able to merge them together flies on the wings of the synthetic vision, and reveals what the heart has always known, namely that the Form does not lie and that Matter and Spirit are the only entity for the liberated consciousness. (Figure 2 follows)



The second heliocentric tropical chart highlights, as noted above, the planetary aspects or *psycho-geometries* from the standpoint of the Sun and according to the esoteric wheel of the 12 Signs. In fact, this is the perspective called *tropical*, i.e., referring to the planetary positions in the ideal<sup>9</sup> Zodiac (30° sections) with respect to the Point of Beginning of Earth's equinox (the direction of planetary Soul). This Point veils the electrical and initiatory power of the Sign and Constellation of Aries and of the Cardinal Cross in manifestation.

The Fire of Life enters from each of the four corners of the Cross overflowing all resistance to the New. In particular, the June solstice is sacred to the energies of **Cancer-Capricorn (First, Third and Seventh Rays)** which *organize the right direction*.

The awakening of new, accelerated rhythms is enhanced by the overwhelming presence of **Uranus** (Seventh Ray of Order, Higher Rhythms and Rites) in Aries (First and Seventh Rays), charged by the continued right angle incidence of Pluto (First Ray, the Destroyer and Reformer) in Capricorn (One, Three and Seven), now reached by Venus (Fifth Ray of loving Intelligence and the intelligent Love), and by Earth (Third Ray, the *place* of awareness) on June 29.

The Summit of the *Mountain of Initiation* is thus ruling the solar or causal Heavens, focused by the odd propulsive energies of the Luminaries. The square (90° angle = 1/4 x 360° = Fourth Ray aspect sacred to *Harmony through Conflict*) from Mercury (Fourth Ray, the Divine Harmonizer) in Libra (Third Ray) stokes further its explosive potential, diffused however by the fluid aspects with Neptune (Sixth Ray) in Pisces (Second and Sixth Rays). Also the duet Saturn (Third Ray) and Mars (Sixth Ray) between Libra and Scorpio (Fourth Ray), now in a rare and deep configuration with Uranus and Jupiter (called

“the God finger”), acts as a trigger for this very powerful amount of initiatory energy. It is now a unique time for revelation, orientation to Brotherhood, renewal, moved by and to the Beauty of Being.

For the entire quarter of the cycle that will take us to the fall/spring equinox, the patterns of the energies available *for the centers of the solar field* (seven sacred Luminaries) could be expressed by the following Formulas (composed through group intuitive reading of planetary psychogeometries). This pattern is ruled by the first formula, emanated from the Heart of the Sun Vulcan (First Ray):

1. The supernal Light reveals the models of the Work. (Vulcan in Cancer)
2. I exalt the radiant geometry of the summit. (Jupiter in Taurus)
3. I impress the right direction to the heavenly prototypes. (Saturn in Libra)
4. The middle way is the central model. (Mercury in Libra)
5. I awaken hierarchical dignity in hearts. (Venus in Capricorn)
6. I support the construction of new ideals. (Neptune in Pisces)
7. Maximum tension triggers new creative processes. (Uranus in Aries)

Each center is always in contact with all the others and may partake of the energies of the other centers because energy is Fire in essence. Fire is the inextinguishable element present and dominant in all the centers and the guarantee of the final union.

The *Models* or archetypes have no form, yet their glory is manifested in the Stars and in the Luminaries of the Heavens. Their formulas are revealed in the numbers and in the paths of the fiery “sparks” in motion. (Figure 3 follows)



In the above chart, we come to the actual landing of the energy into the planetary sphere, illustrated by the geocentric tropical perspective, energies which are in full splendor and fruition at the time of **Cancer** Full Moon.<sup>10</sup>

The human Heart, at the center of the current solar *flares*, in the middle of the four arms of the **Cardinal Cross**, co-measures itself to the solar Heart and sings (Words of Cancer):

Let isolation be the rule and yet the crowd exists.

I build a lighted house and therein dwell.<sup>11</sup>

The pull of matter is superseded by the free choice of the soul. Form life becomes a conscious method of expression for service.<sup>12</sup>

The dark matter/matrix of Cancer receives the seed liberated by supernal Light and germinates new possibilities, cycles and vortexes. These archipelagos of Light organize Substance in order to nourish the unities of Life.

Sun/Vulcan at the opening of Cancer receives the beautiful trine of Neptune, the “Lord of Waters” and the esoteric and hierarchical ruler of Cancer. The Call to Brotherhood fills up the Valley, and every being is ordered to respond. Neptune is in tension with Jupiter (Second Ray), geocentrically already in Gemini (Second Ray) with Venus (Fifth Ray), the two solar Masters of Love and Wisdom, and all together They solve and temper the difficult and overwhelming square Uranus-Pluto. “Love is the Winner” and the real origin of any organizing energy and integrity.

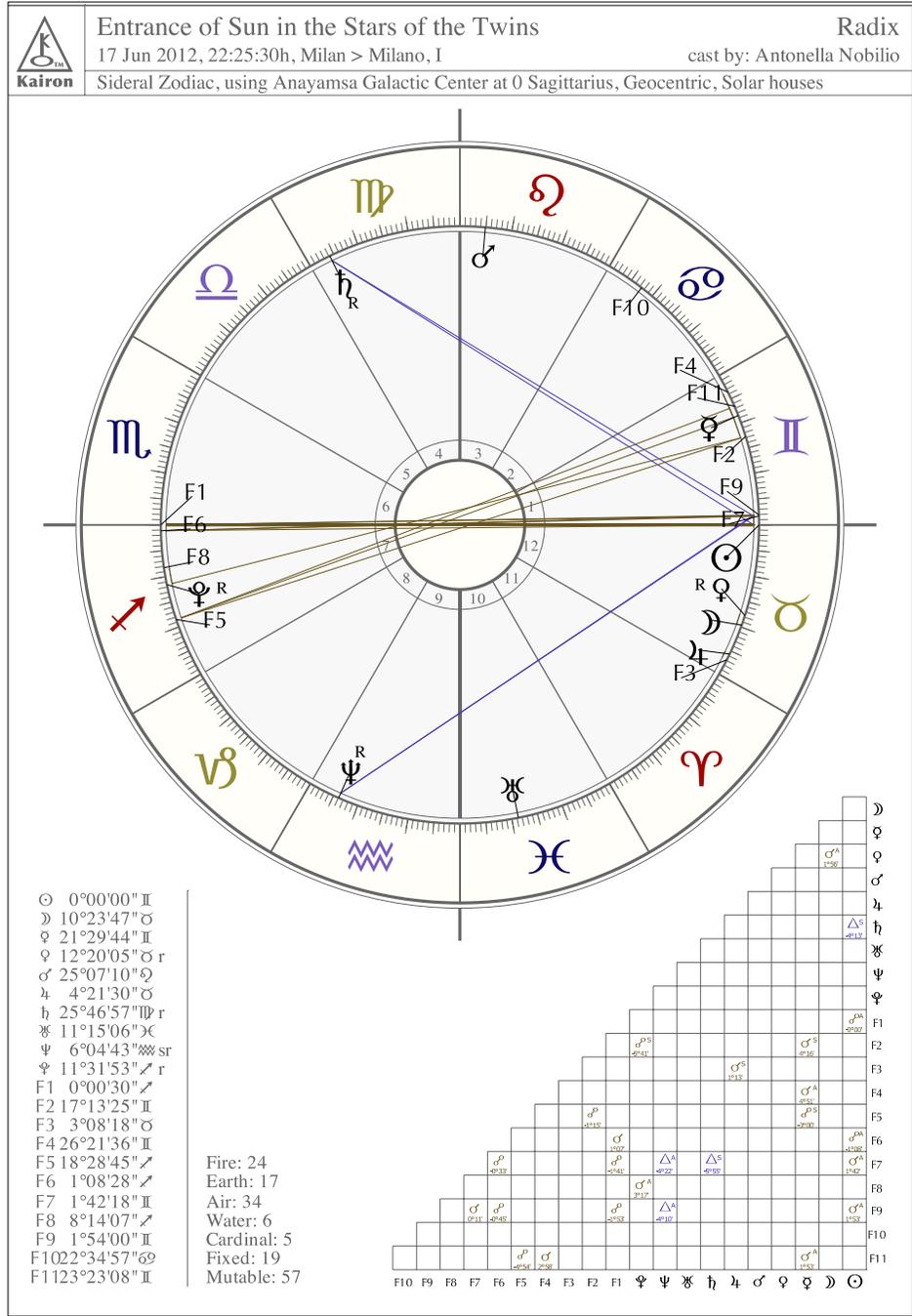
Lastly, in the fourth geocentric sidereal chart (Figure 4), we find again the preceding plane

tary configuration but inserted into the wheel of the 12 *ideal* ecliptic constellations (“ideal” to resonate with the 12 petals of the planetary Lotus) oriented by and to the *ascending* Galactic Center. This is the actual *real & relative* reference for the *point of being*, which is the awakened Heart here on Earth, looking at the objective Heavens as the subjective field of Its collective creation. Heart can see Stars as Itself, *points of Being and Be-ness*, Brothers of Light, Love, Will and Freedom. Heart can identify with rising Stars and liberate Their influence in the field, or rather precipitate Their abstracting power at the highest point on the local meridian, or again adore and lose itself into Them at Their setting. This is the Ritual of Life, out of time and distance, *here & now*, wherever we are, always at the center of Infinite.

In this last perspective of the planetary system in the cosmos, the solstitial Sun is one with Polaris and Betelgeuse, and also with the Dragon and Galactic Center (projected on the ecliptic) through the Earth at the chart center. Jupiter has just passed Alcyone, the central Sun, and Mercury is between Sirius and the two main Twins, Castor and Pollux. These alignments disappear in the radiant daily light while the opposing Stars like Vega (and the prominent and commonly recognized “summer triangle” with Altair/Eagle and Deneb/Swan) are now ruling and igniting our nightly sky.

This perspective integrates Highest and Lowest. Heart realizes that to perform miracles it has to raise its Eye to the Heavens. (Figure 4 follows)

(Figure 4)  
**Entrance of Sun into the constellation of the Twins (June, 21)**  
**Geocentric sidereal chart**



(Figure 4)

- F1 = ecliptic projection of the **Galactic Center**, established as 0° Sagittarius (sidereal)
- F10 = **Merak (Ursa Major)** (1<sup>st</sup> Aspect of the cosmic Triad) - F2 = **Sirius** (2<sup>nd</sup> Aspect)
- F3 = **Alcyone (Pleiades)** (3<sup>rd</sup> Aspect) – F7 = **Polaris (Ursa Minor)**
- F5 = **Vega (Lyra)** - F6 = **Eltanin (Dragon)** – F8 = **Kaus Australis (Archer)**
- F9 = **Betelgeuse (Orion)** – F4 = **Pollux (Twins-Gemini)** – F11 = **Castor (Twins-Gemini)**

## Conclusion

This article is thus intended to present an integrated system of perspectives to encompass the scope of the spatial relationship Man-Earth-Sun-Stars. Such a reading of the Heavens comports with the wider potential and dignity of humanity.

It does not matter how much time it takes, the Heart of Man has to master the *hierarchy of perspectives*, i.e., the four points of view discussed in this article. A *Science* has to present an elegant and proportional system of perspectives, as well as art, religion, politics, economics, education or every field of activity, in order to open mind to *sophia* or wisdom.

The strength of the Fifth and Seventh Rays ruling this rising Age of Aquarius will prompt and order our steps. The Science of Numbers (Harmonics), of Space (Astrology), and of Time (Cycles) are the triune One of the Fifth race that will sound that AUM which will open and carve the paths to the *saving force* of the Heart.

To paraphrase from the Agni Yoga teachings, it is not beauty, but the realisation of beauty will save the world.<sup>13</sup> The comprehension of beauty by the Fourth human creative hierarchy allows the energy of divine Freedom to restore the Plan of Power, Love and Light on Earth.

human Hierarchy is part of these 12 Solar Hierarchies and incorporates the *harmonizing* force from Scorpio and the planet Mercury. It is focused on the fourth buddhic plane, the central of the seven planes corresponding to seven manifested Hierarchies of the cosmic physical plane. Its cooperation with the other Hierarchies of solar and planetary Builders is intelligible through these thought-forms “constructed or anchored on the mental plane” by our planetary Hierarchy concerning the twelve Zodiacal Signs as well as through the relationships between Their forms of expression, the divine and natural Kingdoms (on the cosmic astral and physical planes).

Thus, this “integrated system of relationships,” even if its imports seem valid for our terrestrial perspective and evolution, is certainly *relatively real*, i.e., it constitutes the analogical reflection of the more general one of the Solar System: the relationship between the 12 cosmic Logoi governing the 12 Constellations must be *similar* to those shown for the 12 Zodiacal Signs.

In this real integrated system of spatial Relations, the 12 Hierarchies of solar Builders are each carriers and responding to one of the seven Cosmic Rays (See EA 34-35) issued, for this part of the cosmos/galaxy (the Great cosmic Man), by the cosmic Triad. Whereas the Rays transmitted by the *Signs* as well as the affinities with the Luminaries, acting as Their intermediaries or Rulers for the three levels of human response, are valid only for the current precessional cycle of 25000 years (See EA 589-590).

So, for instance, the Fifth unmanifested Hierarchy which conveys the *forces* of Cancer (focused on the seventh cosmic astral plane - 6.7) resonates with the energy of *veiling the Christ* and through the VII systemic ray in the plane of manifestation of the solar system (the cosmic physical plane), while Cancer (our fourth *House*, illuminated, in the planetary horoscope) liberates the Third and Seventh Ray in our planetary cycle.

In the current cycle this Seventh Systemic Ray of *Magical Order* and of *Ceremonial Organization*, received-transmitted by Cancer, is in primary resonance with the seventh manifested Hierarchy of Aquarius (plane 7.7), and the Earth element and the physical dimension. It is also related to Capricorn and the fifth or tenth manifested Hierarchy (plane 7.5 – *the will to express*), as well as to Aries (plane 6.4 – *the union through struggle*) and its

<sup>1</sup> From the documents of the *Istituto Urusvati*, “Second Sawing,” February 2, 1995.

<sup>2</sup> For more information on a text discussing Heliocentric Astrology from Istituto Urusvati, please contact: [antonella.nobilio@urusvati.org](mailto:antonella.nobilio@urusvati.org) and ask for *The Solar System in Space - 1993* revised 1999.

<sup>3</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, reprint 1979: (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing, 1951), 69. By way of deepening and clarification, these *forces* are, for this part of the universe, those issued by the cosmic Triad (Ursa Major - Sirius - Pleiades) and received-transmitted by the cosmic Logoi expressed in the 12 constellations corresponding to the 12 signs, forces which are entering to this Second Solar System through the 12 Creative Hierarchies, the Builders and the same body of expression of the Solar Logos on the cosmic astral and physical plane. The

second unmanifested Hierarchy. The *urgency to anchor and liberate on physical plane* is so granted and conveyed through Cancer and Seventh Ray energy.

Note that the *forces* or the transmitted rays coincide, for both the two systemic and planetary “perspectives,” only for the Third Ray of Libra (on the third subplane of the seventh cosmic physical plane 7.3) and for the Fourth Ray of Scorpio (plane 7.4), the atmic and buddhic principles.

<sup>4</sup> This is the perspective of the solar Soul serving Its field but pointing to Its Monad or the higher Worlds. Someday there will be recognized the third Astrology of our *Great Cosmic Man*, centered in the “central spiritual Sun” veiled by Alcyone/Pleiades, and ruled by the major Zodiac of 10 constellations (the cosmic Triad and the Seven Solar Systems, which ours is one of and also part of the heart center Sirius of the Great Cosmic Man). The Masters in Shamballa must refer to this third perspective and also to a fourth one or more, one of them centered in the Galactic Centre, the Heart and source of Life of our Cosmos. But up to now we are only able to “count” the exchanges and motions from two main points of “view” (geo and heliocentric) and their plane, the ecliptic. Nevertheless, it is healthy and joyful to think *as if* we were to take care of the cosmic or even universal contacts. At least, with the infinite “parts” of us, we already do.

<sup>5</sup> Astronomically, solstices' direction is the projection of *polar axis*, the planetary spine, on the orbital plane of ecliptic, the cycle of manifestation, representing as such the two Doors or sacred points of synthesis.

<sup>6</sup> In this case, to consider the heavenly chart according to the *local* ascendant of the exact time

of full moon, variable with the location, could be a harbinger of useful information to anchor scientifically the very intense energies on Earth. In the *real & relative* manifestation, the *local & present* ascendant is co-significant, *here & now* on Earth, both of the “soular”/solar equinoctial 0° of Aries sign and of the monadic/galactic direction 0° of the Archer constellation.

<sup>7</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 12.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 15. “...other streams of energy which definitely play upon and affect our planetary life, such as those coming from that great star, Betelgeuse, or from Antares and other stupendous suns and solar systems which are related to the constellations of the zodiac and whose force reaches us through these constellations and not directly.”

<sup>9</sup> The “ideal” solution is not to simplify or leave out the different width of astronomical constellations but to honor the matrix of the 12 petalled Lotus, of Heart at all levels, the sacred gate to infinite Unity and, for mankind, to the fiery world of Ideas.

<sup>10</sup> On July 3 GMT (at 8.53 pm, Milan local time). **Cancer** constellation and sign are putatively sacred at cosmic level to the **Little Dog-Canis Minor** constellation (as Leo to Sirius/Canis Major), the Source of lower manas. Its main Star **Procyon** forms the so called “winter triangle” with Betelgeuse (cosmic Soul, the Mind’s Son, part of Orion, the heavenly Hunter) and Sirius (higher manas). At the center of the triangle there is the **Unicorn-Monoceros** constellation, the one-pointedness of the central will and eye.

<sup>11</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 343.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 340.

<sup>13</sup> Helena Roerich, *1926, New Era Community*, § 27, <http://www.agniyoga.org/search.html>. (accessed June 2, 2012).

# Stigmata and the Initiatory Path

John F. Nash

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## Summary

This article examines the phenomenon of religious stigmatism and studies the lives of six stigmatics to identify characteristic patterns in their lives, conditions and experiences. Stigmata are bodily lesions resembling the wounds suffered by Jesus during his passion. The stigmatics studied also exhibited exceptional capabilities, indicative of major changes to their subtle bodies and transformation to a higher level of consciousness. The article focuses on stigmatism as part of a more inclusive set of phenomena that spans the physical and nonphysical.

Stigmatism is often dismissed as fake or a symptom of mental illness. The first charge is refuted by credible evidence to the contrary. The second has validity but is not applicable to the stigmatics discussed. In addition to displaying exceptional abilities, they enjoyed psychological stability and performed outstanding works of service, despite the challenges of their condition.

Renunciation of the lower nature, elevation in consciousness, and exemplary lives of service indicate that some stigmatics are on the initiatory path. For a few, the stigmata and accompanying phenomena could provide conditions favorable to, or even indicative of, attainment of the fourth initiation. The implications for both esotericism and Christianity could be considerable.

## Introduction

Stigmata (Latin: “marks”) are painful lesions on a person’s body, resembling the wounds suffered by Jesus the Christ before and during his crucifixion. Lesions typically appear on the hands, feet and side but may also appear on the head, back, shoulders, and other parts of the body. A *stigmatic* is a person bearing the marks, and *stigmatism* is the condition charac-

terized by or relating to the appearance of stigmata.

Stigmatism is not a popular topic of discussion in modern religious, esoteric or secular circles. Suggestions that certain people might bear religiously significant wounds on their bodies are swept under the rug of hagiography, pious legend, and fairytale: the stuff of a credulous, superstitious past. If the incidents are too recent to be disposed of so easily, the individuals are written off as imposters and their wounds as fake or self-inflicted. Or incidents are given a pathological label, such as “hysteria,” to shield them from further consideration. A popular Theosophical dictionary provides yet another insight:

The whole matter of stigmata in human subjects is but intensification in very unusual circumstances of what biological science knows to occur commonly and automatically in the bodies of the lower creatures, which not merely change color, but undergo curious transformations under conditions of fright, anger, etc.<sup>1</sup>

Critics evidently are capable of displaying as much hysteria as do the stigmatics of their imagination.

The older Christian traditions may accept stigmatism as a possible “supernatural,” or “preternatural,” phenomenon, but church leaders are reluctant to discuss the authenticity of

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## About the Author

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individual cases. The Church of Rome, where most instances of stigmata have occurred, seeks to discourage curiosity seekers and personality cults. Occasionally, it attributes stigmata to diabolical agency.<sup>2</sup> Even when stigmatics are beatified or canonized, Vatican authorities normally decline to comment on the validity of their stigmata. While people of faith may be open to “miracles,” stigmatism raises questions that religious authorities are unable to answer.

No doubt there have been cases of fraud or sorcery, and skeptics eagerly seize upon them to bolster their case. Cases traceable to mental illness provide additional ammunition. Given the weight of evidence, however, it requires a greater leap of faith to attribute all reported instances of stigmata to irregularities or pathology than to acknowledge that some may be of genuine religious significance. Specific evidence will be examined in due course.

A scriptural passage: “I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus”<sup>3</sup> is sometimes interpreted to mean that the Apostle Paul was a stigmatic. More commonly the twelfth and thirteenth-century Francis of Assisi is believed to have been the first stigmatic. Many more followed; one study identified a cumulative total of 321 stigmatics through 1908.<sup>4</sup> An estimated twenty stigmatics are alive today.<sup>5</sup> Recent cases generally may have more credibility because of improved documentation, greater opportunities for objective scrutiny, and an environment freer from the credulity that we suspect existed at earlier times.

Stigmatics form a tiny subset of mystics but share some of the lifestyle, experiences, and other characteristics of that larger population. In the past the great majority of stigmatics have been Roman Catholics<sup>6</sup> from countries in southern Europe where devotion to Jesus’ sufferings is traditionally strong. Many were members of religious orders—though not, as might be expected, in enclosed, contemplative orders. Now the phenomenon has spread more widely. Stigmatism has been reported among laypeople, non-Caucasians, people in northern Europe and the Western Hemisphere, and members of multiple Christian denominations. At least three Anglicans, one Lutheran, a Bap-

tist, and a member of a Celtic-revival church have received the stigmata. At least two stigmatics were married, and one was in a same-sex relationship.<sup>7</sup> One living stigmatic is an esotericist.

Of critical importance to the present study, some stigmatics acquire exceptional abilities. One such ability allows them to survive for years without eating or sleeping. Another allows them to view, even to participate in, scenes in the past or at distances from their physical bodies. Stigmatics may also have exceptional healing and counseling gifts. These and other abilities will be discussed in detail later. Suffice it to say that those stigmatics no longer function in the “three worlds” the way other people do.<sup>8</sup> They have experienced changes to their subtle bodies and transformation to a new level of consciousness. The present article is concerned with individuals with this larger set of attributes. A group profile will be constructed, based on the lives and experiences of six notable stigmatics.

Stigmatism is obviously of religious interest. Some stigmatics are greatly revered saints of western Christianity, while many more have inspired local devotion or drawn people to the church. Stigmatics with healing and counseling gifts have served large numbers of people. Those who could view the passion or other biblical scenes have provided new information that can be compared with, or may complement, the scriptures themselves. Stigmatics’ exceptional abilities should alert Christians and others to what may lie ahead on the evolutionary path.

Stigmatism is also of considerable interest to esotericists. Stigmatics who bore their sufferings in a spirit of acceptance and love and devoted their exceptional abilities to service may have made significant progress on the initiatory path. While it is inappropriate to speculate on specific individuals’ initiatory status, we can do so for hypothetical stigmatics whose attributes resemble the composite attributes of the group studied. This article will inquire whether the activities, experiences and accomplishments of these hypothetical stigmatics meet the standards of the fourth initiation. If they do, we may conclude that receipt of the

stigmata, under soul guidance, can provide an environment allowing Christian initiates, who have made the necessary spiritual progress in previous lives, to attain the “crucifixion initiation.”

## Six Stigmatics

This section presents brief biographical sketches of six notable stigmatics. Study of their lives will provide insight into what kind of people become stigmatics, what patterns can be identified in their experiences, and what kinds of activities they engage in.

Because several of the individuals are greatly revered in their religious circles, some accounts of their lives and accomplishments take the form of hagiographies. To skeptics, hagiographies are so full of exaggerations, even outright fabrications, that they can never be taken at face value. Certainly caution is in order, but we should also avoid bias and closed-mindedness. One of the assumptions of the present work is that the accounts should be read objectively but should not automatically be dismissed when they conflict with preconceived notions of what is ordinarily possible. We are, after all, dealing with extraordinary people and situations.

The six stigmatics are Francis of Assisi, Anne Catherine Emmerich, Therese Neumann, Francesco Forgione (“Padre Pio”), Dorothy Kerin, and Judith von Halle. Occasional references will be made to other individuals whose lives or experiences contribute to our theme.

Francis of Assisi (c.1181–1226), son of a rich merchant in the Italian city for which he is named, renounced privilege and pleasure to pursue a life of extreme asceticism. He and a small band of followers worked among the poor, sick and marginalized segments of society. Their ministry eventually earned papal recognition as the Order of Franciscan Friars Minor. In addition to his service work Francis is remembered for his love of the natural world. His famous hymn of praise: *Canticle of Brother Sun and Sister Moon*, has inspired millions of people over the centuries and in our own time.

Francis received the stigmata on September 17, 1224 during a forty-day fast on Monte la Verana in central Italy. His hagiographer, the equally famous Franciscan friar Bonaventure, described the ecstatic experience in which Francis’ wounds appeared:

His soul became aglow with the ardor of fervent longing for heaven as he experienced within himself the operations of grace. . . . [O]ne morning near the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross . . . he saw what appeared as a seraph with six bright wings gleaming like a fire descending from the heights of heaven. As this figure approached in swift flight and came near [him] it appeared not only winged but also crucified. The sight of it amazed Francis and his soul experienced joy mingled with pain. He was delighted with the sight of Christ appearing to him so graciously and intimately and yet the awe-inspiring vision of Christ nailed to the cross aroused in his soul a joy of compassionate love.

When the vision vanished after a mysterious and intimate conversation it left Francis aglow with seraphic love in his soul. Externally, however, it left marks on his body like those of the Crucified as if the impression of a seal had been left on heated wax. The figures of the nails appeared immediately on his hands and feet. The heads of the nails were inside his hands but on top of his feet with their points extending through to the opposite side. His right side too showed a blood-red wound as if it had been pierced by a lance, and blood flowed frequently from it.<sup>9</sup>

Francis died in his mid-forties and was canonized two years later. He is one of the most beloved saints, revered by people of all Christian denominations and beyond.

Anne Catherine Emmerich (1774–1824) was born into a peasant family in Flamsche, Westphalia, a principality within the Holy Roman Empire (now Germany). As a child she conversed regularly with Christ, Mary, various saints, and her guardian angel. At age twenty-nine, after working a variety of manual jobs,

she entered an Augustinian convent. Soon thereafter she had an ecstatic vision in which she was offered a crown of flowers or a crown of thorns. She chose the latter, whereupon it was pressed onto her head, causing intense pain, swelling, and bleeding.

The convent was closed after the conquest of Westphalia by Napoleon's army and the nuns dispersed. Emmerich was taken in by a poor widow. By that time she was bedridden with debilitating sickness. On December 29, 1812, during an ecstatic experience, she received the stigmata on her side, hands and feet. Her scribe, the poet Clemens Brentano, recorded the event thus:

She . . . saw a light descending toward her, and distinguished in the midst of it the resplendent form of her crucified Savior, whose wounds shone like so many furnaces of light. Her heart was overflowing with joy and sorrow, and, at the sight of the sacred Wounds, her desire to suffer with her Lord became intensely violent. Then triple rays, pointed like arrows of the color of blood, darted forth from the hands, feet, and right side of the sacred apparition, and struck her . . . . The moment these rays touched her, drops of blood flowed from the wounds.<sup>10</sup>

In addition to the marks of the crown of thorns and the nail wounds on her hands, feet and side, Emmerich had the mark of a cross, three inches long, over her heart.

Anne Catherine had ecstatic visions in which she observed biblical scenes in vivid detail. For instance she described the naming ceremony after the birth of the Virgin Mary. It took place in the home of Mary's mother, Anne:

I saw a great feast in Anne's house; all was gladness. The wicker partitions in the front of the house had been taken away, and a large room was thusly [sic] made ready. . . . In the middle of the room was an altar covered with red and white, and a stand upon which scrolls were laid. . . . Enue, Elizabeth's sister, brought the infant Mary swathed . . . in red and transparent white, and gave her to Joachim. The priests approached the altar, the attendants bearing the chief priest's train, and prayed from the

scrolls. Joachim placed the child on the arms of the chief priest, who held her aloft, prayed for awhile, and then laid her in the little cradle on the altar.<sup>11</sup>

Transcripts of her visions fill forty volumes, and several edited volumes are now available in English translation. Mindful of the suspicion that the visions might attract among ecclesiastical authorities, Emmerich preferred to call them "meditations," insisting that they were "no more than of human value."<sup>12</sup> For twelve years she ate nothing but Communion wafers. The ability to live for extended periods of time without eating is referred to as *inedia*. Emmerich remained bedridden and died at age 49. She was beatified in 2004, the first step toward possible sainthood. But ecclesial authorities set aside Brentano's transcripts of her visions as impossible to authenticate.

Therese Neumann (1898–1962) was born on Good Friday in the village of Konnersreuth, in Bavaria, and lived there all her life. She was a healthy child, but a series of accidents and medical emergencies in her early twenties left her paralyzed and blind. Allegedly, through the intercession of her role model Thérèse of Lisieux, then in process of canonization, Neumann was completely cured.<sup>13</sup>

Neumann received the stigmata, beginning on March 5, 1926, the first Friday of Lent. The first lesion, corresponding to Jesus' spear wound appeared above her heart. It was described as being one-and-three-eighths inches in length. A series of visions over the next several weeks culminated in an intense vision of the passion in which other wounds appeared. In addition to lesions on the hands and feet, she bore wounds corresponding to the scourging, crowning with thorns, and carrying the cross. In all she bore forty-five wounds.<sup>14</sup> For the remaining thirty-six years of her life Therese's wounds bled regularly and often profusely. Like many other stigmatics, Friday was typically her "worst day." Photographs show her bleeding from the eyes as well as from other parts of the body.

Neumann endured almost continuous, intense pain. But she also had almost daily episodes of ecstasy. On important days in the church year

the episodes lasted twenty-four hours. It is estimated that she experienced Christ's passion 725 times, "all in exact conformity with the liturgical calendar."<sup>15</sup> Like Emmerich she also had visions of other events in the Bible. On a few occasions she reported viewing current events at great distances from her physical body.<sup>16</sup>

From 1922 onward Therese—again like Emmerich—refused all food and drink. In fact, anything but the daily Communion wafer was immediately expelled.<sup>17</sup> Far from showing signs of emaciation, however, her body weight increased from 140 pounds in 1927 to 215 pounds in 1953. Moreover, Therese rarely slept, though she remained full of energy.<sup>18</sup>

Neumann became a member of the Third Order of St. Francis in 1946.<sup>19</sup> But she remained active in her community, tending the family's livestock and the local cemetery—wearing gloves to protect her hands—and receiving thousands of visitors. Among the visitors was Paramahansa Yogananda, who gave a favorable account of the meeting in his book *Autobiography of a Yogi*.<sup>20</sup> Therese also cared for the sick, and many healings were attributed to her. Konnersreuth became, and still is, a popular pilgrimage destination.

Francesco Forgione (1887–1968), Neumann's close contemporary, was born in Pietrelcina, a small farming town in southern Italy. An unusually pious child, he had "conversations" with Christ, Mary, and his guardian angel. At ten years of age he resolved to take religious orders, and in 1903 he entered the Capuchin novitiate.<sup>21</sup> The Capuchins were founded in the 16th century as part of a reform movement to recover the Franciscans' original austerity. Although not cloistered, they are among the most ascetic of all religious orders. Forgione took the name Pio, and when he was ordained to the priesthood several years later he became "Padre Pio."

Pio cheerfully endured the rugged discipline of the Capuchins and came to embrace a "ministry of suffering."<sup>22</sup> He considered suffering for Christ's sake to be a divine blessing, and frequently he prayed to suffer more if it would save others' souls or atone for the sins of hu-

mankind. But he also had episodes of ecstasy which brought him the utmost joy.

Padre Pio's visible stigmata appeared on September 20, 1918, in the final months of World War I. But he had already had a number of related experiences. For example, while hearing a boy's confession, he had a vision of an "Exalted Being" holding "some kind of weapon in His hand, something like a long sharp-pointed steel blade." The entity thrust the weapon into Pio's "soul," whereupon Pio felt such intense pain that he thought he was dying.<sup>23</sup> The visible stigmata appeared while Pio was reciting the thanksgiving prayer after Mass. In his own words:

[S]uddenly I was overtaken by a powerful trembling, then calm followed, and I saw our Lord in the posture of someone who is on a cross . . . lamenting the ingratitude of men, especially those consecrated to him and by him most favored . . . . He invited me to partake of his sorrows and to meditate on them . . . . I felt then full of compassion for the Lord's sorrows, and I asked him what I could do. I heard this voice: "I united you with my Passion." Once the vision disappeared, I came to. I returned to my senses, and I saw these signs here, which were dripping blood.<sup>24</sup>

Pio prayed that the pain continue but that the lesions would disappear. The visible signs, he complained, "are an embarrassment and an indescribable humiliation."<sup>25</sup> His prayers were not answered, and Pio bore the marks for fifty years, though they became less clear with age and were gone by the time of his death. People claimed that the blood issuing from his wounds had a fragrant aroma, and some claimed to see rays of light emanating from it.<sup>26</sup>

Pio had numerous visions, including "human manifestations," in which he witnessed events in the life of Christ and other biblical figures.<sup>27</sup> The "conversations" with heavenly figures that began when he was a child continued throughout his life. Pio was also tormented by demons, who made loud noises, threw furniture about his room, and beat him.<sup>28</sup> Despite the limitations imposed by the stigmata, Pio corresponded with thousands of people, offered spiritual

counseling, celebrated the Mass almost daily, and heard innumerable confessions. He seemed able to peer into people's souls and to know penitents' sins even before they entered the confessional. He is said to have been capable of levitation and bilocation. Padre Pio was always a controversial figure, and at least one pope doubted the authenticity of his stigmata.<sup>29</sup> But he was canonized in 2002 and now is officially known as Saint Pio of Pietrelcina.

Dorothy Kerin (1889–1963) was born in a poor London suburb<sup>30</sup> and brought up in the Church of England. She had an ecstatic vision early in life, but otherwise her childhood was uneventful. In young adulthood her health deteriorated and she contracted pneumonia, tuberculosis, and finally meningitis. By 1912, blind, deaf and hemorrhaging, Kerin lapsed into a coma, whereupon her physicians predicted imminent death. But in a near-death experience she had a vision of Christ and awoke, completely cured. Her sight and hearing were restored, and X-rays of her lungs showed no sign of the tuberculosis.<sup>31</sup> She had numerous other visions of Christ and Mary and, on two occasions, visions of holding the child Jesus in her arms.

To escape curious visitors and newspaper reporters, Kerin went into seclusion for fourteen years, living with the family of her spiritual director. During that time she received the stigmata. The wounds appeared over a three-day period beginning on December 8, 1915, the feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary. On the first evening Kerin felt intense pain in her right side, and a lesion appeared on her left hand.<sup>32</sup> She had been experiencing diabolical assaults, and her first reaction was that the pain and wound were of that nature. More-

over, her knowledge of stigmata was rudimentary; for example, she did not know that Francis of Assisi's stigmata were visible.

The following afternoon, while kneeling in front of a crucifix, Dorothy again felt the pain "as if a knife were being driven into her side"

**In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus uttered the timeless words: "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." Theosophist Geoffrey Hodson. . . commented that Jesus' "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 . . . in the history of mankind."**

and collapsed. When she recovered consciousness a wound was visible on her side, in the shape of a cross; she also discovered the wound on her right hand. As recorded by her biographer: "There remained a mark on the back of her hand like the head of a flat triangular nail." On December 10 the wounds appeared on her feet.<sup>33</sup> The wounds "remained open for several days, and were visible for many years after."<sup>34</sup>

Kerin emerged from her period of seclusion to launch a healing ministry. She founded two nursing homes in west London and progressively expanded the homes, without any money of her own.<sup>35</sup> At each critical stage she expressed trust in divine providence, and money arrived, allegedly in the amounts needed. Dorothy declined an offer of marriage in order to devote her life to service. She adopted nine children during World War II and raised them to adulthood. To provide a better environment for them she moved her ministry to a restored stately home in Kent and served there until her death.

Dorothy Kerin believed that healings could sometimes restore physical health but insisted that outcomes depended on divine will. Some healings were dramatic, while others involve gradual improvement. On a few occasions she seemed to leave her physical body to minister to patients at a distance.<sup>36</sup> Toward the end of her life she gave lectures throughout Europe and in the United States. Kerin was an Anglo-Catholic, and her work contributed to the re-

vival of sacramental healing in the Anglican Communion.

Judith von Halle was born in Berlin in 1972 and had clairvoyant experiences as a child. She studied in Germany and the United States and graduated in architecture in 1998. By then she had developed an interest in Anthroposophy. While also practicing as an architect Von Halle was hired as a part-time staff member at the Rudolf Steiner House in Berlin to give lectures on esoteric topics. Her life changed abruptly in 2004, her thirty-third year, when she received the stigmata:

The stigmata . . . appeared in rapid succession . . . . The wounds bled especially in the Holy Week and on Good Friday. They bled during Eastertime until the Feast of Whitsun more or less every Friday and since then only sporadically on specific occasions . . . . The stigmata, which hurt more or less continuously, have since then remained essentially unaltered. Their peculiarity consists in the fact that they do not become inflamed but neither do they heal.<sup>37</sup>

From the time she received the wounds on her body Judith von Halle has been unable to eat or drink. Her inedia is all the more surprising because “she previously loved cooking and eating.”<sup>38</sup> She also acquired the gifts of remote viewing, which focused on Jesus’ passion. In von Halle’s account, Jesus fell seven times on his way to execution. The last occurred at the end of the Via Dolorosa:

The Lord finally collapsed under the wood [the beams of the cross] and did not pick it up again. He was bathed in sweat and His senses were failing. The wooden beams were untied as, under the urging cries of the executioners, He slowly began to raise Himself again. Hardly had He got to His feet when he was dragged back to the ground, to be stretched upon the Cross which had now been put together, and to measure and mark the nail points. Simon wanted to stay with Him, but he was driven away, back down the hill, into the crowd of watchers and attendants.<sup>39</sup>

Receipt of the stigmata, and particularly her gift of remote viewing, caused great controver-

sy in the Anthroposophical Society, and Von Halle and her supporters were dismissed from the Steiner House.<sup>40</sup> Notwithstanding that setback, she felt compelled to share her story. Judith interprets her visions in terms of Steiner’s teachings on the “Mystery of Golgotha.”<sup>41</sup> She continues to write, lecture, and conduct workshops. Her most recent book (in German) was published in 2011. She is married and lives with her husband in Berlin. Whereas some of her predecessor stigmatics were uneducated peasants, von Halle is an educated professional woman.

## Stigmata and Accompanying Phenomena

Based on the stories of the six stigmatics and additional information of interest, we now create a composite sketch of stigmatism and its accompanying phenomena—a group profile of the kind of stigmatics of interest in this article. We shall also discuss efforts to validate or dispute reported cases of stigmata and examine alternative theories for explaining the physical lesions.

The most common stigmata are on the hands, feet and side, matching the wounds suffered when Jesus was nailed to the cross and a spear was thrust into his heart. Francis of Assisi and Dorothy Kerin bore lesions on the hands and feet that included raised areas resembling nails. Some stigmatics have wounds on the head corresponding to the crown of thorns. Wounds may appear on the shoulders, corresponding to the carrying of the cross, or on the back corresponding to the scourging. A few stigmatics, including Anne Catherine Emerich, bore other marks of religious significance, like crosses. The wounds may bleed occasionally or on a regular basis. Bleeding seems to peak on Fridays and during Passiontide. Bleeding can be profuse; on one occasion Therese Neumann lost one-and-a-half quarts of blood.<sup>42</sup>

The lesions may all appear on a single day but more typically manifest over a period of days or weeks. They may be temporary or permanent. In the case of Cloretta Robinson, a ten-year-old African American girl, the lesions lasted less than three weeks;<sup>43</sup> Padre Pio bore

them for half a century. Many stigmatics still bore the wounds when they died.

Stigmatics experience excruciating pain when they receive the wounds and may endure continual pain thereafter. As Padre Pio once remarked, the wounds are “not just ornamental.” The pain and bleeding seem to follow similar patterns of intensity. Catherine of Siena (1347–1380) and a few other individuals bore no visible lesions but felt localized, intense pain in the hands, feet and side. Such cases of “invisible stigmata” may be relevant, particularly when the individuals also exhibited the other phenomena to be discussed shortly.

Most stigmatics engaged in focused contemplation of Jesus’ passion. Significantly, no cases of stigmata have been reported in the Eastern Orthodox churches, which emphasize Christ’s transfiguration and resurrection rather than the passion. Yet it is not easy to determine, from a study of western stigmatics, whether the impulse to engage in such contemplation is the cause or the effect of the bodily lesions. In some cases, focused contemplation did not begin until after the stigmata appeared. Moreover, contemplation of Jesus’ sufferings does not automatically result in stigmata.

Few stigmatics welcome the appearance of the lesions on their bodies. The wounds are hard to conceal, and the bleeding is real. Common reactions include embarrassment and frustration over limitations on their activities. Stigmatics also endure varying degrees of harassment or persecution. Investigation by religious or other authorities are intrusive and may lead to the publication of calumnious statements. Stigmatics may be mobbed by curious tourists or pilgrims seeking healings or counseling.

A number of stigmatics prayed that the lesions be removed, and some received medical treatment in an attempt to heal them. But there are no reports of successful treatment; stigmatics’ wounds do not heal, neither do they become inflamed or infected. In cases of temporary stigmata, the lesions eventually vanished of their own accord. We have no reports of people reacting to the stigmata in a totally negative manner, say, by committing suicide. The

typical attitude is one of acceptance, submission to divine will, and joy at being able to share Jesus’ sufferings. Therese Neumann and Padre Pio even invited additional pain: the one in the hope of relieving other people’s suffering, the other to participate in the redemptive mission.

Stigmatics lives are changed not only by appearance of the wounds and the associated pain but also by the manifestation of other phenomena. These latter include:

- Ecstatic states, often occurring during periods of intense pain or bleeding. Ecstatic visions seem to be an almost universal experience. Visions of Christ, Mary, saints and angels are common. Padre Pio, Anne Catherine Emmerich and Padre Pio had conversations with their guardian angels.
- *Inedia*: the ability to live without eating—except for the Eucharistic wafer—and sometimes without even drinking. Inedia may extend to the refusal or inability to take medications. Catherine of Siena, Therese Neumann, and Judith von Halle were inediatic.
- Voluntary insomnia, the condition in which a person rarely or never sleeps. Therese Neumann required little or no sleep and, from 1926 onward, never slept at all. Yet her energy level exceeded that of the people around her.<sup>44</sup>
- Ability to experience scenes distant from the physical body. Therese Neumann reportedly viewed the coronation of Pope Pius XII in Rome while her body remained among witnesses in Germany.<sup>45</sup> In a few cases, suggestive of bilocation, people experienced the visitations and even touched the stigmatics’ bodies. Witnesses claimed that Padre Pio sometimes levitated while celebrating the Mass.
- Ability to experience scenes in the past. While Therese Neumann displayed that gift, Anne Catherine Emmerich and Judith von Halle stand out for the vivid detail of their reports.

Stigmatics typically view events of religious significance, the most common being Jesus' trial and crucifixion. Emmerich described events stretching back far in the Old Testament.<sup>46</sup> More than one stigmatic experienced holding the child Jesus.

- Ability to speak languages never studied. Therese Neumann, whose formal education was minimal, spoke a dialect of Aramaic that even local scholars did not know. More knowledgeable scholars later confirmed that the dialect was spoken in the first century CE.<sup>47</sup>
- Healing gifts. Dorothy Kerin applied those gifts in a lifelong ministry. Therese Neumann, Padre Pio, and others facilitated incidental healings. Some stigmatics also became gifted spiritual counselors. Neumann, Pio, and Kerin counseled thousands of people.

These phenomena typically manifest concurrently with, or soon after, appearance of the wounds. Three categories of phenomena indicate activity in, or changes to, the subtle vehicles.

The first involves the dense physical body and the etheric body. The etheric body is the link between the physical and higher vehicles. The subtle energy known as *prana* circulates through pathways in the etheric body that correspond to the meridians of Chinese medicine.<sup>48</sup> The flow of prana keeps the physical body alive, nourishes its cells, and ordinarily heals wounds. The fact that the stigmata neither heal nor become infected indicates important changes in the etheric body.

Inedia and voluntary insomnia indicate further changes. Inedia must be distinguished from anorexia, practiced by some Christian ascetics, in which the individual denies him- or herself needed food and drink and suffers the consequences of dehydration and emaciation. Inediacs exhibit no such physiological symptoms; rather, they seem to enjoy relatively robust health. Likewise, voluntary insomniacs suffer none of the expected symptoms of delirium,

phobias, weight loss, and dementia. This ability must be distinguished from the psychiatric condition known as fatal familial insomnia, which has a typical survival span of eighteen months.

The second category involves the emotional and mental bodies. Virtually all stigmatics have exhibited an intense love of God and empathy with Jesus in his sufferings. This strong display of affect is emotionally based, though the mind may also be involved. Psychologists acknowledge that affect can be either pre- or post-cognitive, in other words, it can either precede or follow the mental processing of information.<sup>49</sup> The significant emotional activity should come as no surprise. In most mystics—in contrast to occultists—the rational mind may be relatively undeveloped, but a strong connection develops between the emotional body and the higher mental body, and in turn with the buddhic vehicle.<sup>50</sup>

Remote viewing may also involve the emotional and mental bodies. The experience can extend beyond mere “viewing” to include mental, emotional, and even physical participation in the events. This ability could be attributed to “out-of-body experiences” or “astral travel.” More likely it is a form of higher clairvoyance. Instances of bilocation are rare and hard to substantiate, but if true they would seem to be of a different nature. Highly evolved beings are able to materialize a body, or *mayavirupa*, for specific purposes. The *mayavirupa* has a measure of solidity but is not constrained by physical laws.

The ability to view and participate in events in the past could be attributed to dreaming, vivid imagination, or simply creative storytelling, but the evidence does not support that kind of mundane interpretation. Alternatively, it could be attributed to past-life recall or to some form of higher clairvoyance. But Judith von Halle described the process as something more than clairvoyance:

[T]he experience is not based on so-called visions or pure clairvoyance, nor imaginative pictures, but rather on direct witnessing of what actually happened on Earth. Besides visual perceptions of the individuals

participating in the events at the time of Christ, together with their surroundings, culture, and way of life, all other senses available to us in normal waking consciousness are also involved. For instance the language being spoken can be heard, the ground beneath one's feet is felt, as are cold and heat.<sup>51</sup>

We note, however, that stigmatics' descriptions of biblical and other past events of religious significance are influenced by religious beliefs, prevailing scholarly opinion, or artistic convention. The accounts of biblical events given by different stigmatics show remarkable, but not complete, consistency.

The ability to speak archaic languages points to a connection between the mind and some higher source of knowledge. When Therese Neumann spoke in Aramaic, clearly she was not reading the minds of the scholars with whom she was in contact. If the source is a higher entity, one could interpret the process as a form of telepathy, not altogether different from the process by which the Master Djwhal Khul communicated with Alice Bailey (1880–1949). There is no suggestion that Neumann or other the stigmatics were functioning as trance mediums. In any event, the knowledge of ancient languages provides some assurance that some stigmatics are able to retrieve reliable information from antiquity.

The third category of phenomena involve use of the will. Stigmatics of naturally strong will readily surrender their wills to the will of God. For them the challenge of dealing with frequent bleeding and excruciating pain is immense, but those we have studied did not allow their problems to become a source of self-centeredness. Rather, they continually reached out to others, even seeking to take on additional suffering for altruistic reasons. Stigmatics' renunciation of worldly comforts and dedication to their work provides further evidence of definite use of the will.

States of ecstasy are hard to categorize with respect to the vehicles. Skeptics attribute all ecstasy states to psychiatric disorders or to neurological conditions that can be replicated by drugs or electromagnetic stimulation. Eso-

tericists may dismiss them as "astralism." But even a cursory study of the world's mystics indicates that ecstatic states involve activity extending far above the physical or emotional bodies; the highest states suggest significant activity at the buddhic level.<sup>52</sup>

Healing ability is also hard to categorize. Like linguistic ability, however, it points to cooperation with a higher power. Dorothy Kerin commented on her own instantaneous cure and its message for those who doubt the possibility of healing:

My Healing came from God . . . The miracles Our Lord performed in Galilee and along the Jordan two thousand years ago, He can and still does, today. . . . Miracles of Healing and the recreation of new life are happening today, but many of us shut our eyes to them."<sup>53</sup>

Healing, as her biographer pointed out, is not always of the body.<sup>54</sup> Notwithstanding, a number of people received dramatic and instantaneous healings of physical conditions. Even those healings were, "accompanied by healing of a broken spirit and reconciliation with, or a bringing closer, to God."<sup>55</sup> Kerin practiced the laying-on of hands and anointing with oil, but she approached healing primarily through prayer. In her own words, "[P]rayer is indeed the sharing of life. When we pray to God, we are sharing His life; and when we pray for others, we share His life with them."<sup>56</sup>

The effectiveness of Dorothy Kerin's healing ministry came from trust in God. She had complete confidence that her prayers would be answered, though she never tried to prescribe outcomes. Hers was not the naïve faith of an ignorant person; rather it flowed from the experience of her own healing and probably from the encounters with Christ that brought about her healing. Dorothy's sense of mission, and the belief that she was undertaking divinely mandated work, were unshakable.

## **Broader Perspective**

Combinations of these various changes at the physical, etheric, emotional and mental levels represent a profound transformation of the lower quaternary—and possible transformation

at still higher levels. The stigmatics we have discussed functioned at a level of consciousness beyond that of ordinary humanity.

Stigmatics are not just “ordinary people” who discover unexplained lesions on their bodies. The individuals whose lives we have examined seem to have been very special people, prepared for and dedicated to the challenges of their spiritual path. That path began early in their lives. Many were exceptionally pious and/or had visions during childhood. When visions continued into adulthood, they become ecstatic in nature, resembling the visions reported by other accomplished mystics. On the other hand, the adult visions were not always pleasant; for example, Padre Pio and Dorothy Kerin were assaulted by demons.

Several individuals, including Therese Neumann and Kerin, were healed of severely debilitating or life-threatening illnesses before they received the stigmata. The illnesses, which they faced with resignation if not total acceptance, may have provided a glimpse of the suffering to come. Several had near-death experiences, whereupon they received complete healings. Near-death experiences conceivably could provide opportunities for more advanced souls to take over soon-to-be-vacated bodies, but no stigmatics have identified themselves in such terms.<sup>57</sup>

Occurrences of stigmatism in our own time demonstrate that it is not just a thing of a superstitious past. That said, we like to think that we live in an age of more practical spirituality. Stigmatism seems culturally out of place in the 21st century—more relevant to the asceticism and heroism of the Piscean Age. We flee from the very thought of bleeding wounds and pain, especially if, in some way, they are accepted voluntarily. Devotion to the passion has largely given way to a focus on Christ’s teaching and healing ministry, his present involvement in the world, and his anticipated reappearance. The only major esoteric teacher of modern times to place emphasis on the “Mystery of Golgotha” was Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925), and, significantly, the contemporary stigmatic Judith von Halle is a student of Steiner’s work.<sup>58</sup> An important concept from Steiner’s teachings will be cited later.

On the other hand some of the associated phenomena seem very relevant to our times. Inedia holds out the promise of a mode of physical existence that minimizes the consumption of sentient plants—an expression of harmlessness that goes beyond vegetarianism. Along with voluntary insomnia, inedia may point the direction in which the human race is headed as lower forms continue to evolve.

Stigmatics’ ability to witness past events has the potential, not only to acquire historical knowledge and its cultural and linguistic contexts, but also to savor the sensations and emotions that accompanied past events. This ability could open up new avenues for research. Anne Catherine Emmerich, Therese Neumann, and Judith von Halle all reported that Jesus was crucified not on the familiar “cross,” with vertical and horizontal members, but on a Y-shaped structure. There is no reason why the viewing of past events need be restricted to events of religious significance. The ability to view and participate in scenes at a distance has similar potential.

Cases of stigmatism and its related phenomena have occurred in other cultures and among nonstigmatics. For example, stigmatism has been reported in tribes in Venezuela;<sup>59</sup> it also appears in Buddhist art. Some Indian holy men and women allegedly eat nothing but live solely on prana.<sup>60</sup> Others are said to be capable of voluntary insomnia, levitation and bilocation. Yogananda described a number of individuals exhibiting these abilities.<sup>61</sup> In all cases the abilities are attributed to advanced levels of consciousness. Some psychics have demonstrated remote viewing ability under laboratory conditions, though none has described events in the vivid detail reported by Anne Catherine Emmerich and Judith von Halle.

## Authenticity

Authenticating cases of stigmata is obviously of great importance to determine the validity of claims made by the individuals themselves or made on their behalf by others. The objective is to verify that the lesions are real, while also looking for signs that they might be self-inflicted or have a pathological explanation.

Some people have reported receipt of the stigmata but in fact were dreaming or hallucinating. Stigmata “seen” and “felt” during a state of ecstasy might not be visible or painful when the person returned to normal waking consciousness. Unconscious self-infliction of stigmata-like wounds might occur while a person was asleep or in an ecstatic state. Intentional self-infliction could be undertaken as an extreme form of penance or as a result of mental illness. Fake or self-inflicted wounds could be a publicity stunt or a scheme to extort money from gullible pilgrims. As discussed shortly, stigmata might appear spontaneously as a symptom of disorders known to medical science or clinical psychology.

The Roman Catholic Church has the greatest experience in investigating such matters. Its policy regarding stigmatism has been described thus:

Two extremes must be avoided in attempting to evaluate the stigmata: to assign too readily a supernatural cause for every such visible manifestation, and to see every such phenomenon as a purely psychosomatic disorder. The Church has accepted relatively few cases of stigmatization as authentic and has always demanded more proof than the mere appearance of visible signs in the body.<sup>62</sup>

Among the listed criteria of authenticity was the following: “The appearance of the true stigmata is usually instantaneous, whereas in pathological cases it [sic] often appears gradually.”<sup>63</sup> Instantaneity was also cited as a criterion for discerning divine origin; the Devil would not be able to cause instantaneous stigmata because he lacked the necessary agility!

In recent times investigations of stigmatics have been detailed and thorough. Anne Catherine Emmerich was investigated both by an ecclesiastical commission, which included three physicians, and by a government commission, which kept her under continuous observation for three weeks. Neither reported any irregularity at the time, though a government official later accused her of fraud.<sup>64</sup>

In 1927 a team of nurses and physicians watched Therese Neumann, day and night, for

two weeks. They took photographs, witnessed her bleeding, tested the blood, recorded her episodes of ecstasy, verified that she did not eat or drink, and made detailed measurements of her body weight, temperature, bodily discharges, and other factors.<sup>65</sup> Presumably the team was satisfied, because no critical statement was issued, and the church ordered no further investigation. Allegations that Therese secretly ate food in later years have not been substantiated.

The Church of England lacks the Church of Rome’s long experience in dealing with unexplained phenomena. It did not launch a formal investigation of Dorothy Kerin, and no official comment was made of her condition. Nevertheless, she was examined by an Anglican bishop and several other people, who signed depositions attesting that they had witnessed her stigmata and were convinced of their authenticity.<sup>66</sup> Physicians also testified that there was no medical explanation for the healing she received earlier.

Investigations by religious or other authorities sometimes have called the authenticity of stigmata into question. For example, Monsignor Carlo Maccari, later promoted to archbishop, investigated Padre Pio in 1960 at the request of Pope John XXIII and the Holy Office. Maccari’s 200-page report was highly critical, even accusing Pio of “immorality.” Yet Maccari reportedly recanted shortly before Pio’s death. Procedures for the canonization of Padre Pio included a detailed examination of documentary evidence for his stigmata, experiences and gifts as well as testimony by sixty-nine witnesses concerning all aspects of his life. The Church of Rome demands evidence of two “miraculous” healings attributed to a prospective saint. While no official statement was issued concerning the stigmata, it is unlikely that Pio’s canonization would have moved forward if suspicions had lingered of fraud, mental illness, or immorality.

Judith Von Halle displayed considerable piety but has not publicly disclosed a religious affiliation. Neither has it been revealed whether physicians examined her stigmata. The Anthroposophical Society never investigated her, but she was harshly criticized by leading

members, including the Executive Council at Dornach, Switzerland. The attacks ranged from accusations of fraud, and charges that her “clairvoyant” activities were damaging to the Society, to allegations that she claimed to be the reincarnation of a contemporary and co-worker of Rudolf Steiner! She publicly denied ever making such a claim,<sup>67</sup> and her books do not mention her reincarnational history. Some segments of the Anthroposophical Society continue to denounce her, but she has been embraced by others.

The attacks on Padre Pio and Judith Von Halle focused chiefly on matters peripheral to the validity of their stigmata. It would seem that, frustrated by their inability to make the phenomenon of stigmatism go away, critics try to discredit the stigmatics themselves. Stigmatics’ credibility is sometimes harmed by false, exaggerated or ill-considered claims made by supporters. One Internet website supportive of von Halle shows a photograph of bleeding hands, while another site points out that the hands are not hers!

Investigations have been conducted to authenticate accompanying phenomena. Some of these are also experienced by nonstigmatics, but not usually in the combination discussed here. The Church of Rome has policies for investigating inedia, voluntary insomnia, levitation, bilocation, sweet bodily odor, *hierognosis* (the ability to detect the sacredness of objects), clairvoyance, visions, and “revelations.”<sup>68</sup> The church has also developed strict criteria for judging the validity of “miraculous” healings. Physicians—but not, in her case, representatives of the Church of England—determined that Dorothy Kerin’s healing could not be explained by medical science. Aramaic words and sentences in Anne Catherine Emmerich’s “meditations” were examined by academic linguists and judged to be genuine.

### **Alternative Theories of Stigmatism**

Skeptics have long claimed that the whole phenomenon of religious stigmatism is a hoax, or they attribute it to intentional self-mutilation. Faced with the growing number of documented instances of genuine stigmata,

such claims have become less common in recent years. Meanwhile, attempts to explain stigmatism as a medical, psychiatric or psychological condition have gained momentum. For example, Francis of Assisi is said to have suffered from the painful condition of quartan malaria, complicated by purpura, which can give rise to hemorrhaging on the hands and feet.<sup>69</sup>

Aside from the time-honored “hysteria,” some of the psychological and psychiatric labels assigned to stigmata are: autosuggestion, psychosomatic purpura, dissociative identity disorder, obsessive compulsion disorder, and neurotic necrosis. The most viable theory is that the wounds result from autosuggestion by people with an obsessive level of religiosity.<sup>70</sup> It is supported by research showing that temporary skin lesions can be produced by hypnosis.

The field of biocognition has grown up seeking to relate health conditions to beliefs and cultural history. Proponents assert that “individuals are seen as an inseparable living field of mind, body and historical culture in constant search for contextual meaning.”<sup>71</sup> Mario E. Martinez, “father” of biocognition, explained that the aim “is to show how our belief system impacts upon our immune system and directs the way in which we respond to and treat illness.” He went on to describe stigmata as “the epitome of cultural response.” Noting that most stigmatics have been Roman Catholics, Martinez declared they were surrounded by a culture which celebrates Christ’s suffering. “Unlike ordinary people,” he averred, “stigmatics welcome the suffering because it brings them closer to God. Instead of giving themselves permission to heal, they give themselves permission to suffer.”<sup>72</sup> A recent conference of psychologists came to a similar conclusion. Stigmata, it asserted, “is a religious phenomenon reported only [sic] within the Roman Catholic Church, therefore could it also be a mental disorder evoked by the ultra-religious?”<sup>73</sup>

We might respond by asking why only a very small fraction of the people exposed to an allegedly destructive culture actually become stigmatics. Ignatius Loyola (1491–1556) famously contemplated the passion and devel-

oped his Spiritual Exercises, used as the basis of month-long retreats by Jesuit priests and others.<sup>74</sup> An important purpose of the exercises is to create guilt and shame in the hearts of retreatants for Christ's sufferings. But Ignatius never received the stigmata, nor to the writer's knowledge has any other Jesuit.

Theories suggesting stigmatism is a psychological or psychiatric disorder have to confront the fact that the stigmatics studied herein seemed to lead well-adjusted lives. Far from being dysfunctional neurotics or religious fanatics, they performed meritorious service, despite the pain and other burdens they bore. Stigmatics typically accept the challenges in a spirit of cheerful submission to what they believe is divine will.

As far as the types of stigmatism considered in this article are concerned, medical, psychiatric and psychological theories miss the point. Purpura, autosuggestion, or cultural conditioning might explain the bodily lesions but cannot explain the inedia, voluntary insomnia, remote-viewing ability, knowledge of ancient languages, healing gifts, or other changes that may follow appearance of the lesions. It cannot explain the elevation in consciousness that stigmatics experience or their dedication to service. The set of phenomena we are interested in is much larger than the condition addressed by skeptics or health professionals.

Esoteric organizations and teachers have offered their own theories of stigmatism and, in the process, revealed negative attitudes. The harsh response of the Anthroposophical Society to Judith von Halle's stigmata has already been mentioned. The Theosophical explanation of stigmata, cited in the Introduction, reflected

an attitude of cynicism not just toward stigmatism but also to other religious topics.

Helena Blavatsky (1831–1891), co-founder of the Theosophical Society, declared that stigmatism is “always . . . the result of exalted imagination.”<sup>75</sup> She cited a case of alleged sorcery perpetrated by a Jesuit priest<sup>76</sup> and even attached phallic significance to the crucifixion nails.<sup>77</sup>

Writing in 1903, Theosophist Charles Leadbeater (1854–1934) offered a similar viewpoint. He pointed to the case of Anne Catherine Emmerich as “a rather horrible example of the action of violent emotion upon the physical body.”<sup>78</sup> Leadbeater eventually became a leader of the “Christianization” movement within the Theosophical Society. By 1920

**Sacrifice and suffering extend down to the physical plane. As Rudolf Steiner pointed out: “We actually feel as if thorns were pressing into our head; we feel all the pain and suffering of the Crucifixion.” And as the sense of identification is driven deeply into the individual's nature, “then the stigmata, the marks of the bleeding wounds of Christ Jesus, may appear.” In other words, the stigmata form the outer manifestation of the inner transformation taking place.**

he was more sympathetic, acknowledging that stigmata could result from intense meditation on Christ's passion and death. But he would only refer to “the alleged crucifixion,” since he was convinced that Jesus had been stoned to death!<sup>79</sup>

The psychologists and Theosophists are probably right that the process resulting in stigmatism originates at a nonphysical level. The process may begin with thoughtforms, which are then propelled by strong emotion through the emotional and etheric vehicles to the dense physical plane. Evidence that the mind is involved comes from observations that the form of the physical lesions is influenced by scholarly opinion. For example, examination of the Shroud of Turin suggested that Christ was nailed to the cross through the wrists, rather than the palms of the hands. Soon thereafter the position of stigmatic lesions in a number of cases followed suit. One involved James

Bruse, a Roman Catholic priest in Lake Ridge, Virginia, whose stigmata appeared in 1991.<sup>80</sup>

On the other hand, evidence that the mind is involved does not necessarily imply that all stigmata result from faulty thinking. Neither does it force us to conclude that the thoughtforms originate in the lower mind. Appearance of the stigmata and manifestation of accompanying phenomena feature so prominently in the individual's life that it is hard to imagine that they would not be foreseen, and provided for, before the incarnation began. It would seem that the process would have to be approved, and might be initiated, at the causal level.

Clearly something is taking place on a much larger scale than the alternative theories address. Five of the six stigmatics studied received the stigmata relatively early in life. They spent many years responding to the stigmata and utilizing their exceptional abilities. Rather than describing them as stigmatics who happened to acquire additional gifts, perhaps we should describe them as people functioning at an elevated state of consciousness, who traced their experiences and accomplishments back to the transformative event of receiving the stigmata.

## Stigmata and Initiation

This section examines stigmatism's relevance to the initiatory path: what it might imply about progress on the path, or perhaps what potential stigmatism offers for progress. The stigmatics discussed in this article led exemplary lives of self-denial, service, and devotion to God, despite their suffering and many other challenges. It is reasonably safe to say that they had attained the first initiation; some may have progressed farther. Because stigmatism involves a sense of sharing in Jesus' passion, one might ask whether some stigmatics have attained the fourth initiation. Before trying to answer that question—or considering whether we may legitimately do so—it will be helpful to review modern esoteric teachings on the first four initiations.

### The Initiatory Path

The initiatory path takes us from ordinary human existence to the World of Souls and op-

portunities for spiritual growth beyond the Solar System. Of the seven major initiations available on this planet, the first five are of greatest relevance to our present phase of evolution. Christian esotericists relate them to events in the life of Jesus the Christ.

The first initiation, corresponding to Jesus' birth and presentation in the temple, is characterized by control of the physical nature and awakening to the reality of the soul. The second, corresponding to his baptism and temptation in the wilderness, is characterized by control of the emotional nature; the water of baptism symbolizes emotion. By the third initiation, corresponding to the transfiguration, the personality is completely formed and in control of the lower vehicles. The personality becomes "an agent of the soul."<sup>81</sup> The antahkara links the lower and higher mind, access to the spiritual triad is achieved, and initial contact is made with the monad.<sup>82</sup>

Long before the individual ever crosses the threshold onto the path of initiation he or she is urged to practice self-denial. This discipline prepares for the great sacrifice of the fourth initiation that lies ahead. To quote Alice Bailey, the individual makes "many lesser renunciations of many lives, consciously undertaken, so the many acts of spiritual detachment lead eventually to the severing of that final thread which involves the death of all personality attachments."<sup>83</sup>

The fourth initiation, referred to as "the Great Renunciation," requires more than death of personality attachments. It demands renunciation of the personality itself, the psychic structure in which we have long invested our identity. To give up "who we are"—or who, for long eons, we thought we were—is a great sacrifice indeed. We are called upon to sacrifice that which was raised to its highest perfection in the third initiation. No lesser sacrifice is acceptable.

The fourth initiation is an ordeal of suffering and purgation through which the individual achieves liberation from the thrall of the lower nature. Quoting an ancient Indian source Helena Blavatsky declared: "Fire and Flame destroy the body of an Arhat, their essence makes

him immortal.”<sup>84</sup> An *arhat* [Sanskrit: “worthy”] is a fourth-degree initiate. Jesus is believed to have attained the fourth initiation at the crucifixion,<sup>85</sup> and Christian esotericists refer to it as the “crucifixion initiation.” Anna Kingsford (1846–1888) described it as “the death of the body; the rending of the veil of the flesh; the uniting of the human will with the Divine Will.”<sup>86</sup> Bailey described the fourth initiation thus:

The life of the man who takes the fourth initiation, or the Crucifixion, is usually one of great sacrifice and suffering . . . and even exoterically it is seen to be strenuous, hard, and painful. He has laid all, even his perfected personality, upon the altar of sacrifice, and stands bereft of all. All is renounced, friends, money, reputation, character, standing in the world, family, and even life itself.<sup>87</sup>

Importantly, the fourth initiation requires the “uniting” of the human will with a higher will, or what is more commonly described as submission to a higher will. Christian understanding is that the higher will is the will of God. In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus uttered the timeless words: “Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.”<sup>88</sup> Theosophist Geoffrey Hodson (1886–1983) commented that Jesus’ “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 . . . in the history of mankind.”<sup>89</sup> Bailey generalized that concept to the candidate for the fourth initiation:

There comes a dramatic moment when all desire is renounced; the will of God or the Plan is seen as the only desirable objective but as yet the man has not proved to himself, to the world of men or to his Master whether he has the strength to move forward along the line of service. There is revealed to him . . . some definite, active undertaking which embodies that aspect of the will of God which it is his peculiar function to appropriate and make possible of expression.<sup>90</sup>

The arhat still incarnates in a physical body, but the fourth initiation brings about far-reaching changes to the initiate’s inner being. In Alice Bailey’s words:

At the fourth initiation, the initiate is brought into the Presence of that aspect of Himself which is called “His Father in Heaven.” He is brought face to face with his own Monad, that pure spiritual essence on the highest plane but one, which is to his Ego or higher self what that Ego is to the personality or lower self.<sup>91</sup>

The “Fire and Flame,” which Blavatsky referred to, destroys the initiate’s causal body. Or in Christian symbology, “the veil of the temple [is] rent in twain.”<sup>92</sup> Destruction of the causal body, in Bailey’s words, “marks the completion of the building of the antahkarana and the institution of direct, unimpeded continuity of relationship between the Monad and the personality.”<sup>93</sup> At the same time the Solar Angel departs and “returns to his own place,” having completed its eons-long responsibility for overseeing the individual’s incarnational cycle.<sup>94</sup>

The physical, emotional and/or mental pain; renunciation of lower-self-identity; and the departure of the Solar Angel combine to produce a profound sense of desolation. Jesus, who had already been betrayed by Judas and abandoned by his disciples, faced the departure of the Solar Angel—not to mention the departure of the Christ—cried out, from the cross: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me.” “A great ‘aloneness,’” Bailey declared, “is the supreme test of the fourth initiation.” But, giving voice to one who had already learned that lesson, she quickly reassured the candidate: “[N]ever, my brother, will you be alone, and this too you must have in mind.”<sup>95</sup>

Bailey commented that the “fourth initiation is ruled or governed by the fourth Ray of Harmony through Conflict,” noting that, on this planet, “nothing is achieved except by struggle and conflict.” But she added the comforting thought: “after this fourth initiation, [the individual] is devoid of suffering.”<sup>96</sup> Just as Jesus’

crucifixion made possible the glorious resurrection and ascension, the suffering of the fourth initiation makes possible the glory of the fifth.

Theosophists Charles Leadbeater (1854–1934) and Gottfried de Purucker (1874–1942) both took up the theme of the fourth initiation. Notwithstanding his doubts about the method of Jesus' execution, Leadbeater related the fourth initiation to the crucifixion and also to a sequence of events, beginning with the raising of Lazarus from the dead and ending with the resurrection: "All these details on the Christ-drama have a relation to what really happens with the fourth Initiation."<sup>97</sup> He went on to describe the suffering to be expected:

Always at this stage [of the initiatory path] there is suffering, physical, astral and mental; always there is the condemnation of the world . . . . The peculiar type of suffering which invariably accompanies this Initiation clears off any arrears of karma which may still stand in the Initiate's way; and the patience and joyousness with which he endures them have great value . . . and help to determine the extent of his usefulness in the work which lies before him.<sup>98</sup>

Leadbeater depicted the fourth initiation as the combination of great trial and great spiritual reward, which latter he related to the resurrection: "[A]lways there is the splendid triumph upon the higher planes—which, however, remains unknown to the outer world."

De Purucker saw the fourth initiation as a major expansion of consciousness, through which the individual acquires important new powers:

With the fourth initiation begins a new series of inner unfoldings that is to say, not only are the study, the aspiration, and the living of the life, continued in the future stages, but with this degree something new occurs. From that moment the initiate [sic] starts to lose his personal humanity and to merge into divinity, i.e., there ensues the beginning of the loss of the merely human and the commencing of the entering into the divine state. He is taught how to leave his physical body, how to leave his physical mind, and to advance into the great spaces

not alone of the physical universe, but more especially of the invisible realms as well. He then learns to become, to be, to enter into the intimate consciousness of the entities and spheres he contacts.<sup>99</sup>

De Purucker continued: "Thus beginning with this fourth initiation the neophyte slips into new realms of consciousness; the spiritual fires of the inner constitution are most potent both in character and in functioning; the spiritual electricity, so to speak, flows with far more powerful current."<sup>100</sup> But he conceded: "One cannot really put these mystical things into everyday words."

Leadbeater's remarks about the fourth initiation's relationship to multiple events in the last days of Jesus' earthly life may have been influenced by comments made a decade earlier by Rudolf Steiner. The latter, whose work followed Rosicrucian rather than Theosophical tradition, identified seven stages of "Christian Initiation": the washing of the feet, the scourging, the crowning with thorns, the mystic death, the burial, the resurrection, and the ascension.<sup>101</sup> Steiner drew attention to the intense experience at the physical level: "We actually feel as if thorns were pressing into our head; we feel all the pain and suffering of the Crucifixion." He added that when we succeed "in driving these feelings so deeply into our nature that they have penetrated as far as the physical body . . . then the stigmata, the marks of the bleeding wounds of Christ Jesus, may appear."<sup>102</sup>

## Stigmatism and the Fourth Initiation

Nobody would claim that the mere appearance of lesions on someone's body, even if caused or accompanied by intense contemplation of Christ's passion, is indicative of the fourth initiation. Some lesions may be psychosomatic or explainable in some other way. Some stigmatics may just be at the stage of awakening, characteristic of the first initiation. Others may be mastering the emotional nature, with all the suffering that can involve, en route to the second initiation. In some cases stigmatics may be making "lesser renunciations," helping to overcome personality attachments and nega-

tive personal karma in preparation for the fourth initiation in a future life. The stigmata and intense pain provide opportunities to set aside substantial amounts of karma in a relatively short period. One wonders whether, in previous lives, stigmatics were Christ's tormentors or executioners.

The sufferings of Anne Catherine Emmerich, Therese Neumann, Padre Pio, and others could hardly be described as "lesser renunciations." Yet it is inappropriate to speculate on their or anyone else's initiatory status. From our limited perspective we simply do not see the whole picture of their karma, accomplishments, or states of consciousness.

It is legitimate, however, to ask whether those we have studied are *representative* of stigmatics who are approaching, or are in the process of attaining, the fourth initiation. Accordingly, we now discuss hypothetical individuals who fit the profile already developed: individuals whose lives resemble, in their broad features, those of the real stigmatics studied. These hypothetical individuals—whom for convenience we shall call "profile stigmatics"—receive the stigmata; endure ongoing, intense pain and bleeding; acquire exceptional abilities currently with, or soon after, receipt of the visible lesions; experience an elevation in consciousness; and dedicate their lives to service in the face of their own disabilities and persecution by others. We shall now inquire to what degree these profile stigmatics meet the requirements of the fourth initiation.

First, the profile stigmatics exhibit a high degree of personality integration and soul infusion, indicating that they have already attained the third initiation. Whether they possess a completed antahkarana is not known, but from an early age they seem able to move effortlessly from one level of reality to another. Glimpses of the monad may account for their comfort in communicating with higher entities, some of whom are considered divine.

Second, the stigmata create an environment of suffering in which, to quote Helena Blavatsky, "fire and flame" can destroy the body and purify the lower self. Stigmatics suffer enormously, enduring not only bleeding and continual,

intense pain but also embarrassment, disruption of life plans, and persecution from inside and outside their own religious or esoteric circles. They may be surrounded by people who do not understand or who exhibit hostility. The profile stigmatics feel very much alone, facing lives of great challenge with little support. Despite their great suffering they remain joyous, believing that they are sharing in Jesus' sufferings. As Charles Leadbeater affirmed, "the patience and joyousness" with which individuals bear suffering "have great value" and determine their usefulness in the work undertaken.

Some of the profile stigmatics suffer assault from demons. Critics may assert that such assaults are indicative of a struggle on the lower astral plane, but the profile stigmatics seem to have mastered the emotional/desire nature. More likely, they are attracting attacks by hostile entities because of progress toward the higher initiations. We recall the temptation of Christ in the wilderness.<sup>103</sup>

Third, the profile stigmatics have overcome personality attachments and demonstrate renunciation to high degree. They embrace simple lifestyles and devote their lives to prayer and work, with no thought for their own health or wellbeing. They may enter strict religious orders or serve in the priesthood. Like Francis of Assisi they sacrifice "friends, money, reputation, character, standing in the world, [and] family."

Fourth, submission to a higher will is an obvious quality. The profile stigmatics are not weak-willed people of simple piety, easily swept up in religious fervor. They have strong wills, but readily submit their wills to what they believe is the will of God.<sup>104</sup> They sense what God wishes them to do and perform "some definite, active undertaking which embodies that aspect of the will of God," despite the debilitating effect of their physical condition. In carrying out their missions they overcome enormous internal and external challenges.

Fifth, the accompanying phenomena are significant enough to indicate liberation from the normal constraints of physical existence.

Abilities like remote viewing, “visiting the past,” and bilocation exemplify the new powers envisioned by Gottfried de Purucker—“how to leave [the] physical body, how to leave [the] physical mind, and to advance into the great spaces not alone of the physical universe, but more especially of the invisible realms as well.” Healing ability also exemplifies the transformation de Purucker envisioned. Through abilities like inedia, and voluntary insomnia, the profile stigmatics demonstrate liberation from the thrall of the lower self. In

other cultures such abilities are regarded as evidence of high levels of consciousness.

Table 1 summarizes the evidence considered. Every one of the requirements of the fourth initiation, listed in the first column, appears to be satisfied by the suffering, renunciation, experiences and accomplishments of the profile stigmatics. Based on this evidence we can scarcely avoid the conclusion that those hypothetical stigmatics are approaching, or are in process of attaining, the fourth initiation.

**Table 1. Evidence that “Profile Stigmatics” Meet the Requirements of the Fourth Initiation.**

Requirements of the Fourth Initiation	Characteristics of the Profile Stigmatics
Already attained the third initiation	Evidence of personality integration, mastery of lower vehicles, soul infusion, ability to move from one level of consciousness to another, contact with divine spark (monad).
“Many lesser renunciations”	Serious illnesses early in life, renunciations in previous lives (?)
Ordeal of suffering and purgation, desolation	Intense pain, limited activities, embarrassment, persecution, assault by demons
Renunciation of personality attachments	Indifference to the “things of this world,” dedication to service regardless of personal cost, membership of ascetic religious orders
Submission to higher will, performing “some definite, active undertaking which embodies that aspect of the will of God,”	Joyous acceptance of suffering, readiness to take on additional suffering, submission to the will of God, lives of selfless service despite the challenges of stigmata
Liberation from the normal constraints of physical existence, “slip[ping] into new realms of consciousness”	Inedia, voluntary insomnia, remote viewing, experiencing events in the past, healing and counseling gifts

This conclusion could meet with resistance among esotericists. The fourth initiation customarily is viewed as the achievement of a lifetime of selfless service that ends with heroism in the face of grave suffering and death. Critics may complain that stigmatics’ suffering cannot be equated in value to that of other fourth-degree initiands: that it is in some way self-serving. Some embrace a “ministry of

suffering.” Whatever we might think of such a ministry, clearly it is undertaken in a spirit of selflessness and compassion rather than masochism or self-hatred. In any event we do not know what larger effects stigmatics’ suffering may have. The profile stigmatics may have gained permission to take on racial, national or group karma, as Christ did 2,000 years ago. We understand that such permission, though

rare, may be given to highly evolved individuals. Heroism is not necessarily demonstrated exoterically.

Another potential stumbling block for esotericists is the notion that individuals whose world-view is molded by Christian teachings and by the path of mysticism could attain the fourth initiation. We might be tempted to think that the higher initiations are restricted to persons with occult training, speaking the language of esoteric philosophy—perhaps even restricted to students of a particular esoteric teacher. A moment's reflection should warn us away from assuming that we alone have earned recognition by the Planetary Hierarchy.

Another issue we need to address is the precise role the bodily lesions may play in the fourth initiation. Presumably their purpose is more than simply to create pain, since that purpose could be achieved by other means. Their more specific role would seem to be explained by the significance western Christianity attaches to Jesus' passion and death. Even though most Christians may be unaware on an intellectual level of the nature of the fourth initiation, Jesus is seen as the model of suffering and renunciation. When Christians come to a time when suffering and renunciation are inevitable they instinctively identify with him. What better role model could a Christian initiate select than the one we now call the Master Jesus?

Sacrifice and suffering extend down to the physical plane. As Rudolf Steiner pointed out: "We actually feel as if thorns were pressing into our head; we feel all the pain and suffering of the Crucifixion." And as the sense of identification is driven deeply into the individual's nature, "then the stigmata, the marks of the bleeding wounds of Christ Jesus, may appear." In other words, the stigmata form the outer manifestation of the inner transformation taking place.

It would seem that the phenomenon of stigmatism overlaps—to a significant degree but not completely—with the Great Renunciation. Not all stigmatics are approaching the fourth initiation, and not all fourth-degree initiates manifest the stigmata. It is the area of overlap that interests us. Conditions exist therein for certain

individuals to experience a kind of reenactment, or re-presentation, of Jesus' passion. Ray type and previous lives spent as a Christian mystic may be factors influencing the choice of such a path. The path of stigmatism may well be suited to individuals whose souls or personalities are on the Sixth Ray or—to recall Alice Bailey's comment—the Fourth Ray.

It was proposed earlier that appearance of the stigmata, acquisition of exceptional gifts, and expansion of consciousness would be foreseen ahead of the lifetime in which they occur. By the time of the third initiation the human soul is well developed and operates in collaboration with its mentor, the Solar Angel.<sup>105</sup> The Angel's responsibilities have long included planning the entity's incarnations to reflect individual karma and provide opportunities for spiritual growth. The Angel would doubtless be involved in the decision to embark on a lifetime in which stigmatism plays so large a role. Participation in that decision, ahead of the fourth initiation, takes on special poignancy because of the Solar Angel's imminent departure.

## Concluding Remarks

This article has examined stigmatism to assess its authenticity, spiritual significance, and relevance to the initiatory path. To that end, it has examined the lives of six notable stigmatics to gain an understanding of their background, experiences and accomplishments. Stigmatics come from the larger population of mystics, and some, like Francis of Assisi, Catherine of Siena, and Padre Pio, are counted among the foremost saints of western Christianity.

Many individuals, throughout the last eight centuries and living today, have borne lesions on their bodies resembling the wounds suffered by Jesus during his trial and execution. Some of them have experienced less visible but potentially more important changes to their etheric, emotional and mental vehicles. Not every stigmatic experiences the whole inventory of accompanying phenomena. Yet combinations occur with sufficient frequency to suggest that they form a coherent and interrelated set. This article has focused on individuals

who exhibit both visible wounds and some combination of the less visible phenomena.

The combination of physical and nonphysical phenomena, or what might be considered the “exoteric and esoteric” aspects of stigmatism, dramatically change stigmatics’ lives. The individuals’ lower vehicles are beginning to function very differently from those of other people. Such individuals are undergoing a transformation to a new state of consciousness, in which they no longer need to eat or sleep, in which they can live without harming sentient life of any kind, in which indeed they tread lightly on the Earth.

The visible lesions seem to be the end-product of a process that begins with mental activity and then descends, via the emotional and etheric vehicles, to the dense physical body. Precisely how this occurs is not yet understood either by the health sciences or by esoteric psychology, though strong emotion no doubt plays a role. Medical, psychiatric or psychological theories may be able to explain the physical stigmata, but they cannot explain the exceptional abilities, the changes in the lower vehicles, or the elevation in consciousness. They cannot explain the transformation in stigmatics’ lives or their dedication to service. While no one should underestimate the challenges posed by the stigmata and the associated pain, one could argue that the wounds may serve primarily as an outward sign of the inner transformation taking place.

Self-denial, long suffering, elevated consciousness, commitment to high ideals, and exemplary lives of service leave little doubt that some stigmatics are making progress on the initiatory path. At the very least they are setting aside negative karma and making the “many lesser renunciations” in preparation for the fourth initiation in a future life. The important question is whether some stigmatics can attain the fourth initiation in their current lifetime. No assertions are made about the possible initiatory status of the six stigmatics studied, or any others mentioned in this article; it is not our place to do so. But hypothetical individuals who fit the group profile *representative* of the six stigmatics appear to meet the standards of the fourth initiation, as discussed in the

esoteric literature. Stigmatics’ suffering may be no less “heroic” than the suffering of fourth-degree initiands who undergo torture and violent death; it may have beneficial effects extending far beyond themselves.

The possibility that some stigmatics could attain the fourth initiation is highly significant for both Christian spirituality and esotericism. It would indicate that, far from being antithetical to the initiatory path, Christian beliefs and practices can support and nurture progress even to the higher initiations.

Stigmatism would seem to resonate more with the Sixth Ray and with the Piscean Age than with the incoming Seventh Ray and Aquarian Age. What role it will play in the future is an open question, but Sixth Ray personalities and souls are found in all ages, and the continued incidence of stigmatism, inside and outside traditional Christianity, suggests that it will remain relevant for some time to come. Twenty living stigmatics is a small, and declining, fraction of the world’s population, and the subset who fit the profile we have developed is smaller still. But if only a few stigmatics in each age reach the fourth initiation, their achievement could hardly be dismissed as insignificant.

Stigmatism is not a pleasant topic to discuss; nor, for that matter, is Jesus’ passion or any other plausible scenario of the fourth initiation. As soon as we move beyond the generalizations of Christian or esoteric teachings we encounter the horrific suffering of real people. While we, like the stigmatics we have studied, strive always to maintain a joyous attitude, we must not forget that the Great Renunciation lies ahead for all who aspire to higher consciousness. The examination of this one scenario can be a “lesser renunciation,” consciously undertaken as we move forward on the path.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: “Stigmata,” *Encyclopedia Theosophical Glossary* (Theosophical University Press, 1999.) <http://www.theosociety.org/passadena/et-gloss/sr-sum.htm>. Accessed April 7, 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Jordan Aumann, *Spiritual Theology* (1980; reprint; London: Continuum, 2006), 421.

<sup>3</sup> *Galatians* 6:17. All scriptural citations in this article are from the King James Bible.

<sup>4</sup> Ted Harrison, *Stigmata: a Medieval Phenomenon in a Modern Age* (New York: St Martin's, 1994), 9.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.

<sup>6</sup> For the record, the present author is not a Roman Catholic.

<sup>7</sup> Harrison, *Stigmata*, 81-99. Also C. Bernard Ruffin, *Padre Pio: the True Story* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 1991), 158-160.

<sup>8</sup> In esoteric teachings the "three worlds" are the physical, emotional, and lower mental planes

<sup>9</sup> Bonaventure, "De Stigmatibus Sacris," *Legenda Minor* (trans: Fr. Quaracchi), 1941, 202-203. [http://www.franciscanfriarstor.com/archive/stfrancis/stf\\_stigmata\\_of\\_st\\_francis.htm](http://www.franciscanfriarstor.com/archive/stfrancis/stf_stigmata_of_st_francis.htm). Accessed March 15, 2012.

<sup>10</sup> Clemens Brentano, "Life of Anne Catherine Emmerich," Introduction to *The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, trans, anon. (Charlotte, NC: Tan Books, 1983), 19.

<sup>11</sup> Anne Catherine Emmerich, *The Life of Jesus Christ and Biblical Revelations*, trans, "an American nun" (Charlotte, NC: Tan Books, 2011), vol. 1, 154-15

<sup>12</sup> Brentano, "Life of Anne Catherine Emmerich," xv.

<sup>13</sup> Adalbert A. Vogl, *Therese Neumann: Mystic and Stigmatist* (Rockford, IL: Tan Books, 1987), 1-6.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 7-10.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 11, 27.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 59-61

<sup>17</sup> Allegedly Neumann could tell the difference between an unconsecrated host, which she could not swallow, from the consecrated host. The ability to distinguish between sacred and other objects is known as *hierognosis*.

<sup>18</sup> Vogl, *Therese Neumann*, 25-26.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

<sup>20</sup> Paramahansa Yogananda, *Autobiography of the Yogi* (1946; reprint; New York: Philosophical Library, 2005), 351-359. From the vantagepoint of higher consciousness Yogananda was able to observe the content of some of Therese's ecstatic visions.

<sup>21</sup> Ruffin, *Padre Pio*, 29-42.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 60. As punishment for minor offenses Pio and the other novices were forced to beat themselves with chains until blood ran onto the floor.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 151.

<sup>24</sup> Vittorio Messori, "I Am a Mystery to Myself," Preface to *Padre Pio: Under Investigation: The*

*Secret Vatican Files*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011, xiii.

<sup>25</sup> Ruffin, *Padre Pio*, 155.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 164.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

<sup>28</sup> The noises reportedly were loud enough to annoy neighbors.

<sup>29</sup> Pope John XXIII allegedly was among the skeptics.

<sup>30</sup> The present author grew up nearby.

<sup>31</sup> Dorothy Kerin, *Fulfilling* (Tauton, UK: Wessex Press, 1952), x. See also Dorothy M. Arnold, *Dorothy Kerin: Called by Christ to Heal* (London: Hodder & Stroughton, 1965), 59-60.

<sup>32</sup> Arnold, *Dorothy Kerin*, 31-32

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Johanna Ernest, *Dorothy Kerin 1889-1963: Her Ministry of Healing*, 1987. [http://www.ny-arrow.demon.co.uk/Johanna\\_folder/D\\_Kerin.-html](http://www.ny-arrow.demon.co.uk/Johanna_folder/D_Kerin.-html). Accessed March 8, 2012.

<sup>35</sup> "Nursing homes" of the time served people of all ages who, for any of several reasons, were not admitted to hospitals. They employed licensed nurses, and physicians were on call.

<sup>36</sup> Arnold, *Dorothy Kerin*, 33.

<sup>37</sup> Judith von Halle, *And If He Had Not Been Raised*, trans, B. Stevens (Forest Row, UK: Temple Lodge, 2007), 10.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>39</sup> Judith von Halle, *Secrets of the Stations of the Cross and the Grail Blood*, trans, M. Barton (Forest Row, UK: Temple Lodge, 2007), 117. In the traditional devotion of the Stations of the Cross Jesus falls three times.

<sup>40</sup> Peter Tradowsky, *The Stigmata*, trans, M. Barton (Forest Row, UK: Temple Lodge, 2010.)

<sup>41</sup> Rudolf Steiner's works are available from SteinerBooks, Inc., Great Barrington, Massachusetts.

<sup>42</sup> Vogl, *Therese Neumann*, 13.

<sup>43</sup> Harrison, *Stigmata*, 87-90. Robinson's case was reported in the *Archives of General Psychiatry* of 1974.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>45</sup> Vogl, *Therese Neumann*, 59-60.

<sup>46</sup> Emmerich, *The Life of Jesus Christ and Biblical Revelations*, vol. 1, 1-116.

<sup>47</sup> Vogl, *Therese Neumann*, 48-51.

<sup>48</sup> John F. Nash, *The Soul and Its Destiny* (Bloomington, IN: Authorhouse, 2004), 100.

<sup>49</sup> See for example, Jennifer S. Lerner & Dacher Keltner, "Beyond Valence: Toward a Model of Emotion-Specific Influences on Judgement and Choice," *Cognition and Emotion* (vol. 14, no. 4, 2000), 473-493.

- <sup>50</sup> John F. Nash, "Prayer and Meditation in Christian Mysticism," *The Esoteric Quarterly* (Fall 2011), 17-41.
- <sup>51</sup> Von Halle, *Secrets of the Stations of the Cross and the Grail Blood*, 5.
- <sup>52</sup> Nash, "Prayer and Meditation in Christian Mysticism."
- <sup>53</sup> Dorothy Kerin, *Fulfilling* (Tauton, UK: Wessex Press, 1952), viii.
- <sup>54</sup> Arnold, *Dorothy Kerin*, 96.
- <sup>55</sup> Stevens Heckscher, "Dorothy Kerin: Sign and Significance," *Journal of Christian Healing* (vol. 23. no. 2, Fall/Winter 2007), 14-31.
- <sup>56</sup> Kerin, *Fulfilling*, 39.
- <sup>57</sup> People whose souls took over another's adult body are referred to in the popular literature as "walk-ins."
- <sup>58</sup> For a comprehensive explorations of Steiner's work in that field see his *Approaching the Mystery of Golgotha*, trans. M. Miller (Great Barrington, MA: SteinerBooks, 2006.)
- <sup>59</sup> Johannes Wilbert, Occasional Papers of the Museum of Cultural History, University of California at Los Angeles (no. 3, 1975), 5-6
- <sup>60</sup> See for example Ernest E. Wood, *Is This Theosophy?* (London: Rider, 1936), 183ff.
- <sup>61</sup> Yogananda, *Autobiography of a Yogi*, numerous references.
- <sup>62</sup> Aumann, *Spiritual Theology*, 432.
- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 433.
- <sup>64</sup> Source: *Catholic Encyclopedia*. <http://www.-newadvent.org/cathen/05406b.htm>. Accessed April 4, 2012.
- <sup>65</sup> Vogl, *Therese Neumann*, 80-87.
- <sup>66</sup> Copies of the depositions are included in Arnold, *Dorothy Kerin*, 32-38.
- <sup>67</sup> Steiner predicted that two members of his early group would reincarnate before the end of the 20th century, but von Halle stated categorically that she was not one of them. See Piero Cammerinesi, "Preconception and Free Thought: Reflections on Judith von Halle," July 2011. <http://www.philosophyoffreedom.com/node/5518>. Accessed May 29, 2012.
- <sup>68</sup> Aumann, *Spiritual Theology*, 426-441.
- <sup>69</sup> Edward F. Hartung, "Saint Francis and Medieval Medicine," *Annals of Medical History* (n.s., 1935), 85-91. See also "St. Francis' Stigmata," *Time Magazine* (March 11, 1935).
- <sup>70</sup> See for example O. D. Ratnoff, "The Psycho-genic Purpuras: a Review of Autoerythrocyte Sensitization, Autosensitization to DNA, 'Hysterical' and Factitious Bleeding, and the Religious Stigmata," *Seminars in Hematology* (vol. 17, no. 3, 1980), 192.
- <sup>71</sup> Source: Institute of Cognitive Science. <http://www.biocognitive.com/biocognitive/>. Accessed June 2, 2012.
- <sup>72</sup> Sinead O'Neill, "Exploring the Truth behind 'Holy Wounds' of Stigmata." <http://www.-biocognitive.com/images/pdf/DailyIreland-stigmata.pdf>. Accessed June 2, 2012.
- <sup>73</sup> Carol Roach, "The Religious and Psychological Implications of Stigmata: Conclusion," 2011. <http://www.examiner.com/article/the-religious-and-psychological-implications-of-stigmata-conclusion>. Accessed June 2, 2012. One wonders how Anglican, Lutheran, Baptist, and other stigmatics would react to the news that their condition only affects Roman Catholics!
- <sup>74</sup> Loyola, a Basque nobleman and soldier, founded the Society of Jesus, popularly known as the Jesuits, as a religious order dedicated to missionary work and teaching. They became the "foot soldiers" of the Counter-Reformation.
- <sup>75</sup> Helena P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled* (New York: J. W. Bouton, 1877), vol.1, 398.
- <sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, vol.2, 633.
- <sup>77</sup> Helena P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* (Adyar, India: Theosophical Publishing House, 1888), vol. 2, 56.
- <sup>78</sup> Charles W. Leadbeater, *The Other Side of Death: Scientifically Examined and Carefully Described* part 2 (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1903), 611.
- <sup>79</sup> Charles W. Leadbeater, *The Monad and Other Essays Upon the Higher Consciousness* (Adyar, India: Theosophical Publishing House, 1920), 34. Leadbeater's belief concerning Jesus' death is detailed in the posthumously published *Christian Gnosis*, revised edition, Wheaton, IL: Quest, 2011. 127-132.
- <sup>80</sup> Harrison, *Stigmata*, 80-87.
- <sup>81</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II* (New York: Lucis, 1955), 759, 398.
- <sup>82</sup> The spiritual triad, consisting of *atma*, *buddhi* and *manas*, is the threefold vehicle of the monad, the divine spark within us. The antahkarana is the "bridge" in mind-stuff providing continuity of consciousness between the lower and higher mind.
- <sup>83</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age I* (New York: Lucis, 1944), 312.
- <sup>84</sup> Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1, 6.
- <sup>85</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar* (New York: Lucis, 1922), 19,
- <sup>86</sup> Anna B. Kingsford, *The Perfect Way: or the Finding of Christ*, reprint: 1881; (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2011), 111.
- <sup>87</sup> Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 89.

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<sup>88</sup> Luke 22:42.

<sup>89</sup> Sandra Hodson (ed.), *Illuminations of the Mystery Tradition* (Manila, Philippines: Theosophical Publ. House, 1992), 258.

<sup>90</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology* (New York: Lucis, 1951), 392.

<sup>91</sup> Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 117.

<sup>92</sup> Mark 15:38. See also *Matthew 27:51*; *Luke 23:45*.

<sup>93</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing* (New York: Lucis, 1953), 406.

<sup>94</sup> Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 137. For an expanded discussion of the solar angel and its responsibilities see Nash, *The Soul and Its Destiny*, 177-206.

<sup>95</sup> Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II*, 759. We do not know when Djwhal Khul, for whom Bailey wrote, attained the fourth initiation, but he attained mastership in the late 19th century.

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<sup>96</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* (New York: Lucis, 1960), 701.

<sup>97</sup> Leadbeater, *The Masters and the Path*, 225.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 227.

<sup>99</sup> G. de Purucker, *The Initiatory Cycle*. <http://www.theosophy-nw.org/theosnw/path/oc-gdep.htm>. Accessed June 1, 2012. Less extensive remarks can be found in Purucker's *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* (Theosophical University Press, 1979), 323.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> Rudolf Steiner, lecture October 14, 1911. Included in *From Jesus to Christ* (Forest Row, UK: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1991), 165.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 168. Emphasis added.

<sup>103</sup> See for example *Mark 1:12-13*.

<sup>104</sup> The apostle Peter comes to mind in that regard.

<sup>105</sup> See for example Nash, *The Soul and Its Destiny*, 252-253.

## Fundamentals of the Work

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### Meditation with Seed Thought

Daily meditation must be a fundamental part of our practice as disciples if we truly wish to make progress on the spiritual path. Although there are many types of meditation, what they all have in common is the goal of controlling the three lower personality vehicles in order to reach the ultimate goal of stabilizing our awareness at the highest possible level of consciousness. Being able to maintain this heightened consciousness at will allows us to tap into resources that reveal the nature of the Self and help us become who we really are. Eventually, meditation provides an unimpeded, reliable contact with the Soul – our true Master on this spiritual journey.

The meditation practice that we use in the School for Esoteric Studies is meditation with seed thought. This form is highly suitable as a method for developing the mental body and expanding our ability to communicate in both the objective and subjective worlds. In this type of meditation we use an aspirational passage from our studies and focus the mind on it as we attempt to penetrate into the world of meaning or the “soul” of the seed thought. The benefits of this type of meditation are twofold.

First, we learn how to control the mental body, which is our point of access to the Soul. By selecting an aspirational seed thought and concentrating on its words and inner meaning, we put the mind on a vibrational level that is more receptive to Soul energies. We are also giving the mind something to focus on, forcing it to slow down. This focus makes it easier to filter out extraneous thoughts and channel the energy of the “monkey mind,” away from its continuous, automatic and mindless chatter, toward a more elevating task. In this way we strengthen our ability to concentrate and to think more clearly and one-pointedly. As we gain facility with this technique, we discover the importance of consciously choosing our thoughts rather than allowing automatic thoughtforms to control us.

The practice of consciously choosing our thoughts will also help us to consciously choose and control our emotions.

Second, as we take the seed thought deep into our consciousness and work with its implications, we are training the mind to look beyond the surface of things to discover the world of meaning. As the deeper meanings of the seed thought begin to surface, they have the power to gradually and subtly transform our habitual mental attitudes into a more positive state of mind. This leads to increased self-understanding, to the ability to be in the present and detached from our usual preoccupations with the past and the future, and to the transformation of our personality by such Soul qualities as patience, tolerance, acceptance and compassion. We also learn how to bring down abstract thoughtforms into a concrete form, to express what may seem to be inexpressible, to create practical thoughtforms and manifest them on the physical plane.

The key to success in this type of meditation is to *actively* engage the mental body and not allow it to become passive or lazy. In an active process we use the mind as a tool to analyze the seed thought, looking for connections to deeper meanings, utilizing analogies, and considering practical applications. This method involves an active engagement or communication with the Soul, just as we would engage in a conversation with a friend.

As we seek deeper meanings behind a particular seed thought, the mind will naturally come up with many superficial observations in the beginning, but we can't let the mind rest there. The mental body needs to grapple with deep thoughts in order to develop strength and flexibility; otherwise it will be content with platitudes and fixed ideas, and will not develop the ability to think things through. People who do not develop this ability tend to passively accept the information that comes to them via their circle of family and friends and from the media.

To give the mental body a good workout, the suggestion is to work with a seed thought daily over the course of a few weeks (preferably in the morning when our minds are at their freshest and not in the evening, which might disrupt our sleep cycle). During the first few days of work with the seed thought, while it is still fresh and new, we may find it easy to maintain an active dialog, but then the work begins as we attempt to dig ever deeper. Every day we approach the seed thought anew, and we are a subtly different person from one day to the next. Some days it will seem like we are trudging through a desert at night, but then on other days we will discover a lighted oasis of new insights.

We may also observe that at times we approach the seed thought with the emotional body, rather than the mental body. We “feel our way” into the seed thought and respond to its emotional appeal. This is a normal experience when we are just beginning to learn how to meditate with a seed thought, and the emotional body can certainly help to evoke thoughts from our mental body. Nevertheless, we must persist with the mental approach, and this perseverance through the difficult times not only strengthens our mental muscles and our will power, it can also be a test of our willingness to do what it takes to build our connection to the Soul. The Soul won’t do the work for us. It will only meet us halfway. One suggestion for getting through the dry spells is to simply hold the seed thought in the light of the Soul and wait for the Soul to release its wisdom.

As with any organic process, our daily meditation goes through various phases, and we devel-

op a rhythm similar to breathing in and breathing out. Thus there will be a stage in which we are *actively creating* thoughtforms, and this will be followed by a stage in which we are *actively receptive*. This means that we are alert and aware of our firm alignment with the Soul; we have reached a high point of conscious identification with the meaning of the seed thought, and we are in a state of conscious and dynamic invocation.

In this stage – receptive meditation – we use the will to maintain our connection with Soul, and our attitude is one of openness and willingness to receive whatever may come through. What comes through, however, will not necessarily be in the form of clear words or ideas. It may be received in the form of a subtle energy, and the effects of this energy may not become evident immediately. The insights may percolate through later in the day or manifest in symbolic form in our dreams. We can picture the process of invocation and evocation as though we were receiving a compressed transmission that may not be “readable” until later when the brain has had a chance to process it and “unfold” the message.

True meditation is a conscious active interplay between the mental body and Soul in which we lose all sense of self and become the Soul, and we think and act *as* the Soul as we meet the challenges of daily life.

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## Book Review

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*And if He Has not been Raised* and *Secrets of the Stations of the Cross and the Grail Blood*, both by Judith von Halle, Forest Row, UK: Temple Lodge 2007, £14.95 and £11.93, respectively.

These two books were originally published in Germany, in 2005, as volumes of a single work. They have now been translated into English, the first by Brian Stevens, the second by Matthew Barton, and are readily available from online and other retailers. The title of the first book is a quote from *1 Corinthians* 15:14.

The two books and a number of other publications are the works of Judith von Halle, a German esotericist and stigmatic. She is an Anthroposophist, a student of the works of Rudolf Steiner. She also bears on her body painful and bleeding wounds resembling those suffered by Jesus the Christ during his trial and crucifixion. Her situation alerts us to the reality that stigmatics walk the Earth today, and some may be educated, professional people.

Judith Von Halle studied in Germany and the United States, graduated with a degree in architecture in 1998, and set up an architectural practice. By that time she had developed an interest in Anthroposophy and eventually was hired by the Rudolf Steiner House in Berlin to lecture on esoteric topics.

Von Halle received the stigmata during Holy Week (the week before Easter), 2004. Her situation caused great controversy in the Anthroposophical Society. She was harshly criticized by the society's international Executive Council at Dornach, Switzerland. The following year, she and her supporters were fired by the governing board of the Steiner House. Continuing attacks by high-ranking members ranged from accusations of fraud, and charges that her "clairvoyant" activities were damaging to the Society, to allegations that she claimed to be the reincarnation of a contemporary and co-worker of Rudolf

Steiner! She denies making any such claim. One still-active blog denounces her for raising "the spectre of atavistic Catholic superstition."

Some segments of the Anthroposophical Society have embraced her, and her books are distributed by SteinerBooks in the United States. Von Halle continues to write, gives lectures and conducts workshops on esoteric topics, and lives with her husband in Berlin.

In addition to receiving the stigmata Judith Von Halle acquired exceptional gifts, not uncommon among stigmatics. She is an *inedic*; she does not and cannot eat but displays none of the symptoms of anorexia. Interestingly, before receiving the stigmata she loved cooking and eating. Like some other stigmatics, she also has the ability of remote viewing, reporting in great detail events from the past, including the events of the first Holy Week. Following is part of her account of Jesus' trial before Pontius Pilate:

At last Pilate uttered the sentence of death on Jesus of Nazareth. After the proclamation he himself wrote the judgment, of which [his] secretary made several copies. Grounds were attached to the sentence, in which Pilate justified his reasons for having Jesus of Nazareth crucified. These grounds were that a religious community with other customs had demanded this verdict of him, and he had ceded to their demand in order to avoid rebellion. . . . Now there followed a storm of protest from the high priests and their followers, because Pilate had thereby placed the responsibility on them. [*Secrets*, 89]

The scene on the Sunday morning when the "gardener" asked Mary Magdalene "Whom seek ye?" was described thus:

He asked her this question as a teacher of initiation asks his pupil. With this question He asked her if she was seeking *Jesus* or *Christ*. But initially she was only looking for Jesus of Nazareth, her beloved teacher in his

physical body. But as Christ then touched her heart (in the Gospels this is when He called her by her name) she reacted immediately, so filled with love and so overwhelmed . . . that she forgot everything. . . . At the moment of “reunion” everything was forgotten; she believed He was by her again as before. She fell down before Him full of love and wanted to kiss his feet. [*And If*, 134; emphasis and parenthetical clause in original]

Von Halle interpreted her experiences in terms of Steiner’s teachings on the “Mystery of Golgotha.” For example she discussed the disposition of Christ’s etheric body when Jesus died on the cross:

Let us now look at the other part of His etheric body [the first part was reassembled to form the “resurrection body,”] which enters the aura of the earth already from the Cross. As the Redeemer’s blood flows from the nail wounds, the earth’s etheric sphere is transformed in an instant. Rudolf Steiner describes this in moving terms in his lectures on the Fifth Gospel. The blood that flows from the wounds touches the earth and renews its encircling aura before the Christ Spirit undergoes earthly death. [*Secrets*, 49]

The material for the two books came from lectures given to a restricted audience at the Rudolf Steiner House in 2004 and 2005, before von Halle was dismissed. She states in the Introduction to *And If* that one of her reasons for publishing the material in book form was to clear the atmosphere of suspicion that was swirling around her at that time—though that does not seem to have happened. Another reason was that she believed that the material was entirely consistent with Steiner’s teachings and in no way was intended to supplant them. Most importantly, von Halle wanted consideration to be given

to that which I place at the heart of my efforts to achieve through psychic and spiritual contemplation of the most decisive and factual event in the development of mankind a living and truthful relationship to the contemporary Christ. This alone is capable of being each single individual’s most precious treasure

and will be the quiet source of all selfless love and sympathy. [*And If*, 2]

The chapters in both books—and presumably the lectures and her visions—do not follow the chronological sequence of the events before, during and after Holy Week. For example, successive chapters in *And If* are: “An Account of the Events between Death and Resurrection,” “The Transfiguration on Mount Tabor and the Last Night on the Mount of Olives,” and “The Easter Event at the Time of Christ.” In *Secrets*, four chapters dealing with “The Spear-Wound Mystery and the Grail Blood” are followed by six chapters under the section heading “The Stations of the Cross and the Seven Words of Christ on the Cross.”

*Secrets* is identified as “Volume 2,” but its material does not begin from where Volume 1 ends. In order to follow the story of the passion and resurrection one is forced, not only to refer to one book and then the other, but to read later chapters before earlier ones. This may not create a problem for the serious reader, bent on detailed study and multiple readings of the books, but it is irritating for someone who wants to read the whole story from beginning to end.

In *And If*, von Halle’s own material is interspersed with commentary by Peter Tradowsky, founder of the Steiner House in Berlin and one of her strongest supporters. Although the commentary may be of interest to serious readers, someone who is primarily interested in von Halle’s accounts is likely to find the interruptions intrusive.

One wishes that the material in the two books could be edited to remove extraneous matter and put the chapters in chronological order. Meanwhile, all we have is the books as they have been published.

This reviewer is familiar with several of Rudolf Steiner’s books (most of which are themselves collections of lectures). While, unlike Judith von Halle, I do not consider myself his disciple, I found a wealth of useful information in the books. They raise the veil on von Halle and her very unusual circumstances: living stigmatic,

esotericist, intellectual, married. They also shed unique light on the events of the life, death and redemptive mission of Jesus the Christ.

I strongly recommend the two books to all serious students of Christian esotericism and particularly to students of Anthroposophy.

John F. Nash  
Johnson City, Tennessee

## Easter Festival: The Full Moon in Aries

Kathy Newburn

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The work that we do together at this time inaugurates the high point of the spiritual year, the period of the higher interlude. Throughout the world many individuals and groups are meeting for meditation and prayer at this time. The Jewish celebration of Passover as well as the Christian celebration of Easter make this period a time of concentrated spiritual aspiration for many of the world's people. Through this combining of our spiritual holidays the work is strengthened and given increased potency.

As we link up in meditation with all the many other individuals and groups who are working together at this time, we recite the mantra of the New Group of World Servers:

May the Power of the One Life pour  
through the group of all true servers.

May the Love of the One Soul characterize  
the lives of all who seek to aid the Great  
Ones.

May I fulfill my part in the One Work  
through self-forgetfulness, harmlessness  
and right speech.

As most of you know, this mantra is used by many people throughout the world each afternoon at 5 p.m. as a means of sustaining the group nature of our spiritual work. This mantra speaks of the divine triplicity of Will or Power, Love-Wisdom and Creative Intelligence, which are known as the three rays of aspect. The triplicity is also reflected in the three great planetary centers: Shamballa, the center of divine Will; Hierarchy, the center of love upon our planet; and humanity, the kingdom that reflects the intelligence principle. The trinity that this mantra symbolizes is also reflected in the three spiritual festivals that we celebrate each year at the time of the Aries, Taurus and Gemini full moons. The Easter Festival, which

we are observing at this time, marks the real "new year" in the spiritual sense, and this is reflected in the rebirth that occurs at this time in the natural world with the coming in of spring in the northern hemisphere.

During this period of the higher interlude, those of us who have some understanding of the spiritual factors that condition and substand outer events have a special responsibility to stand behind the Hierarchy and the work that it must do during this time of inspiration. This subjective support provided by the spiritual and esoteric workers in the world is a real service and helps in the manifestation, on the physical plane, of the needed changes. Our task is to stand as a united channel through which the livingness of divinity can flow outward into human consciousness. We provide a vital link within the chain of Hierarchy, bringing the Plan into outer recognition.

Aries is the first sign of the spiritual year and is known as the point of all beginnings. It provides an impulsive, outgoing and vital energy. It is a positive, masculine sign, and is traditionally linked with the aggressive nature of its ruler, the planet Mars. It signifies the descent of the life force, or spirit aspect, into matter. Aries is a fire sign, and it is the purveyor to our solar system of pure electric fire and the dynamic nature of God. It is a fire that fosters and nourishes heat and also a fire that burns and destroys. Electric fire is related to the Will aspect and to the jewel in the Egoic Lotus, the hidden, central point of pure, fiery Will. In Aries the "jungles of experience are set on fire and dissolve in flames, and then the Path stands clear, and unobstructed vision is achieved." [*Esoteric Astrology*, p. 95] Fire is the great liberator, clearing away obstacles and bringing forth the truth. Through the agency of fire, Aries is said to "fuse the beginning and

the end, to blend the opposites and dispel both time and space.” This quality of blending links Aries with its opposite sign of Libra, for both are concerned with the bringing together of the opposites and the process of fusion. Through Aries the blending of spirit and matter is achieved through the consecrated use of the mind.

Aries is also one of the zodiacal signs that is concerned with death, and in this case it is death through the agency of fire. Through the death of self-will the individual is released into Shamballa, and Aries opens that door into the center of Will and Purpose. Aries is the primary sign through which the energy of the First Ray releases our planetary Life. But First Ray energy is something that we cannot, as yet, fully understand because it is only now coming into prominence within our planet as it begins to be appropriated by humanity in a group sense. The First Ray is at times feared because of its power, which – if not qualified by love – can create some of the cruelest and most destructive types of individuals, those whose lives are conditioned by the unrestrained pursuit of power as an end in itself. But the individual conditioned by the First Ray who has also cultivated a strong link with the love aspect would be capable of wielding power on a vast scale for the good of the whole.

The combination of First and Second Ray energies is a potent force for good; it conveys garnered power and strength, the unfoldment of love-wisdom and compassion and serves to widen the circle of influence and to include and uplift many. Through Aries, the person who embodies First Ray force “develops the power of organization, of control over forces, particularly over the energy of death, over the power of destruction applied with love, of dominance over multitudes, of cooperation with the Plan and the practice of the will in rightly and correctly guiding and directing planetary affairs.” [*Esoteric Astrology*, p. 108]

The world has witnessed much of the destructive aspect of this ray, but as we become more adept at responding to this energy we will see that the First Ray energy can provide that impetus for change that sweeps away obstacles

and brings rapid evolutionary growth. When this energy works out in combination with the incoming energy of the Seventh Ray, we know that a real period of opportunity is before us.

Through Aries, the First Ray energy enters into our solar system in the cosmic sense. Aries would be instrumental, therefore, in implementing the Shamballa impacts that have occurred twice in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and again in the year 2000. With each impact humanity becomes better able to withstand and understand the mysterious nature of the Will, and then the effects of this powerful energy are not so detrimental.

The First Ray of Will and Power is also known as the Ray of the Destroyer. But it is equally known as the conveyor of synthesis. The destructive aspects of this ray are readily apparent all around us. Even though the destructive aspects of this ray have about run their course on the spiritual plane, upon the physical plane we are still feeling the horrific effects of the energy of destruction as it works out in all the many departments of our civilization. However, destruction ever paves the way for that which is new and better, and without it there would be no change. Destruction can, therefore, be seen as a real part of the Plan, for it is only because we cling to the tangible and to that which is known that we find change and destruction troubling.

The synthetic aspect of the First Ray is becoming more widespread at this time, although it is not given as much attention from the media and is perhaps less dramatic in its effect. This energy can be seen working out in the move toward global planning, international relationships, and the unified blocs and amalgamations that we see taking shape in so many areas. Synthesis, on the outer level, is a reflection of the fact that humanity is moving into fuller cooperation with the Plan and the underlying Purpose, and this is reflected in our sometimes feeble attempts to reconcile our differences despite any real inclination to do so upon the part of the personality. We move toward reconciliation because we have no other choice and because the Soul is demanding recognition. All the parties involved in reconciliation

fear change and, in some cases, the line of least resistance is to hold onto the old order; but change must come, and it will always involve compromise on all sides.

The Easter Festival is a time of resurrection, rebirth and the renewal of life. Mental illumination – light – pours into the mind of humanity during this festival, revealing our true nature. It is this light and spirit of renewal that can contribute to the elevation of humanity as a whole. This Light is poured forth into our planet through the medium of the Christ. Energy from Shamballa and the Hierarchy is focused through the Christ, who stands at the midpoint and center of our planetary life, and this light is then distributed to humanity through the intermediary of the New Group of World Servers and the people of goodwill.

This festival really symbolizes joy – the joy of liberation. The quality of joy is one that humanity desperately needs to learn, and yet this seems difficult for us because of the long-standing tradition of pain and suffering that conditions the human kingdom on this planet Earth. It is through relinquishment and renunciation that the lessons of joy are learned, and these attitudes enable us to eventually overcome the ancient habits of misery. In regard to this quality of joy, there are some interesting passages to be found in the book *The World's Religions* by Huston Smith. In the section on Christianity he eloquently conveys to the reader what seems like a true impression of the quality of life that permeated the early disciples and followers of Christ after his death. He wrote that the real turning point and the determining event within the lives of these early followers was their experience of and reac-

tion to the resurrection initiation through which Christ passed at this period of the Easter full moon. Smith does not attempt to answer the many questions that surround this mysterious event, questions that can become real stumbling blocks to people today who could not even allow for the possibility of such an event. Instead Smith highlights the transformation in consciousness that the resurrection

**The forces of restoration that flow into our planetary life at this time emanate from the Mind of God and stimulate the principle of intelligence. But the intention of these forces of restoration should not be misinterpreted or viewed as a call for the restoration of the old order and a longing for the past and that which no longer exists. The restoration that is called for is rather the restoration of the mind and the spiritual values that have, in many cases, been overlooked because of the demands of the outer world.**

caused within the disciples. He said, “It brought about the juncture of goodness and power.... If Christ’s life had convinced the disciples of God’s love, his resurrection convinced them of his power.”

He goes on to describe how from that moment the disciples were seemingly transformed and irrevocably linked in an entirely new manner with the inner source of spiritual energy. They were transformed from simple and inarticulate men and women into pas-

sionate, eloquent servers of the race. They now possessed a fire that set the whole Mediterranean world aflame. And this inner transformation was carried forward despite the many obstacles, the ridicule and persecution that the disciples had to endure. Smith believed that their transformation was a direct result of the love which they had known through Christ. This love they had experienced through his living presence sustained them after his death through a process that esotericists would call “overshadowing.” This overshadowing presence helped to ensure that the seeds of this teaching could become firmly anchored for the Piscean Age.

Today we are involved in a process that parallels the experience of these early disciples. Yet

this process is different in some respects. Today we do not have the direct experience of having lived and worked with the Christ as did these early disciples. We work without any outer recognition, holding fast to the inner recognition that the same love that they felt is abundantly available to us today, even though concealed from our sight. Disciples and spiritual workers today face a no less difficult task than did the early disciples, for each must find the manner in which they can best aid in the present process of the externalization of the Ashrams. When you think about aiding in this preparatory work you quickly realize how very difficult it is and how rare are those moments when you are met with interest or genuine understanding. We live in a world that is quite similar in many ways to that of the Romans 2000 years ago, with the focus primarily upon the material values. But our world is also infinitely more complex, and nowhere is this more apparent than within the mental bodies of humanity today. The intellect has become so developed that it often proves to be the “slayer of the real,” overpowering and rendering silent the considerations and straight knowledge of the heart.

Resurrection is concerned with the “livingness of life,” and it provides the keynote for the coming world religion. It is said that the resurrection of the spirit of humanity, and eventually of all forms of life, will ultimately be the goal of future religious training. It is not the resurrection of the physical body that is of concern, but rather the resurrection of the spiritual nature. The resurrection experience symbolizes the power of the indwelling life to draw all people out of the world of material values into the world of spiritual recognitions.

It is resurrection that is the keynote of nature, not death. This was the real message of the Christ 2000 years ago, not the distorted teaching upon death and sin. Crystallization of the form has led present-day Christianity to focus upon externals rather than upon the inner spiritual principles. Usually, once crystallization sets in, it takes a crisis in order to evoke change. In terms of the world’s major religions, we can see that this process of crystallization is strong during this end of the age. But

when we consider Tibetan Buddhism, we can perhaps sense an exception to this condition. It seems that from all of the voices within the religious communities of the world, the Tibetans, under the leadership of the Dalai Lama, are seeking to work in greater concert and dialog with the contemporary world. As much as we lament the terrible tragedy of the Chinese invasion of Tibet, we can also recognize that this crisis served a real purpose for the rest of the world by bringing these gentle people and their teachings and culture to many who might otherwise never have been exposed to them. Through the crisis that the Tibetans have endured, they have come forth at this time as real messengers of spiritual truth to the West. The ancient Tibetan prophecy that when the iron bird flies the dharma will go to the West has certainly proven true.

The forces of restoration that are active at the time of the Easter Full Moon are under the direction of a great extra-planetary being who works through Shamballa and is known as the Spirit of Resurrection. This living spiritual entity, temporarily working under the direction of the Christ, seeks to restore livingness to people’s spiritual goals and life to their planning; his task is to foster the vitality needed to implement the trends of the New Age. At this time of the Easter Festival, this Spirit of Resurrection pours forth his energy into our planet. He is sometimes called the “Sun of Righteousness” with “healing in his wings,” for he carries life-giving energy and hope that can restore nations and dispel the glamor and distortion that still surrounds death.

The forces of restoration that flow into our planetary life at this time emanate from the Mind of God and stimulate the principle of intelligence. But the intention of these forces of restoration should not be misinterpreted or viewed as a call for the restoration of the old order and a longing for the past and that which no longer exists. The restoration that is called for is rather the restoration of the mind and the spiritual values that have, in many cases, been overlooked because of the demands of the outer world. While it is tempting to look with nostalgia at the innocence, relative simplicity and security of the past, we know that for many

reasons we would never want to go back, for this is contrary to the law of forward evolutionary progress and growth. Great transformations have taken place within the human mind and civilization through the instrument of the struggles of this past century. We have become more open to new ideas and concepts, and the entire form of our civilization has changed. It takes time to construct new forms adequate to meet the changing need, but these changes will be rapidly carried forward with the aid of the incoming energies of the New Age.

It is said that the effect of these forces of restoration are primarily physical and that their objective is the production of the new Earth and all the outer evidences of an inflowing new life. As they condition human consciousness they create a renewal of the psychological health of humanity – elevating it to a more wholesome and happier approach to life, bring-

ing hope and optimism where none existed. One of the inevitable effects of this process of mental transformation will be the acquiring of vision. This sensing of the vision is not the impractical imagining of some vague future but rather the visioning of that which can be realized within the confines of our present resources and capabilities. These forces of restoration are primarily effective in regard to the spiritual workers of the world, stiffening their will-to-live and their will-to-good, which in turn works out within humanity as a fostering of goodwill and right human relations.

Easter is a time of creation and new beginnings, a time when out of the familiar and known new life can spring. As we come together in meditation, let us work positively to provide a channel so that the energies that are flooding our planet at this time will find release into receptive human hearts and minds.

## The Wesak Festival: The Dynamic of Determination-Enlightened, Enthusiastic Will

John Cobb

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“Two men look out through prison bars. One sees mud, the other stars.” (Frederick Langbridge)

These familiar words can be applied to all of us, for as Souls we are imprisoned in the three worlds. Of course, our imprisonment is not punishment, but a voluntary self-imposed confinement to lift and redeem the “substance” or lesser lives of those three worlds, in line with the redemptive Will of God.

As for one person seeing mud and the other stars, what we, as esotericists, have learned to see is *both* the “mud” and the “stars,” as we “look above and help below.” And if we apply the analogy to present national and world conditions, we can certainly see a great deal of “mud” around us. But at this Festival period, if

we focused on the “mud,” we would only hamper what should be accomplished at the time of Wesak, which is not only to look up to, but to *reach for* the “stars.”

We are concerned, however, not only with the Vision, without which the people perish, but also with the means of making it factual in living experience.

As many of us know, the Wesak Festival is primarily an annual Hierarchical event, during which the Masters of the Wisdom, the Lords of Compassion, the Spiritual Hierarchy in their various ranks, make alignment with, approach, and invoke the highest center of the planetary Life, Shamballa, where the Will of God is known. The key participants are the Christ, as head of the Hierarchy, and the Buddha, as representative of Shamballa.

In that great approach – which for long ages involved only the Hierarchy and Shamballa – we, humanity, are now not only invited to share, but we *must* share because of the changes within the planetary life already brought about under the influence of the dawning Aquarian Age.

Let us see if we can together grasp more of the meaning and significance, the reality and importance of the Wesak Festival, of the interplay between the three major planetary centers – humanity, Hierarchy and Shamballa – resulting in clearer “visions” respectively for both the Hierarchy and humanity – plus the great transference of certain spiritual energies from Shamballa that will speed both the Hierarchy and humanity toward their destinies.

So let us temporarily set aside our personal concerns and reach out in our aspiration, our thinking and our spiritual intention toward the Masters and the Hierarchy. We visualize them not as remote, distant, grandiose beings, but rather as individuals who have trodden the Way we are now treading; who have experienced to the full as human beings; who have learned to love selflessly, and who have joyously transformed their lives so that they now not only experience the joy of the Soul but also know the bliss of identification with Triadal and Monadic levels of being.

And yet, with all Their high attainment and despite the Way of the Higher Evolution beckoning Them forward, They strive to stimulate and help the rest of us humans to achieve, to know the wonders of planetary, systemic and cosmic Life that is at present beyond our awareness. They help us to pass from suffering to fulfillment, from darkness to Light, from the unreal to the Real, from death to immortality, from chaos to Beauty.

All this is tied in with the Law of Cycles. Just as daily we do our individual meditations and monthly our Full Moon Approaches, so each

year at Wesak the Hierarchy joins with humanity in making an approach to Shamballa.

We are told that the Spiritual Hierarchy expresses fully two Aspects of Deity, intelligence and Love, and is perfecting a third, the Will. The Masters are learning to fully wield and express the First, or Will Aspect, but as yet They are still striving to grasp and understand the Purpose as it is known in the Council Chamber of Shamballa – the Purpose that will

require for its ultimate fulfillment the use of divine Will, Love and intelligence throughout the planetary life.

A common objective of this process could be described as catching a glimpse of the purpose of Sanat Kumara, that great Being Who is pledged to lift and redeem the total planetary life.

It is probably beyond us, at our present stage of

evolution, to accomplish this, but we can expect to achieve a clearer vision of the Plan that embodies the Will of God and that surely must be in line with the great underlying redemptive Purpose of the Logos. Humanity can now tap, to a certain extent, a measure of that Shamballic Will. This is so because, under Cyclic Law, the influence of the Aquarian Age is already bringing great changes throughout the planetary life – although it is true that most of those changes are on the higher or inner levels and have yet to externalize. Since the Hierarchy always works under the Law of Cycles and of Cyclic Compensation, it follows that they are masters of Time and of right timing.

The Hierarchy – which constitutes the Ashram of Sanat Kumara, “is coming peculiarly and in a new sense under the influence of His Will nature,” and the Masters “are being brought to a new and more appropriate conception of the divine Purpose that lies behind the Plan and motivates it. The Will of God is becoming plainer to Them.” But that’s not the whole story. The Tibetan writes, “from the Christ down

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to the newest and latest accepted disciple, each in his own place, all are becoming increasingly responsive to the Will of God. This is bringing about great, necessary and unexpected changes, some now taking place, some to follow later.”

Regarding the first change, He states,

the entire technique of training disciples for initiation and of absorbing them into the various ashrams has been altered. ... The older methods built around the direct relationship between a Master and a disciple reached their highest point of usefulness early in the Piscean Age. For nearly two thousand years these methods have proven so successful that the intensity of humanity’s response is that hundreds are now ready for absorption. With the arrival of the Aquarian Age, group preparation, group instruction and group acceptance must and will supersede the older methods.

Linked to this first change is the second one, whereby

a measure of the training is now objective and exoteric. Hence the establishment of the New Group of World Servers, which provides not only a field of service for accepted disciples, but also a rallying point for all determined aspirants, where they can be tried out, and where their motives and persistence can be tested prior to direct acceptance into the Ashram. This shifts the responsibility of preparing aspirants for accepted discipleship onto the shoulders of the pledged disciple and away from the immediate attention of the accepting Master, who is thus freed for other fields of service. This, in itself, is one of the major indications of the success of the evolutionary process as applied to humanity.

We could discuss more fully the implications of these two changes, but it is probably more timely and more fitting to consider the third change, one that is particularly relevant to our work together at the Wesak Festival. This is how the Tibetan describes it:

The third great change has been in the relation of the Hierarchy to Shamballa, and of

this you can necessarily know and understand little. I could perhaps express the underlying significance to you in symbolic language. The energy emanating from Shamballa has been divided into two direct and distinctive streams. One stream, embodying the *dynamic of purpose*, is now pouring into the Hierarchy and its seven major ashrams.

Another stream, embodying *the dynamic of determination or of enlightened, enthusiastic Will*, is reaching humanity direct via the New Group of World Servers. Hitherto a blended stream of Shamballa force has poured into the Hierarchy and has streamed, in its undifferentiated type and quality, into all the groups within the Hierarchy. Now (written 1944), the quality of determination or of what the average person understands by the use of the word “Will,” is pouring into the New Group of World Servers, while the energy of dynamic Purpose, differentiated into seven diverging streams, is pouring into each of the “seven points of reception,” the Masters’ Ashrams within the ring-pass-not of the Hierarchy. These seven types of Purpose embody the seven energies that will reorganize and redefine the Hierarchical undertaking, and thus inaugurate the New Age. [The above extracts are drawn from *The Rays and the Initiations*, pp. 239-241]

Do these words give a clear indication of why humanity can and must increasingly share in the Wesak Approach?

We are not concerned, of course, with the first stream of energy from Shamballa, which embodies the dynamic of Purpose. That is not for us to understand or to handle, but is the task of the Spiritual Hierarchy. *Our* concern is surely with the other stream, which, “embodying the dynamic of determination or of enlightened enthusiastic Will, is reaching humanity direct via the New Group of World Servers.”

This final phrase – “reaching humanity direct via the New Group of World Servers” – is a reminder of an aspect of the New Group that we are apt to forget, or of which we may not even have grasped the significance. The Tibet-

an explains: “The New Group of World Servers is *primarily* a group that, while working on the outer plane of daily, physical living, yet preserves a close ashramic integration.”

So we need to remember that the New Group of World Servers is not only outwardly responding to needs in line with the Plan, but is also preserving a strong subjective spiritual life, thus constituting an open channel from humanity to the Kingdom of God – to the Spiritual Hierarchy and to Shamballa.

Let us ponder the nature of the Shamballa energy that we – that is, the planetary group of which we are a part – can together receive. The Tibetan uses two phrases to describe this energy: first, as embodying “the dynamic of determination or of enlightened enthusiastic Will”; and second, “the quality of determination or of what the average person understands by the use of the word ‘Will’.”

The first description seems the more appealing and evocative one. We all know how greatly we and the whole world need that enlightened, enthusiastic Will, not only in treading the Spiritual Path, but in resolving the enormous prob-

lems that we face. We do not lack the means to resolve our difficulties; we simply lack the *will* to apply those means. That willingness, that enlightened enthusiastic Will-to-Good, is being directed to us by Shamballa, by Sanat Kumara. Let us identify with the New Group of World Servers and joyously accept this energy in the service of our fellow human beings.

And let us also hold in mind, in connection with Shamballa, that the Great Invocation “embodies the divine intent and summarizes the conclusions of the thinking of the planetary Logos.” (DINA 2, p. 156) If that is the case, then response to our use of the Great Invocation is certain, response not only from the Spiritual Hierarchy but also from Shamballa, for our voicing of the Invocation, signaling our cooperative intention, is what the Great Ones are waiting for!

As the Master DK wrote to one of his disciples (see DINA 1, p. 629): “No cost is too great to pay in order to be of use to the Hierarchy at the time of the Full Moon of May, the Wesak Festival; no price is too high in order to gain the spiritual illumination that can be possible, particularly at that time.”

## The Festival of Goodwill: The Full Moon in Gemini

John Nash

### The Festival and the Future

The Festival of Goodwill is celebrated at the Full Moon in Gemini. This year’s festival, on June 4, 2012, will be the sixtieth in the series (the first was observed in 1952), and the “golden jubilee” adds further significance to an already important occasion.

The other two festivals of the Higher Interlude, the Easter and Wesak Festivals (celebrated, respectively, at the Full Moons in Aries and Taurus) draw upon religious traditions that date back to the dawn of the Piscean Age. Their continued relevance is not in question, but to some degree the focus is on the past. By contrast, the Festival of Goodwill, also known

as the Festival of the Christ, Festival of Humanity, or World Invocation Day, looks unambiguously to the future, to the Aquarian Age. It celebrates the increasing presence in the world of the Second Aspect of Deity: the immanent presence of Love-Wisdom, expressed through humanity. The Christ established a link with the center of planetary life known as Shamballa, and the festival offers opportunities to contact levels of reality hitherto beyond our reach.

The Tibetan Master Djwhal Khul announced the new festival shortly after World War II. He explained that the Festival of Goodwill “will be the festival of the spirit of humanity – aspir-

ing towards God, seeking conformity with the Will of God and dedicated to the expression of right human relation.... It will be a day where-on the spiritual and divine nature of humanity will be recognized.”<sup>1</sup>

Actually the Festival of Goodwill was new only to humanity. The Tibetan noted that it had long been observed on the inner planes:

On this festival, for two thousand years, the Christ has represented humanity and has stood before the Hierarchy and in the sight of Shamballa as the God-Man, the Leader of His people and “the Eldest in a great family of brothers”.... Each year at that time He has preached the last sermon of the Buddha before the assembled Hierarchy. This will therefore be a festival of deep invocation and appeal, of a basic aspiration towards fellowship, of human and spiritual unity, and will represent the effect in the human consciousness of the work of the Buddha and of the Christ.<sup>2</sup>

This reference to the Christ and the Buddha places the Festival of Goodwill in relationship to the Easter and the Wesak Festivals and hints that its energy helps synthesize that of the older festivals. Announcement of the Festival of Goodwill came in the context of prophecies of far-reaching importance. The Tibetan Master predicted that the Christ will reappear on Earth, the Hierarchy of Masters will be externalized, the Mysteries will be restored, and a New World Religion will emerge to serve humanity’s spiritual needs in the Aquarian Age. No dates were given for these momentous events, and we understand that much depends on our own progress toward establishing right human relations. Whether they will begin in 2012 or 2025 is purely a matter of speculation; some mentioned dates have already passed.

In the spirit of the Festival of Goodwill’s future orientation, this talk will focus on the emergence of the New World Religion and the closely related restoration of the mysteries. The new religion, we understand, will grow out of, and eventually replace, the religions of the Piscean Age. It will also embrace some aspects of “Masonic tradition,” which perhaps we can interpret to include other expressions of

Western esotericism, such as Rosicrucianism and the Golden Dawn. Instead of dividing people, as religions have in the past, the New World Religion will embrace people of every persuasion and every nation. The Tibetan sketched its broad outlines thus:

Spirituality will supersede theology; living experience will take the place of theological acceptances. The spiritual realities will emerge with increasing clarity, and the form aspect will recede into the background; dynamic, expressive truth will be the keynote of the New World Religion. The living Christ will assume His rightful place in human consciousness and see the fruition of His plans, sacrifice and service, but the hold of the ecclesiastical orders will weaken and disappear. Only those will remain as guides and leaders of the human spirit who speak from living experience, and who know no creedal barriers; they will recognize the onward march of revelation and the new emerging truths.<sup>3</sup>

The Tibetan added that “these truths will be founded on the ancient realities but will be adapted to modern need and will manifest progressively the revelation of the divine nature and quality. God is now known as Intelligence and Love. That the past has given us. He must be known as Will and Purpose, and that the future will reveal.”<sup>4</sup>

Certainly we see evidence of progress toward implementing the New World Religion. Many people today identify themselves as “spiritual” rather than “religious.” They may be disillusioned with organized religion, particularly that of their upbringing, but they feel a strong impulse to respond to higher reality and to express that impulse in ritual, prayer and experiential worship. For their part religious bodies have changed in significant ways since 1949 when the Tibetan’s cycle of writings came to an end. The political power of institutional Christianity continues to decline – though evangelical fundamentalism has achieved strong influence in the United States. Christian denominations are reaching out to one another with increasing ecumenical warmth; mutual respect and understanding are at an all-time high. Also there is much greater emphasis on

service, including the healing ministry, which has only recently been restored in the western church after a millennium of neglect.

Nobody would claim that Christianity's transformation, on the lines envisioned by the Tibetan, is complete, or that universal harmony has been attained across sectarian lines. Separatism remains in every denomination, in some more so than others, but real progress has been made. Where much more work is needed is in overcoming mutual suspicion among Christianity, Islam, Judaism and other world religions.

Belief in an original repository of truth, adequate for all time, and notions of infallible, unchangeable dogma are increasingly unpopular both outside and inside organized religion. In medieval times the institutional church was almost the sole center of learning, and it served an illiterate laity content to be told what to believe. Today an educated laity honors its own insights and spiritual experiences. Moreover, people view truth as continually evolving and unfolding; what might once have been satisfactory doctrine may now need to be updated or replaced in the light of new insights. Whether spirituality will actually supersede theology, however, is debatable. We are thinking beings who are unlikely to stop constructing intellectual models of higher reality. Not insignificantly, the domains of theology and esoteric philosophy overlap to a considerable extent.

The Master Djwhal Khul hesitated to use the word "doctrine," but he declared that the New World Religion will incorporate three "major presentations of truth":

1. The fact of the Spirit of God, both transcendent and immanent, will be demonstrated, and also a similar fact in relation to man. The mode of their approach to each other, via the soul, will be indicated. This aspect of the emerging truth might be called Transcendental Mysticism.
2. The fact of the divine quality of the Forces in nature and in man and the method of their utilization for divine purposes by man. This might be called Transcendental Occultism.

3. The fact, implied in the first, that Humanity as a Whole is an expression of divinity, a complete expression, plus the allied fact of the divine nature and work of the planetary Hierarchy, and the mode of the Approach of these two groups, in group form, to each other. This might be called Transcendental Religion.<sup>5</sup>
4. The Tibetan's repeated use of the word "transcendental" deserves special attention. He seemed intent to distinguish the three major presentations from mysticism, occultism and religion as they have usually been understood. The distinction may be relatively minor in the first instance; mysticism of a high order can be found in all world religions and now is being embraced increasingly by the masses. The history of occultism, on the other hand, provides many examples of the need for more transcendentalism in that area.

Will and Purpose evidently will receive considerable emphasis in the New World Religion. The Tibetan spoke of the importance to us of the First Aspect of Deity.

We are – if it could be but realized – in process of reinterpreting and rearranging what can be called "the doctrinal structure underlying the relation between knowledge and wisdom." This involves the destruction of old concepts such as the trinity of manifestation, and the assembly of those new and more correct ideas that must inevitably be substituted for the old, as the unfoldment of the first aspect is presented to the initiate upon the Path. This, through certain later activities, will gradually seep downwards into the consciousness of humanity, and the New World Religion will be founded upon a deeper spiritual perception of the Father or Life Aspect, in place of the rapidly crystallizing vision of the Son or consciousness aspect.<sup>6</sup>

Whether or not spirituality supersedes theology, the Tibetan spoke of a New World Religion, not a new world spirituality. Religion

implies the sharing of spiritual experiences and a collective response to those experiences. It implies common ideals, a sense of communion, and some form of group worship. Indeed the Tibetan reassured us that “prayer, worship and affirmation” will be preserved. But to them will be added “the new religion of Invocation and Evocation ... in which man will begin to use his divine power and come into closer touch with the spiritual sources of all life.”<sup>7</sup> That comment may provide clues to what the Tibetan meant by “Transcendental Occultism.”

The Great Invocation will play an important role: “This new Invocation, if given widespread distribution, can be to the new world religion what the Lord’s Prayer has been to Christianity and the Twenty-Third Psalm has been to the spiritually minded Jew.”<sup>8</sup> Many of us, whether or not we personally identify with Christianity or Judaism, would hope that the Lord’s Prayer, the Twenty-Third Psalm, and other revered prayers and scriptural passages can be preserved in the liturgy of the new religion and used alongside the Great Invocation.

Like the religions of the past the New World Religion will have its liturgical calendar, and the Festival of Goodwill along with Easter and the Wesak Festival will be major events. The dates of those festivals are governed by a combination of solar and lunar cycles. The Tibetan acknowledged that “many church festivals are fixed by reference to the moon or a zodiacal constellation. Investigation will prove this to be increasingly the case, and when the ritual of the New World Religion is universally The

Eastern Orthodox churches have always placed more emphasis on Christ’s transfiguration, resurrection and established this will be one of the important factors considered.”<sup>9</sup> He also predicted that man will grasp not only his relation to the spiritual Life of our planet, the “One in Whom we live and move and have our being,” but will also

[gain] a glimpse of the relation of our planet to the circle of planetary lives moving within the orbit of the Sun, and the still greater circle of spiritual Influences which contact our solar system as it pursues its orbit in the Heavens (the twelve constellations of the zodiac).<sup>10</sup>

Events in the life of the historical Christ will continue to serve as sources of inspiration in the New World Religion:

Upon the revelation of the risen Christ must the New World Religion take its stand. Christ upon

the Cross, as will appear when we study the next great crisis, showed us love and sacrifice carried to their extreme expression; but Christ alive from all time, and vitally alive today, is the keynote of the New Age, and upon this truth must the new presentation of religion be built and, later, the new theology be constructed. The true meaning of the Resurrection and the Ascension has not yet been grasped; as a divine subjective reality those truths still await revelation. The glory of the New Age will be the unveiling of those two mysteries, and our entrance into a fuller understanding of God as life.<sup>11</sup>

Significantly, emphasis on the cross and the suffering Christ is primarily a feature of western Christianity.

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ascension: on Christ as the expression of divine glory. The Tibetan did not mention Pentecost, which has Judaic as well as Christian roots. But it falls within a few days of the Festival of Goodwill, and the latter is sometimes referred to as the Pentecost, or Whitsun, Festival.

Implementation of the New World Religion will require action on multiple levels. The Tibetan identified ten “focal points of energy in the human family through which certain energies can flow into the entire race.” The sixth of those focal points, consisting of “workers in the Field of Religion,” will bear the major responsibility:

Their work is to formulate the universal platform of the New World Religion. It is a work of loving synthesis and it will emphasize the unity and the fellowship of the spirit. This group is, in a pronounced sense, a channel for the activity of the Second Ray of Love-Wisdom, that of the World Teacher – an office held at present by the Christ. The platform of the New World Religion will be built by the many groups, working under the inspiration of the Christ and the influence of the Second Ray and these – in their totality – will constitute this sixth group.<sup>12</sup>

Interaction will also be necessary between humanity and the Hierarchy of Masters. It “will take the form of a conscious unified group approach to the world of spiritual values, evoking ... reciprocal action from Those Who are the citizens of that world – the planetary Hierarchy and affiliated groups.”<sup>13</sup> When the necessary groundwork has been laid, two senior members of the Hierarchy will take decisive action:

The Master Jesus will take certain initial steps towards reassuming control of His Church; the Buddha will send two trained disciples to reform Buddhism; other steps will also be taken in this department of religions and of education, over which the Christ rules, and He will move to restore the ancient spiritual landmarks, to eliminate that which is nonessential, and to reorganize the entire religious field.<sup>14</sup>

The Master Jesus’ plans to “reassume control of His Church” would seem to refute suggestions that Christianity has run its course and will soon pass out of existence as a relic of the Piscean Age. Indeed it would seem that Christianity will play a significant role in the New World Religion. We shall see shortly that its role may be larger than would have been expected.

Involvement by high-level members of the Hierarchy will make way for the restoration of the Mysteries, which “will unify all faiths.”<sup>15</sup> The mysteries, we understand,

will be restored to outer expression through the medium of the Church and the Masonic Fraternity, if those groups leave off being organizations with material purpose, and become organisms with living objectives. When the Great One comes with His disciples and initiates we shall have (after a period of intensive work on the physical plane beginning around the year 1940) the restoration of the Mysteries and their exoteric presentation, as a consequence of the first initiation. Why can this be so? Because the Christ, as you know, is the Hierophant of the first and second initiations and He will, if the preparatory work is faithfully and well done, administer the first initiation in the inner sanctuaries of those two bodies.<sup>16</sup>

Several statements in this passage merit attention. First, the reference to 1940 may raise eyebrows. For example, one wonders how long a “period of intensive work on the physical plane” will be needed – presumably more than the seven decades that have elapsed since then. Second, the Tibetan’s statement that the restored mysteries will be expressed through “the Church and the Masonic Fraternity” is highly significant. Certainly we can see how the Masonic tradition, which draws upon the ancient mysteries, will be a useful ingredient. But reference to “the Church” suggests that Christianity may be the only religion to play a major role. To be sure, Christianity has a strong tradition of sacramental ritual, and it is worth noting that in the Eastern Orthodox Churches the sacraments have always been referred to as “the mysteries.” But it is unclear at this time how the mysteries “will unify all

faiths” if age-old rituals of other world religions are not included. Finally, since the Christ is the hierophant of the first two initiations, it would seem that full restoration of the mysteries on the physical plane will not occur before his reappearance. Perhaps the restoration will come relatively late in the timeframe of the Tibetan’s prophecies.

The anticipated involvement of senior members of the Hierarchy in establishing the New World Religion and restoring the mysteries might suggest that the rest of us can sit back and watch developments from the sidelines. But the Tibetan was emphatic that action is required from all of us and that there is no time to waste:

It is necessary for you to understand the immediate spiritual possibilities that confront humanity if those of you who have vision and love humanity are to measure up to the immediate opportunity. It is necessary that you should grasp the immediate preparatory steps that you can take in relation to those possibilities and should also have a vision of the principles that must govern the New World Religion, with its outstanding points of focus.<sup>17</sup>

The Tibetan assured us that nobody is to be coerced into helping to implement the new religion: “I only seek to give you information, leaving you to make due application under the urge of your own souls.”<sup>18</sup> Whether or not we belong to a church or a Masonic order, there is much we can do. Perhaps, as we prepare for the Festival of Goodwill, the Festival of the Christ – and as we hold the vision of the New

World Religion – we shall find that the urge of our own Souls is more powerful than any external coercion might be.

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<sup>1</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, New York: Lucis, 1957, 421.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 202.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 55-56.

<sup>6</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II*, New York: Lucis, 1966, 403.

<sup>7</sup> Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 401.

<sup>8</sup> Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II*, 164-165.

<sup>9</sup> Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 419.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* Parenthesis in original.

<sup>11</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *From Bethlehem to Calvary*, New York: Lucis, 1937, 163.

<sup>12</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age I*, New York: Lucis, 1944, 38.

<sup>13</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Education in the New Age*, New York: Lucis, 1954, 122-123.

<sup>14</sup> Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 573.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 573.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 514-515. Elsewhere the Tibetan commented that the mysteries will also be restored in the sciences. See for example Alice A. Bailey, *The Reappearance of the Christ*, New York: Lucis, 1948, 122.

<sup>17</sup> Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 393.

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