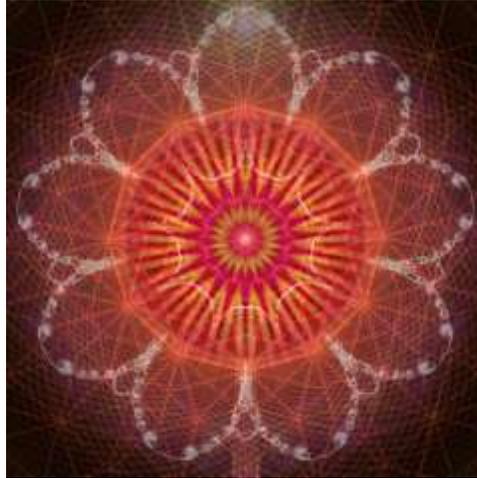


Spring 2015, Volume 11, Number 1



# *The Esoteric Quarterly*

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

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



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# *The Esoteric Quarterly*

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

## From Syncretism to Synthesis

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All religions and spiritual traditions possess some degree of syncretism. The dynamic phenomenon of co-mingling happens when one religion accepts or absorbs elements of another tradition. The three Abrahamic faiths, for example, are not only extensions of each other; they incorporate elements from older pagan and/or polytheistic systems. Likewise, Buddhism, especially in Tibet, preserved a number of traditional themes from its Hindu lineage, while some Hindu Siddha traditions are shown to have strong Islamic and Buddhist influences. Syncretism was one of the essential principles of Hermeticism and the late Renaissance, and remains the most prominent characteristic of Gnosticism and the Esoteric Philosophy. However, Theosophy and the Trans-Himalayan traditions go beyond syncretism to synthesis since neither is accidentally or artificially created, but united instead by a golden thread that is common to all religions, philosophies and scientific world-views. The articles in this issue provide examples of how syncretism informs and alters religious and esoteric traditions and helps resolve them into a subjective synthesis.

It is well known that the Trans-Himalayan teachings have eastern foundations, but seldom does an author research the connections to explore the similarities and differences. Our first article, from Malvin Artley, is the exception. *Perspectives on the Antahkarana*, surveys the theme from both the Western esoteric tradition and the Mahayana Buddhist perspective. In addition to discussing the Buddhist antecedents from which the “Science of the Antahkarana” springs, the author investigates the correlation between Western esoteric teachings on the “rainbow bridge” and the Tibetan Bardo practice for death and dying. However, the author shows that the states described in the *Bardo Thödol* can also be experienced in meditative states during a systematic practice in building the Antah-

karana. The article concludes with a section that relates the Tibetan Buddhist Phowa practice to the transfer of consciousness at death and to the building of the rainbow bridge.

Zachary Lansdowne contributes the second article in this issue which compares Lucille Cedercrans’ “New Thoughtform Presentation of the Wisdom” to Alice A. Bailey’s teachings on the Technique of Integration for the Seventh Ray. The article provides an introductory section on the Master Rakoczi, the Master associated with the Seventh Ray and the Cedercrans’ teachings. Also included is a brief profile of Cedercrans and the process by which her teachings were written. This is followed by an in-depth interpretation of the five stages of Bailey’s Seventh Ray Technique to which relevant statements from Cedercrans writings are applied. Lansdowne’s analysis and commentary shows that both Cedercrans and Bailey hold integral views of human development, and that Bailey’s obscure symbolic teachings can be clarified by passages from Cedercran’s writings.

Our third offering, from Iván Kovács, is part of a series that examines the life and works of W. Y. Evans-Wentz, the American scholar who helped to promote an understanding of Tibetan Buddhism in the West. The previous article in this series explored the first book in his Tibetan tetralogy: *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. This article continues the discussion of the remaining three books: *Tibet’s Great Yogi Milarepa*; *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines*; and *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*. The article includes an analysis of the forwards and afterwards to the fourth edition by Donald S. Lopez Jr., who proffered a detailed and critical evaluation of the original texts and the life of Evans-Wentz. Also provided is a response to Carl Jung’s “Psychological Commentary” on *The Tibetan Book of Great Liberation*.

Our final article—*The Lesser Known Nāth Yoga Sect*, by Vijay Srinath Kanchi and Sunil Salunke—explores The Nāth order, a syncretic system which draws its lineage back to Lord Shiva. The order was systematized by the Mahasiddha Goraknath who is widely credited with the formulation of Hatha Yoga. While Nāth yoga utilizes techniques aimed at conditioning the physical body, such as Pranayama and Asana as a tantric practice, its primary goal is gaining mastery over the mind and bringing about cessation of all mental activities so that the highest state of absolute truth and consciousness can be attained. In addition to exploring the Nāth Siddhis, the so called “Masters of Magical Powers,” the article touches upon the esoteric tenets of the Nāth school by comparing it with the well-known Patanjali yoga system.

We have included a short paper from Aaron J. French on the Renaissance theologian and syncretistic philosopher Marsilio Ficino, one of the “Great Esotericists of the Past,” who believed that all the world’s religions could be related to each other. Also included is a review for an impressive new book by Dorje Jinpa, titled *Sensa: The Lost Language of the Ancient Mysteries*. The book is a “must read” for every serious esoteric student.

Our “Poems of the Quarter”—*i thank God for this amazing...* and *O sweet spontaneous*—focus on the theme of Spring with two poems from E. E. Cummings, an American poet, whose work consciously takes up the Taoist principles of wholeness and entwinement with nature. Both of these poems are in the public domain.

Our “Pictures of the Quarter”—*Seeds of Life*, *Three Devas* and *Spring*—are from Suchitra Davenport. Suchitra is a meditation teacher, soul-based counselor and collaborative leader at *Soul Source, Center for Conscious Living*. She is a Registered Flower Essence Practitioner with the Flower Essence Society of North America and is trained in several healing/counseling modalities. Her paintings are based upon the premise that beauty brings us into resonance with the Presence and reminds of us of our essential nature. A further source of inspiration in her work lies in the

importance of establishing a more conscious and harmonious relationship with the devic and nature kingdoms. Such a deep response to the beauty and inner life of nature is revealed in the three paintings featured here, each of which opens the heart and mind to the energetic dimensions inherent in the natural world and creative life forces of Spring.

Donna M. Brown  
Editor-in-Chief

### Publication Policies

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

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

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

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

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

## Poems of the Quarter by E.E. Cummings

---

**“i thank you God for most this amazing”**

i thank You God for most this amazing  
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees  
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything  
which is natural which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today,  
and this is the sun’s birthday; this is the birth  
day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay  
great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing  
breathing any—lifted from the no  
of all nothing—human merely being  
doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and  
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)

**“O sweet Spontaneous”**

O sweet spontaneous  
earth how often have  
the dotting  
fingers of  
prurient philosophies pinched  
and poked  
thee

has the naughty thumb  
of science prodded  
thy

beauty how  
often have religions taken  
thee upon their scraggy  
knees squeezing and  
buffeting thee that thou mightest conceive

gods  
but  
true

to the incomparable  
couch of death thy  
rhythmic  
lover

thou answerest  
them only with  
spring

## Pictures of the Quarter by Suchitra Davenport

---



### ***Seeds of Life***

*Acrylic on canvas, 22" x 28"*

Followed by

### ***Three Devas***

*Acrylic on canvas, 30" x 30"*

And

### ***Spring***

*Acrylic on canvas, 20" x 24"*



## Quotes of the Quarter

---

We can now consider the antahkarana itself as an electrical phenomenon. An initial sticking point is that the antahkarana is not commonly thought of as a circuit, but more as a bridge across the gap in consciousness that exists between the lower mind of the personality and the higher mind of the Spiritual Ego. However, we will recall that the antahkarana is actually woven around an already existing thread of force that stretches across this chasm. This is the sutratma, the life thread that stretches from every individualized son of God on the highest planes of the system right down through the Solar Angel on the mental plane and into the personality in the lower three worlds, delivering the vital energy of Life itself and as much of the consciousness of the higher planes that can be registered at any particular personality's stage of unfoldment. When our thoughts are directed back upwards towards this high source on the spiritual realms in meditation, the antahkarana is woven around the sutratma and we have a two way flow of living, conscious energy, and this completes the fohatic or electrical circuit. Interestingly, the old commentary describes someone who has spun or woven the first tenuous strand of the upward part of this circuit as "a weaver in fohatic enterprise."

Laurence Newey, *The Antahkarana as an Electrical Phenomenon*,  
[http://www.lucistrust.org/en/arcane\\_school/the\\_electric\\_bridge/general\\_articles/the\\_antahkarana\\_as\\_an\\_electrical\\_phenomenon](http://www.lucistrust.org/en/arcane_school/the_electric_bridge/general_articles/the_antahkarana_as_an_electrical_phenomenon).

The way to escape death is to escape life. ... This, then, is the Rainbow — the bridge which the artist throws over the yawning of reality. ... He works out, in his art, the unreal triumph — since it is neither a triumph over life nor over death. It is a triumph over an imaginary world which he himself has created. The drama lies entirely in the realm of the idea. His war with reality is a reflection of the war within himself.

Henry Miller, "Creative Death," *Wisdom of the Heart* (New York: New Directions, 1941), 7.

The Seventh Ray is not the ray of synthesis. The synthesis is being applied through the Seventh Ray simply because it is the Seventh Ray which is being utilized as the energy upon this planet to carry synthesis. *Synthesis* in the highest sense of the word is *Cosmic First Ray*. Synthesis as it relates to this planet is the first subray of the Cosmic Second Ray. First Ray is being objectified through the Seventh.

Lucille Cedercrans, *Applied Wisdom* (Roseville, MN: Wisdom Impressions Publishers, 2013), 89.

Now the shift from the Sixth Ray expression actually means that the ideal which has been held before the eyes of humanity as an unattainable yet most desirable development is to be shifted from the realm of the unattainable, to be brought down into the heart and mind of every human being as his goal. Instead of being worshipped, instead of being prayed to, it is to be brought into the heart and mind, and true ordered activity, through Ceremonial Magic, to be embodied and ex-pressed in the daily life and affairs of every member of humanity—in the daily life and affairs of the civilization itself. This is the meaning of the new Seventh Ray civilization, that it brings the ideal into the field of activity.

Lucille Cedercrans, *Ashramic Projections*, (Roseville, MN: Wisdom Impressions Publishers, 2012), 51.

Understanding should not be mistaken for realization, and realization should not be mistaken for liberation.

Sogyal Rinpoche, *Dialogue on the Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, with Swami Virato New Frontier Magazine, 1994.

The Mahamudra teachings are profound instructions that lead to the realization of the true nature of mind. *Mahamudra* is a Sanskrit word that describes the fundamental nature of reality, both relative and ultimate. It encompasses our mundane consciousness, in all its confusion, as well as the primordial wisdom that is its true nature. It extends to our experience of all phenomena. In Sanskrit, *Maha* means “great” and *mudra* means “seal,” or “symbol.” Mahamudra is like the king’s seal; once the king stamps his seal on a legal document everyone has to abide by that law. No one can escape its reach. Similarly, nothing can escape the reach of Mahamudra—all phenomena are contained within and sealed by this reality. This is what Mahamudra means: nothing beyond, nothing outside. No matter how hard we search, no matter how skillful or powerful we are, we cannot find buddhahood outside of our present experience.

Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, “Pointing Out Ordinary Mind,” *Lion’s Roar*, Sept. 2009.

Are you oblivious to the sufferings of birth, old age, sickness and death? There is no guarantee that you will survive, even past this very day! The time has come [for you] to develop perseverance in [your] practice. For, at this singular opportunity, you could attain the everlasting bliss [of nirvāṇa]. So now is [certainly] not the time to sit idly, But, starting with [the reflection on] death, you should bring your practice to completion! The moments of our life are not expendable, And the [possible] circumstances of death are beyond imagination. If you do not achieve an undaunted confident security now, What point is there in your being alive, O living creature?

Padmasambhava, *The Tibetan Book of the Dead: First Complete Translation* (London, UK: Penguin Classics, 2007), 8.

My father is wisdom and my mother is voidness. My country is the country of Dharma. I am of no caste and no creed. I am sustained by perplexity; and I am here to destroy lust, anger and sloth.”

Padmasambhava

The Natha tradition (Sampradaya) is a timeless lineage of spiritual masters, connected with Infinite Consciousness through the greatest Yogi of all ages, Babaji Gorakshanatha, the same introduced in Yogananda's Autobiography of a Yogi. These ancient yogis discovered that the secret of cosmic consciousness is intimately linked with breath mastery. The life force, which is ordinarily used for bodily functions, can be channeled for higher activities by a method of calming and stilling the ceaseless demands of the breath.

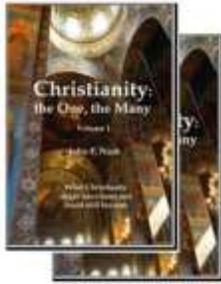
Raju Khan, *Natha Sampradaya - Hatha Yoga, Kundalini and Kriya Yoga* (Mumbai, India: The Himavanti Brotherhood.)

The success of this [Nātha] tradition was partly due to the fact that its teachers did not recognize caste barriers, and their teachings were adopted by outcastes and kings alike. In the course of time, the followers of Nāthism became a “casteless” caste of spinners, weavers and metal workers.

Georg Feuerstein, *The Encyclopedic of Yoga and Tantra* (Boston, MA: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 1997), 242.

Marsilio Ficino brought the philosophy, culture and wisdom from the Egyptian, Greek, and Islamic worlds together with Medieval Christian Europe, which was a major contribution to the development of Western society. Ficino chose the best from each of these worlds—separating superstition from wisdom, speculation from reason. He achieved the extremely difficult integration of Platonic reason with Christian religious doctrine. He brought the view of the immortality of the soul back into Christianity and convinced leading thinkers that the human being was a reflection of the divine.

Ron Cacioppe, “Marsilio Ficino: Magnus of the Renaissance, Shaper of Leaders,” *Integral Leadership Review*, 2009. Online at: <http://integralleadershipreview.com/5397-feature-article-marsilio-ficino-magnus-of-the-renaissance-shaper-of-leaders/>.



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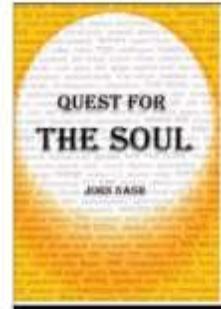
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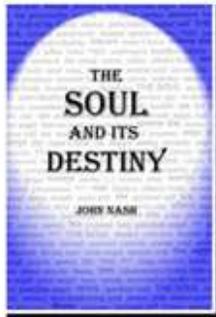
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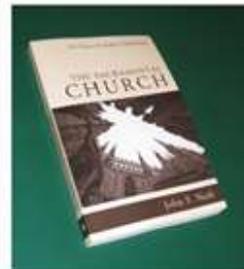
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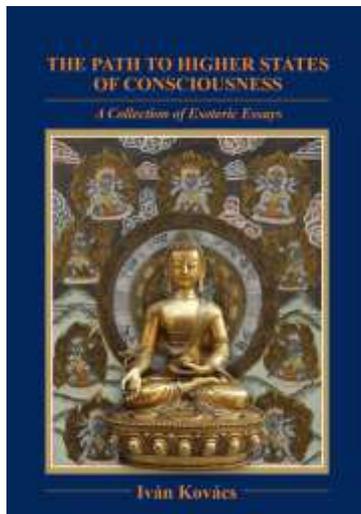
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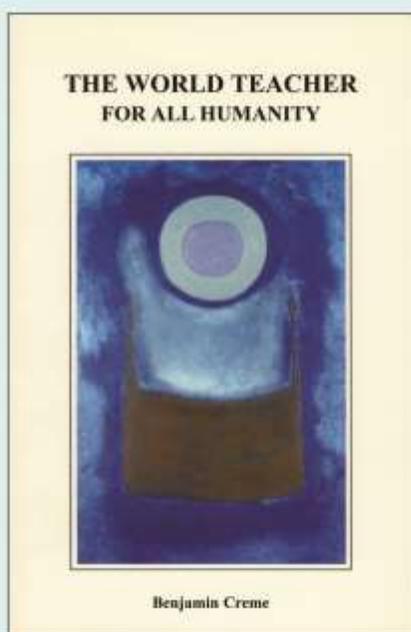
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# Perspectives on the Antaḥkaraṇa

Malvin Artley

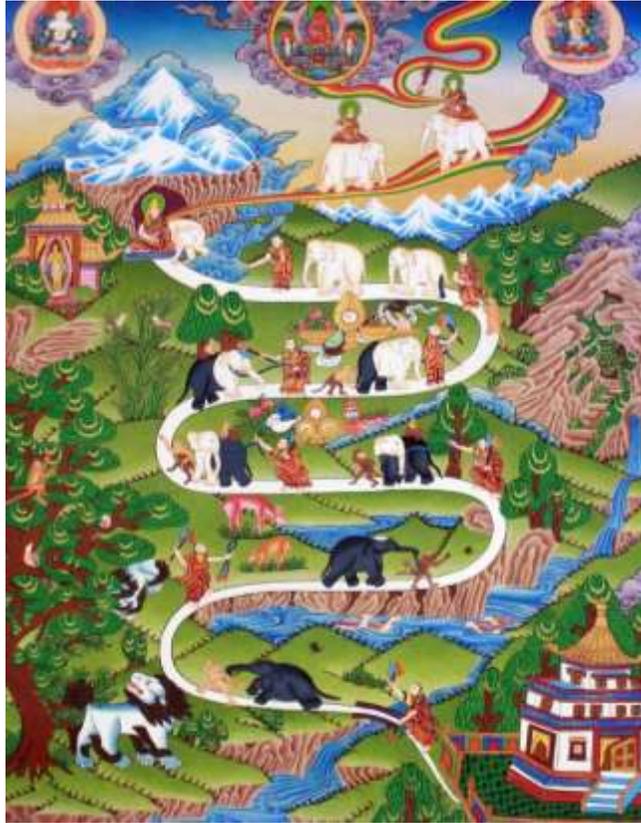


Figure 1: The Nine Stages of Shamatha<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

This article is an investigation and overview of the main concepts of the Antaḥkaraṇa, the means of its construction and its importance in service and meditative practice. Western esoteric perspectives are introduced first, followed by Buddhist perspectives. In Vajrayana Buddhism, the practice of taking death and birth on the path to enlightenment<sup>2</sup> is touched upon, since it is used in their meditations as a basis for higher spiritual attainments. The article introduces a perspective on the Antaḥkaraṇa that is not touched upon in the extant standard Western esoteric literature and, which adds richly to an understanding and the effective construction and use of the Antaḥkaraṇa. A description of the stages of

dissolution in death and meditation is introduced, followed by a very brief discussion of Buddhist meditative practices, with an emphasis upon *phowa* practice.

## About the Author

Malvin Artley is an astrologer and author with a background in esoteric studies, physics, Chinese esotericism and industrial machinery. His focus in recent years has been the relationships between the aforementioned fields, especially as they apply to astrology and modern scientific thought, with an additional focus on Buddhist studies. He is the author of *Bodies of Fire: A Thousand Points of Light*, and *The Full Moons: Topical Letters in Esoteric Astrology*. Malvin currently lives in northern Italy and can be contacted at: malvin@malvinartley.com

## Introduction

Figure 1 is a painting one typically finds in murals at Buddhist monasteries that describes the stages of meditation in calm abiding, or *shamatha*. The painting is a diagrammatic representation of those stages of meditation and has as its main feature a winding path along which an elephant plods, guided first by a monkey and later by a monk,<sup>3</sup> who after completely pacifying the elephant rides it on his way to attainment of higher realizations<sup>4</sup> and beyond. Each elephant represents a stage in one's progress in the achievement of *shamatha*, and is a representation of the mind of the monk at any particular stage. The monk represents the will that is brought to bear on the mind. What is of particular interest is the final stage—the place in the painting where the path ends and is replaced instead by a rainbow, emanated from the heart of the monk, over which the monk traverses back and forth in a victorious pose on the back of the elephant. That rainbow bridge is a bridge of light—of consciousness—which the monk, as meditator has himself constructed.

Students of the books of Alice A. Bailey will be well-acquainted with that bridge of rainbow-colored light. It is the *Antahkaraṇa*, the “rainbow bridge,” which enables one to proceed onwards to the great expansions of consciousness, or major initiations<sup>5</sup>. Having the *Antahkaraṇa* clearly developed is essential in any advanced meditative practice. Without it, no regular contact with the more subtle aspects of our nature is possible, nor is any accurate recollection of what is contacted in the more advanced stages of meditation or sleep. The creation of the *Antahkaraṇa* is essential if one is to engage in any sort of higher spiritual practice, and the key to its attainment is a mind that is completely subdued by the will of the meditator, i.e., is single-pointed and pacified. Hence, the emphasis placed on the construction of the *Antahkaraṇa* in the books of Alice Bailey.

### What is the *Antahkaraṇa*?

*Antahkaraṇa* is a Sanskrit term composed of two root words:<sup>6</sup> *antaḥ* and *karaṇa*.

“*Antaḥ*” has been translated as “within,” or more to the point, “within the heart.” *Karaṇa* is a word meaning “causing,” “of the senses,” and most revealingly in terms of this exposition, “instrumental.” The compound word has been variously translated as “minds,” “mind/heart” and “heart.” All translations are valid when applied to the current subject. In essence, the *Antahkaraṇa* is a function of four factors: *chitta*, *manas*, Ego and *buddhi*, the “Ego” being the basis of the “I” consciousness, or sense of self. *Chitta* is the mind-stuff, or mental matter, regarded largely as the conceptual (concrete) mind. *Manas* is the process of mentation itself at all levels, largely regarded as *vritti* (obscurations or modifications) which in the final analysis are the obscurations to enlightenment.

The Ego is dual in nature: on the one hand, it expresses through the causal body and is the incarnating soul—one of the causes of incarnation, aside from karma—when it is “downward-focused.” Thus it is the subtle sense of self-hood,<sup>7</sup> of which the personality is the reflection. On the other hand, it is the point at which we gain entry and insight into the more spiritual aspects of ourselves, and as such, it is the gateway to wisdom. The latter is the soul “upwardly focused.” *Buddhi* is “pure reason,” if we can understand that term, divorced from what we know as mental constructs or concepts, but it is also karmic volition—to be explained shortly—which is a volition that is also dual in nature, leading to “upward movement” or aspiration to enlightenment on the one hand, and the urge to liberation of all imprisoned lives on the other hand. It is sometimes called the lowest aspect of “primordial mind.” *Buddhi* or pure reason is that aspect of universal mind which makes the direct experience of wisdom possible. When we consider definitions of the *Antahkaraṇa*, its construction and spheres of influence, although it is said to be a bridge of strictly mental construct, we may well find that in the final analysis it cannot be separated from *buddhi*, and it is the bridge that ultimately leads to that state of being.

It might be useful at this point to pause and consider terminology. In the Western esoteric traditions, we are quite used to terms such as

“soul,” “intuition,” “ego” or “Ego.” However, since we will be considering the Buddhist perspectives in this paper, it is useful to recognize that Buddhism uses no such terms. There is no “soul” in Buddhism *per se*, for instance. What we call the soul is to Buddhists simply a higher aggregate—a mental factor—and as such, it is ultimately an obstruction to omniscience, even though it leads one to seek that state. This applies as well to the Triad (atma/buddhi/manas). Ego and ego are both terms that to Buddhists have no meaning aside from the “I” consciousness. They are “dependent arisings,” one coarse, one subtle. The matter is abstruse and is really beyond the scope of this paper, but it is mentioned here to give some perspective on what is being addressed.

While one might find these ideas uncomfortable, at odds with the Western esoteric traditions or just plain odd, it might be helpful to realize that the goal of the practitioner in Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism is full enlightenment—what we might call “monadic realization” and beyond—and that once meditative equipoise can be had and the Antaḥkaraṇa completed, the path to such a state is very swift indeed. In fact, the soul and the Triad are both transcended on the third through the fifth Buddhist paths,<sup>8</sup> respectively, and it is said this can be done within one or two lives depending upon one’s strength of application and karma. This indicates but one area in which Buddhism differs from the Western esoteric traditions.

Another term that is related to the subject matter at hand is “intuition.” Again, if one mentions the term to a Buddhist, it is usually greeted with a blank stare. The closest equivalent this author has found in Buddhism is “direct valid cognition.” Yet, the term “intuition” is bandied about in the general populace as though it is easily had. In truth, very few people actually have what would rightfully be called an intuition. True intuition comes only with the first tenuous completion of the Antaḥkaraṇa, thus permitting the light of buddhi-manas to flood the brain consciousness. As such, it is *always* experienced in a field of bliss, and the knower is one with the known. It is rarely experienced at first, but once it has

been, it is an impelling and compelling experience, leading one swiftly to the goal. What passes for intuition in the vast majority of cases is psychic impression, and mostly lower impressions at that. One of the aims of spiritual practice is to have true intuitions—part and parcel of the “science of vision”—and that is only had once the Antaḥkaraṇa is completed, usually from the third Buddhist path onward, when one can more or less merge seamlessly with the light of buddhi via the highest aspect of mind in mental matter. With that, we return to the more Western presentation.

The Antaḥkaraṇa is described as: “...the path of communication between soul and body, entirely disconnected from the former: existing with, belonging to, and dying with the body.”<sup>9</sup> The Antaḥkaraṇa is entirely an aspect and a direct result of our aspirations toward enlightenment in the early stages. In Buddhism, this would be called the stage of “aspiring bodhi-chitta” (bodhichitta being the mind of enlightenment). The Antaḥkaraṇa does not come from “higher up,” meaning from the soul. Rather, we build it entirely ourselves in the early stages through the force of our aspiration. In the later stages, it is built directly via the focused mind of the meditator, as directed by one’s will. Of particular interest is the use of the Hindu term *karaṇa* with *karaṇa-śarīra*—the “body of causes”—or the “causal body.” The *karaṇa-śarīra* is the body or emanation of the incarnating soul, the soul or that part of us that reincarnates from life to life and which forms the subtle basis of the personality. It is this body of causes “over” which the Antaḥkaraṇa is built, eventually enabling a direct interplay between the monad and the personality.

Blavatsky defines the Antaḥkaraṇa as *manas* connected with *buddhi*, and not simply as one’s higher mind, or Ego.<sup>10</sup> She goes further, though, and says, “...the Occultists explain it as the *path* or bridge between the Higher and the Lower Manas, the divine *Ego*, and the *personal* Soul of man.”<sup>11</sup> In this latter context, we might gain further insight from the Buddhist presentation of the subject which follows, if we realize that “mind” and its resulting mental factors, in the Buddhist view, encompass the

entirety of atma/buddhi/manas/emotion and not simply “manas.” In other words, our point of reference shifts as we progress along the path. The Antaḥkaraṇa opens a door which connects all facets of “mind.” Thus the Antaḥkaraṇa eventually enables one to directly access and thereby become useful to one’s spiritual source—the monad—and from thence to transcend the soul, human and divine, altogether—yet at the same time to be able to fully engage the human and divine soul in service. In order to synthesize and round out all the preceding points, it may be of use to read through a brief compilation of direct quotes from the books of Alice Bailey regarding the Antaḥkaraṇa.<sup>12</sup> Comments are inserted in brackets in between to tie the sections together:

The Science of the Antaḥkaraṇa is the science of the triple thread which exists from the very beginning of time and links individual man with his monadic source.<sup>13</sup> [T]here is, on the part of the soul-infused personality, a definite break *in consciousness* between the lower mind and the abstract mind. The [most abstract, or formless] mind (being the lowest aspect of the Spiritual Triad) can be regarded as a door admitting the consciousness of the soul-infused personality into a higher realm of contact and awareness.<sup>14</sup>

The opening quote would seem to suggest that the Antaḥkaraṇa has been a part of our “equipment” since the dawn of our human existence. However, in reading on we see that this is not the case. Only a small aspect of the bridge is in evidence as sentience and life-force. Even at a more advanced stage of human evolution—that of the soul-infused personality—the Antaḥkaraṇa is not yet fully devel-

oped, as evidenced by the break or gap in consciousness. This being the case, how does one gain real insight into the spiritual realms if there is not full cognizance of them, if waking consciousness swoons every time those realms

are approached, and then one returns to waking consciousness with no memory of what was experienced? Here we have the crux of the problem (as well as its solution) when we seek to become more spiritually focused.

The triple thread mentioned in the above series of quotes, is the combined life, consciousness and creative threads, anchored respectively in the heart,

head and throat. The life thread links a person with their monadic source. The creative thread is a synthesis of the life thread plus the consciousness thread.<sup>15</sup> The consciousness and creative threads are developed, strengthened and refined as our meditative and service work advance. The fact that we have this break or gap in consciousness is evident to us when we sleep if, upon waking, we have no memory of what we did on the inner planes during the night. It is the same in the deeper meditative states until we are able to link the brain consciousness with the Ego via the consciousness thread. When this connection is established, it is possible to recall much of what transpired in our waking and sleeping states as well as in our meditative states. This “continuity of consciousness” is developed via the Antaḥkaraṇa. Therefore, the solution to the problem of the break in consciousness lies in our efforts to build this bridge, as outlined next.

The work of the building of the antaḥkaraṇa is primarily an activity of the personality, aided by the soul; this in time evokes a reaction from the Triad.<sup>16</sup> [The] *Antaḥkaraṇa* is the lower manas, the path of communication between the personality and the higher

**There is no “soul” in Buddhism.... What we call the soul is to Buddhists simply a higher aggregate—a mental factor—and as such, it is ultimately an obstruction to omniscience, even though it leads one to seek that state.... Ego and ego are both terms that to Buddhists have no meaning aside from the “I” consciousness. They are “dependent arisings,” one coarse, one subtle.**

manas, or human soul, or the link between the mental and the buddhic [faculties].<sup>17</sup> [It is] the channel of communication between the brain and the spiritual will, or the Monad, working through the medium of the Spiritual Triad... bridging...the gap which exists between the Monad and the personality.<sup>18</sup> The antaḥkaraṇa, therefore, is the thread of *consciousness*, of intelligence, and the responsive agent in all sentient reactions.<sup>19</sup> [T]his thread of consciousness is *evolved by the soul* and not by the monad.<sup>20</sup> [It] is the Path symbolically.<sup>21</sup> One of the points which it is essential that students should grasp is the deeply esoteric fact that this antaḥkaraṇa is built through the medium of a conscious effort *within consciousness itself*, and not just by attempting to be good, or to express goodwill, or to demonstrate the qualities of unselfishness and high aspiration.<sup>22</sup>

There would seem to be some contradictions in the above statements and the earlier statements which suggest that the Antaḥkaraṇa is self-evolved through the force of high aspiration. But what is outlined actually seems to describe a twofold and graded process, one “reaching up,” the other “pulling up.” In reality, the apparent latter stage can be seen as a continuation of the earlier stage. In the early stages, we methodically, painstakingly go through the process of building the bridge via the force of high desire and the power to visualize, which helps us to “reach upwards” until the force of our efforts attracts the attention of the soul, at which time we are in a sense “pulled up” by the soul. This is followed by our continuing efforts as a soul-infused personality to attract or invoke a response from the Triad, and then the work goes ahead very quickly. So, in reality, there are ultimately two gaps in consciousness that need to be bridged—between the lower and the higher minds, and then between the soul-infused personality and the monad itself via the full Triad. This stage is outlined next.

[People] concerned with the building of the antaḥkaraṇa [thus have as] their task...that of linking the three points of mental focus—the mind [manas], the soul [as repre-

sented in the higher, or symbolic mind] and the lower mind [concrete mental faculties].<sup>23</sup> [T]he building of the antaḥkaraṇa ...is *consciously* undertaken only when the disciple is preparing for the second initiation [the “Baptism”].<sup>24</sup> No major initiation can be taken until there is some measure of conscious use of the antaḥkaraṇa.<sup>25</sup> [It] is the conscious integrating force...the medium of light transference [and] concerns the continuity of man’s perception.<sup>26</sup> [A] sense of universality is [therefore] required [when building the antaḥkaraṇa] and indicates, when present, a measure of monadic inflow. This inflow comes naturally via the antaḥkaraṇa or across the “rainbow bridge.”<sup>27</sup> One of the lines of thinking which it is most necessary to impress on advancing and advanced disciples is that of “initiated thinking.” This means thought carried forward on purely abstract levels, and embodying, therefore, thought which is free from soul conditioning [higher mind] or from the crystallizations of the lower [concrete] mind. It is essentially triadal thinking and is only registered by the brain when the antaḥkaraṇa is somewhat constructed and there is some direct communication from the Spiritual Triad to the brain of the personality.<sup>28</sup> The building of the second half of the antaḥkaraṇa (that which bridges the gap in consciousness between the soul and the spiritual triad) is called the “science of vision,” because just as the first half of the bridge is built through the use of mental substance, so the second half is built through the use of light substance.<sup>29</sup>

There is a rich field of investigation into the stages of initiation that is opened when one examines the correlations between the Buddhist grounds and paths in relation to the expansions of consciousness we call initiations. For instance, the third human initiation, as described by Bailey, marks the Buddhist “Path of Seeing,” and this relates directly to the beginnings of the “science of vision.” At this stage “thought” as we have known it is supplanted increasingly and rapidly by direct cognition, or the direct ascertainment of truth and this takes place in a field of what is called “clear light,”

which is the light of the Triad.<sup>30</sup> Rather than being a process of thought which leads us to conclusions, the “science of vision” is a direct transference of light into the brain consciousness that overshadows our thoughts and clarifies our thought processes more or less instantaneously. The full fostering of this “light transference” and its use in service correlates to the “science of vision” as indicated in the aforementioned quotes. Thought as we commonly know it then becomes an aftereffect in consciousness, instead of a means to an end. It becomes a tool of the monad for working effectively in the fields of matter, of which the personality is the access point.

The fields of development for an initiate are those of the Triad and beyond. The “initiated thinking” referred to in one of the preceding quotes can have a dual meaning. On the one hand, it can refer to “thinking in the Triad” (Triadal consciousness) as one proceeds to master the higher meditative states and remove the subtler obscurations to omniscience in the clear light meditations (to be explained later). On the other hand, it can refer to the thinking that is induced in mental substance when the higher impressions are received from buddhic levels and beyond. In effect, the mind must make sense of what is perceived in this latter case. The intuitions that are received as a result of “triadal thinking” must be made useable in service. “Universal thinking” here becomes necessary because once one is able to access these levels in meditation any sense of separateness quickly begins to fall away and all of one’s notions of culture, religion, species, gender, time, space, etc., are challenged and are eventually seen as limitations to service and enlightenment. “Universal thinking” refers to all thought that can be accessed, human and otherwise, unrestricted as to any sense of limitation,<sup>31</sup> limitation being the very thing that personality engenders. “Universality” begins with “impersonality.”

Bailey’s use of the term “mind” can be somewhat problematic, depending upon one’s point of view, for there is an apparent blind involved in the terminology used in these quotes. “Thought carried forward on purely abstract levels” can have two meanings, especially if

one considers Buddhist logic: In one sense, such thinking can be seen to take place on the most abstract levels of the mental plane, but that would only be the smallest part of the story. The matter is clarified for us in the words, “It is essentially triadal thinking...” Such “thinking”—for it is not human thought as we normally experience it—takes place in a field of bliss, of clear light, which is characteristic of the Triad and the monad, in a type of mind that knows no separation between the Knower and the known. In other words, the “triadal thinking” thus described is initially buddhic-manasic and then increasingly atmic-buddhic, and as indicated in the last line of the preceding quotes, can only be registered in the brain consciousness after the Antaḥkaraṇa is somewhat completed.

Spiritual desperation is what is needed to provide the required “point of tension” from whence the antaḥkaraṇa can be built. There is a basic distinction between desperation and pessimism. Desperation is related to the time element and to a correct and discriminative perception of the need.<sup>32</sup> *The tension of the lower evokes the attention of the higher.*<sup>33</sup> [T]he Science of Service...is the effort and the strenuous activity of the serving disciple which evokes the soul powers, makes meditation an essential requirement, and is the mode—ahead of all others—which invokes the Spiritual Triad, brings about the intensification of the spiritual life, *forces* the building of the Antaḥkaraṇa, and leads in a graded series of renunciations to the Great Renunciation, which sets the disciple free for all eternity.<sup>34</sup> [The antaḥkaraṇa] is the final medium of abstraction or of the great withdrawal. It is with the antaḥkaraṇa that the initiate is concerned in the fourth initiation, called sometimes the Great Renunciation<sup>35</sup>—the renunciation or the withdrawal from form life, both personal and egoic.<sup>36</sup> [Emphasis added]

To summarize, the first stage of building the Antaḥkaraṇa takes place in meditative equipoise on the mental plane, is initially laborious but eventually enables one to receive impressions directly from the soul. Once this is com-

plete then it is only a short period of time, relatively considered, before the second phase—that of full triadal interplay—is engaged. In Buddhism it is commonly held that this second phase can be completed in a single lifetime and one can thus attain full enlightenment, also in that time frame. The first line of this last set of quotes states exactly what is needed in order to complete the building of the bridge—the sense of desperation. This sense of desperation arises from one’s service motivation. In one way, it is a test of one’s readiness and resolve. If the sense of desperation mentioned is not present, why would the soul or the Triad respond to us? We do not make any effort to save a person who is swimming peacefully in a lake, for example, but we bend every effort to help when that person struggles to stay afloat and cries out for help. Once one has been pulled out of the water, so-to-speak, and one has achieved the desired connection and interplay, then another factor takes over in the life of one so imbued—one increasingly “becomes Triadal.” In other words, service becomes the overriding concern in one’s life, and this comes from inspiration, or light transference from Triadal levels, keeping in mind that manas is only the smallest part of Triadal awareness. Service is no longer a mental exercise, or aspiration. It is a fact in one’s life—one’s life-blood, if you will—as evidenced by the light in which the mind is thereafter constantly bathed.

The last set of quotes brings us back to a term mentioned earlier in this paper with regard to buddhi—karmic volition. Up to the point when the kundalini rises and brings about an end to the sense of separated self, service is an ideal—a noble ideal to be certain, but not a *known*, urgent reality. In a sense, the Antaḥkaraṇa represents the clear central channel in the spine through which kundalini can rise unimpeded. When one, through mental development, mental equipoise and directed will, has reached the point in their development where the bridge is completed, and it is possible to directly experience the divine via the kundalini, there will be a direct cognition of emptiness to use the Buddhist terms, and life is changed forever. From that state of being, which is manasic-buddhic, one has the

overpowering sense that, “Yes, I must bend every effort to liberate every being from their suffering and bring them to this very state!” The immediate need becomes clear along with time element or window of karmic opportunity. The suffering of others is known directly, as well as their sense of separation from that state of blissful peace.

Yet, one becomes even more desperate—desperate to relieve the suffering of others, and it is this bodhisattva-like desperation for which the teachers and the Triad await. The release of the karmic threads that bind us and others to “this dreadful ocean of cyclic existence” so that they too might experience the bliss of the divine becomes one’s fixed volition. Until one can bring the suffering of others to an end and allow them to come to know the absolute peace of buddhi directly, there is no rest or peace for the one who has thus attained. The path of the bodhisattva or a Christ is therein fully engaged.

### The Antaḥkaraṇa: East and West

Some of what has been outlined in the preceding text may seem new or different to the Western esoteric student, but in fact, the science of the Antaḥkaraṇa has been taught to initiated disciples for many centuries in the East. This has been true where Buddhist practice predominates, especially in Vajrayana Buddhism, a branch of Mahayana Buddhism, wherein service is seen to be a prerequisite to being initiated into the practice of a *sadhana*, or meditative method.<sup>37</sup> For example, and to tie this in with the above quotes, in the prayer that typically precedes all Mahayana teachings and practices, the final line roughly reads “...may I attain Buddhahood *in order to benefit all sentient beings*.” The practices and teachings are not for one’s own self. They are undertaken for the cause of the greater good. Service is thus the factor which must impel one to take up meditative practices.

Before we begin to investigate Buddhist perspectives on the Antaḥkaraṇa, it may benefit us to pause for a few moments and consider why we would even need to take these perspectives

into account. What follows is the author's opinion, but personal experience with what is discussed within this paper has led to the conclusions that ensue. We might suppose that what has been given out thus far to the West in the writings of Helena Blavatsky, Alice Bailey and others is sufficient for our need. What has been presented through those works is universal in its scope, and has indeed been of great service. However, the primary sources for those works have come from the Himalayan region—a region that has been predominantly Mahayana Buddhist in its traditions for over one thousand years, and which has had its roots in Hindu traditions for far longer than that. In fact, Djwal Khul, who was one of the main sources of the information in the books of Blavatsky and Bailey, stated that he was an abbot of a large Buddhist monastery in Tibet.<sup>38</sup> The material presented here is intended to provide additional insight into the background of the Trans-Himalayan tradition. However, the reader will want to bear in mind that the information imparted regarding occult meditation is generalized and not specific, as explicit instructions are still secret in the large and orally transmitted.

For those who embark upon the Buddhist occult practices that lead to higher realizations, the presence of a spiritual teacher to guide or assist one through the stages of the path has been and still is essential. But, if we examine the current world situation, we see a unique opportunity on a global scale. As a result of Chinese intervention in Tibet and the resultant diaspora, the teachings that were once safeguarded and exclusive to Tibetan monasteries are now widely available. Initiations into practices which are very occult and were once secret and given only to monastics are open to anyone provided the teacher approves it. Virtually every major Western city now has a Buddhist center, often with a Tibetan sangha on the premises, and lamas travel frequently to those centers to teach and give initiations or empowerments. The opportunity is unprecedented, for reasons that will be outlined below.

There are two points that we may want to ponder in this regard: firstly, why would these practices and teachings now be so widespread

when they were previously kept secreted away for centuries, only coming to light outside the Himalayan region to any great extent almost 70 years ago—and after the end of the World War? And secondly, what is the opportunity presented by virtue of the first point? It is this author's considered opinion, and I am not alone in this view, that there has been a concerted plan underway on the inner planes for the West to avail itself of these teachings and practices. This is being done to stimulate a more rigorous spiritual effort in the West by way of the more occult forms of meditation, to offset somewhat the materialism of the West, and with the purpose of creating a bridge between East and West. This effort is also an experiment designed to blend the Western scientific mind with Eastern methods.

In the East, the method of pursuing spiritual practices is to withdraw from the world. But when Westerners commonly engage in these practices, they seem ill-disposed to retreat from the world, preferring instead to practice them in their own way and in the midst of their busy lives, much to the wonderment and consternation of the Eastern teachers. This is the stated way of progress for the Western disciple.<sup>39</sup> However, there is another aspect to this situation that bears our consideration, and this concerns the occult meditative practices which lead to the higher spiritual attainments, as seen in the following quote from Alice Bailey:

The Himalayan School and Lodge is the one that principally concerns the Occident and the *only school without any exception* that should control the work and output of the *occult* students in the West.<sup>40</sup> [Emphasis added]

The reason why the Himalayan School is such a primary conduit of power for occult students in the West is because the meditative practices of the Hindu and especially Buddhist traditions, involve the movement of the subtle energies in the subtle channels of the body, utilizing internal heat. As such, they can prove to be quite dangerous if the student is not under the guidance of a teacher who has seen the practice through to its conclusion. The movement of the subtle energies through the visualizing

power of the mind via the will of the meditator represents a highly productive form of practical occultism that is ideally suited to the Western intellect. The remainder of the quote (not excerpted here) from *Letters on Occult Meditation*, goes on to say that the Eastern teachers know well how to protect their pupils. This is largely due to the unbroken lineages of their transmission and the close proximity of the students to the teachers over the centuries. In short, these practices have been employed for centuries to great effect, producing a large number of initiates. As a result, there is a large body of data and shared experience among the *sangha* or monastic community upon which the teacher can draw in any eventuality with the student. These practices are safe, fast and produce exactly the results claimed when done under the watchful eye of a qualified teacher.

There is, however, a tendency in the West to devalue some Eastern practices on the basis of more modern or Western standards. This is an unfortunate view and displays a certain ignorance as these practices and the truths that lie behind them are universal. The only “Westernization” that should take place is the adapting of one’s life to accommodate the practice. To fool around with an occult technique is not a good idea. To do so could take one along a perilous path, at worst, or be non-productive, at least. On the other hand, the general teachings *should* be subjected to Western scientific thought, as long as this is accompanied by an effort to integrate what is true and effective into Western culture.

If one has taken on a sadhana and is involved in occult methods, it is essential to make time to do the practice as prescribed, and then go about one’s daily life, making personal adjustments as the work proceeds. The general teachings, though, can be utilized in conjunction with Western methods, with the added cultural richness that the interaction with the Eastern presenters can provide. It matters not whether one is a monastic or lay practitioner. Respect is needed, as well as adaptation, and there is no reason to suppose that Tibetans or Indians should be expected to abandon their methods in favor of a more Western way. Their methods have proven themselves.

These latter points bring in another dimension which will eventually find application: the West is not monastic in its orientation, nor is it ever likely to be. The days of religious monasticism in an increasingly secular world are quickly becoming a thing of the past. The Westerner is a householder, and this brings in some interesting and potent possibilities. If the situation is found wherein a couple, for instance, share the same occult practice, and if the proper training can be found, then the practice can be greatly accelerated for both—meaning the possibility for enlightenment for both parties. Women are said to have a particular gift for Vajrayana practices, for instance, which enables them to more quickly achieve the needed states that lead to enlightenment,<sup>41</sup> and in the West, there are no monastic strictures on “male/female interactions.” In the end, though, it makes no difference whether one is male or female, Eastern or Western. It is stated in Mahayana teachings that what is needed for enlightenment is a *human* body—a “precious human rebirth”—and there are no qualifications to that statement on the basis of gender, race or culture, regardless of what one may have heard to the contrary.

Thus, there is a unique opportunity before us—for the West in having access to what was once the domain of the Eastern occultists, and for the East in having access to Western science, technology and culture. In the end, we are *all* being given the opportunity to accelerate the spiritual evolution of the world. Now, along with the Western esoteric presentations, we have the opportunity to engage directly in the practices that lead one to the higher spiritual attainments, and in complete safety. A true spiritual teacher is able to teach anyone according to his or her need. If such a teacher is found, it is to our great benefit if we can take what is given, first as hypothesis and later as proven fact through application, whether the teacher is of our race, gender or culture, or not, but at the same time “testing what is given as one would gold.” In other words, we subject everything to the rigorous scrutiny of our own consciousness. A true teacher would not have it any other way. We meet such teachers through our karma and our need. It is not by

accident that Tibetan Buddhism especially is now found dispersed throughout the West. It is a part of the world karma and addresses a world need, aside from the obvious hardship it has placed on many of the Tibetan people. Ultimately, it will be found to have greatly benefited the Tibetan people. The preceding comments were made with the aim of opening a window of consideration and dialog, and not to promote a cause. It is the uniting of the facets that give a jewel its value, and not the individual face.

Returning to the subject of the rainbow bridge, if one reads between the lines in the preceding quotes on the Antaḥkaraṇa there are certain key things that may appear to stand out regarding its conscious building:

- It requires the practitioner to be able to visualize, to imagine, and to act “as if.”<sup>42</sup>
- It requires the use of abstract thought, the use and correct interpretation of symbols.
- It requires a sense of urgency—a point of tension that overcomes all personal concerns.
- The sense of urgency—“desperation”—and the resulting effort invokes the help of the Spiritual Triad, and the mind becomes thenceforth imbued somewhat with buddhi, which is recognizable by the sense of bliss it confers, the light which one sees inwardly and the falling away of any sense of separateness. This comes in regularly only in the latter stages of the process.
- It requires that one’s grasp of truth not be limited by temporal concerns, such as religion, culture, gender, etc.
- It is a meditative practice, which:
  - a) is initially and increasingly inspired by service, and
  - b) takes the visualizations of the processes of death (abstraction) as a path to enlightenment and birth as a method of manifestation, esoterically considered.

This last point is implied, but not stated and goes back to the reason why Buddhist practices

especially can be so effective in this regard. “Taking death onto the path” involves a set of specific visualizations and instructions that are especially encountered in practices of Secret Mantra.<sup>43</sup> They involve the taking of the winds into the heart and then directing them through the subtle channels, thus clearing those channels and enabling the arising of internal heat, which leads to the greater meditative realizations. The break in consciousness referred to in the quotes is directly addressed in this process. The reason it is called taking death onto the path is because one encounters the “clear light” at the time of death, and this clear light is the basis upon which full enlightenment is achieved. This clear light is also what is experienced on the other side of the “break in consciousness” as well.

One also experiences a type of clear light at the time of deepest sleep, which can be used as a basis for attainment and a practice for the time of passing. Thus, the death process is identical in particulars with the meditative methods that lead one to full enlightenment. This may seem odd at first or uncomfortable, but at death, one is taken back to the source or launching point of one’s life—the soul itself, the highest point overshadowing the lower triplicity. If one could learn to recognize these stages, work consciously with them and do so in the waking state, then it becomes possible in life, and also at the time of passing, to enter fully into the consciousness of the higher Spiritual Triad. One can attain continuity of consciousness, and eventually achieve monadic realization and thus have a tremendously increased capacity to bring an end to world suffering. The possibilities for service are indeed endless. Such is vouchsafed for us in the tried and tested methods of the Himalayan schools, with their centuries of direct experience behind them.

### **Buddhism and the Antaḥkaraṇa**

There is an obscure formula that was presented in one of Alice Bailey’s books which, when examined in the light of Buddhist practice, represents a key to understanding the building of the Antaḥkaraṇa. It is contained in the following words:<sup>44</sup>

## THE SUN . . . BLACK . . . ANTAḤKARAṆA

The key that unlocks this statement, in turn, is found in the recognition of the stages of dissolution in sleep, meditation and death, and can be seen the following now-familiar syllable:



We recognize this syllable as the Tibetan script for OM, or expanded, as AUM (the sound aspect of “OM” the unstruck sound). How is it that OM is a key to unlocking this aforementioned obscure formula? The answer is to be found in the component parts of the syllable and what they represent in a meditative context. Before entering into that discussion, it may be useful to investigate a few other factors in this regard in order to provide a more secure foundation.

OM represents the body, speech and mind of a buddha.<sup>45</sup> It is employed as a header in mantras and is used to invoke enlightened beings, or buddhas. In other words, it is more or less generic, connecting one with a divine source, whatever that might be, as represented in a mantra. OM is used here because it is familiar, but virtually any Sanskrit or Tibetan syllable that ends in “m” can be used as a basis for dissolution, emanation and connection with a divine attribute, or deity. Syllables such as the one pictured are often systematically dissolved and re-emanated during the course of an advanced meditative practice. Upon dissolution of the syllable one then meditates on emptiness<sup>46</sup> until the next stage of practice is engaged. The syllable OM is actually composed in three parts: a, o and m, denoted respectively by the letters pictured below, (sounding as AUM):



The “a” (pronounced “ah”) is the base letter, whereas the *naro* (middle symbol) and the *thigle* (circle) are qualifiers. The general process is to dissolve the body of the syllable first, moving gradually to the *naro* and then the *thigle*. The *thigle* atop these syllables is thus the point of exit and re-entry for the qualities rep-

resented by the form of the syllables. So, when pronouncing the OM, for instance, one can visualize the dissolution of one’s body (“a”), speech (“o”) and mind (“m”) as a part of a process ultimately leading to union with the divine attribute or deity one is invoking. A study of these syllables is one of the bases of *mantrikashakti*, or the divine powers inherent in speech. When used within the context of a *sadhana* they have great power and safety in usage. The idea of dissolution, emanation and connection with the divine is inherent in the construction and utilization of the *Antaḥkaraṇa*, yet we have an opportunity to practice these methods on a daily basis. But before we discuss the vast, unrealized potential of this practice, it is important to understand what is being dissolved and why there is the need for dissolution in the first place.

We understand somewhat the importance of death as a liberating event in the cycle of life and as an act of restitution of our soul to its emanating source. What may not be so apparent is that we go through this same process every night when we fall to sleep, passing through these very stages when we enter into our deepest, dreamless sleep. Later, when we return to waking consciousness, we are unable to fully recall what we did or experienced during those hours. In both instances—death and sleep—we eventually experience the mother clear light, however fleetingly. Yet, because the *Antaḥkaraṇa* is not completed we are unable to access these subtle levels of consciousness in the waking state or understand how we arrived or returned therefrom. This gives us some idea of why it would be important to learn to recognize the stages of dissolution in death and in meditation. If we could learn to recognize these stages and participate in the process consciously we would be able to engage the clear light for extended periods, thus actively constructing the bridge in consciousness and greatly hastening our progress along the way. In addition, we would be more capable of bringing through the experiences and impressions that we receive in our deepest sleep and meditation.

The OM is ubiquitous in *sadhanas* and mantras. In the OM we have the death process—or

the “process of conscious abstraction,” if one prefers that term instead—symbolically represented. Why this is so is as follows: The body of the OM, which is the “a” base letter and the *naro* (the wing-shaped symbol atop the “a”), represents the dissolution of the elements in the process of dying—the earth, water, fire and wind elements. These can also be recognized in the process of going to sleep or in the deeper phases of meditation. The part of the OM in which we are particularly interested, though, is the *thigle*, or circle on the top—the “m” sound in the OM. The thigle represents the withdrawal of the consciousness from the elements in death, sleep and meditation once they no longer serve as a support to consciousness (the coarse and subtle elements of the physical body). In other words, the elements are the bases of the sense-based consciousness.<sup>47</sup> When these elements begin to withdraw in the process of death, the body is pronounced clinically “dead.” At this point in meditation one ceases breathing, although the life thread is still firmly anchored in the heart. These factors have importance to our current considerations and have some interesting sidelines, which are illustrative and pertinent to the process of building the Antaḥkaraṇa, and will be outlined in the next section.

Returning to the thigle, there are four distinct stages to its dissolution, and in fact, the entire thigle is not usually represented in Tibetan text. Usually only the circle, or even a dot, is shown, which represents the stage of “white appearance,” outlined below. This stage of “white appearance” is often taken to be the stage of clear light, but this is a misapprehension. In effect, once this stage is passed in meditation or dying, conceptual mental activity ceases and one then enters into what appears to be a clear, peaceful state of being. Above and beyond the circle, one will often see a small wavy line drawn and connected to it, denoting a small flame. That flame represents the final stages of dissolution. At this point, one is completely withdrawn from any sensory awareness. These four stages of the final withdrawal of consciousness are called, in order: white appearance, red increase, black near-attainment with recollection and black near-

attainment without recollection. These latter two stages are explained in the next section. These final stages lead one into the experience of the mother clear light, which is manas with a touch of buddhi—the true “clear light.” The formula at the start of this section can thus be re-written as follows:

THE SUN (red increase) . . . BLACK (near-attainment) . . . ANTAḤKARAṆA (the bridge)

In the above formula, regarding “the bridge,” we might ask, “the bridge from what to what?” The answer is that it is the bridge between black near-attainment with recollection and the mother clear light. It is the bridge which takes one past the swooning of consciousness at the stage of near-attainment without recollection. With the completion of the Antaḥkaraṇa there is no longer a swooning of the consciousness. Once this has been attained in fullness, and one has full recollection back and forth between the near-attainment with recollection and the clear light, so-to-speak, continuity of consciousness—full recognition and memory of all experiences in the twenty-four hours of the day, as well as a full recognition of one’s past lives—is established. This must be accomplished by the dynamic force of the will or control over the mind, and involves the yogic technique of the withdrawal of the winds into the central channel at the spine, as explained in the next section. One is then well on the way to conquering death,<sup>48</sup> has all but completed the Antaḥkaraṇa, has almost ended the necessity for reincarnation and can, after the Great Renunciation, incarnate and die at will. One is well on the way to becoming an Adept or realized White Magician, or in Tibetan, a Rinpoche and higher.<sup>49</sup> Of course, this only happens if one’s motivation is entirely oriented toward the salvation of the imprisoned lives of the planet. With this in mind, how does one recognize the stages of dissolution and success in one’s visualizations in the building of the Antaḥkaraṇa?

## Death and the Antaḥkaraṇa

In Buddhist monasteries where Vajrayana practices predominate, death is a much-anticipated and celebrated event. In short, it

represents the one opportunity a monastic person has to attain the higher initiations. A lay person can do so with a consort, given the requisite conditions, but such a process can be fraught with difficulties and will not be dealt with here. If a monk, geshe or lama<sup>50</sup> is preparing to die, the signs related to the body are watched very closely. When a person dies, usually there are signs of death aside from the obvious loss of heartbeat and ceasing of breath, such as the exit of fluids from the lower orifices and blood from the nose, loss of heat from the body, etc. When, at the passing of one known to be spiritually advanced, these extra signs are not seen it is generally taken to mean that the person has entered “death meditation.” There are other measures taken to ascertain death meditation, not the least of which is direct clairvoyant ascertainment of the state of the one who is passing. If the person is particularly advanced, then there may also be environmental signs, such as unusual weather, unusual behavior of animals, etc.

If one enters death meditation at the time of death, the body will remain fresh. It will look like the person is asleep or in deep meditation instead of dead, in other words. If, in a meditative pose, the body will remain erect and not slouch over. The body can remain in this state for weeks so long as the death meditation is ongoing. This so-called death meditation is actually the process of initiation and can, if one is very accomplished in meditation, lead one directly to full enlightenment—the stage of Chohan and higher.<sup>51</sup> All the Buddhist training comes into play for the person at this point: the training in taking death as a path, the conscious utilization of the process of dissolution, etc. In essence, the passing one can take one of the greater initiations with which we are familiar, usually from the fourth and upward.

However, it is not always the case that one who can enter death meditation shows any outward signs of having been particularly advanced while in life. There have been cases where it has been found out after the fact that the person practiced in secret and was not engaged in outward study, debate or teaching. So, one can never be sure of another’s spiritual status until the time of death. It is possible for

one to practice the deeper levels of meditation during the hours of sleep and never show any signs of having practiced during the waking hours. In such a case, one would have to be adept in dream yogas in the hours of sleep. In this way, one could build the bridge in consciousness that would enable the greater expansions of consciousness at the time of death. For this reason, it is important that one is able to recognize the stages of dissolution and be able to work with them with confidence.

The stages of dissolution and their meaning are as follows:<sup>52</sup>

**The Earth Element dissolving into the Water Element:** Things appear to the mind in the likeness of a mirage. The outer senses are quelled; the body has a feeling of heaviness, of sinking, and the mind lapses into the mirage-like state. The physical world has lost the ability to support consciousness. The sense then arises of being carried away on vast, flowing water. In the death process, the eyes close at this point and the person begins their withdrawal from the life. Outer activity ceases.

**The Water Element dissolving into the Fire Element:** All watery essences evaporate, and the appearance of a wispy, blue smoke arises. The water element has lost its ability to support consciousness. In the death process, the bladder may void its contents, and watery exudations take place. In meditation, the emotions are completely stilled at this point.

**The Fire Element dissolving into the Air Element:** At this point in the death process, one loses the ability to discriminate. The body goes cold. In meditation, this marks the point of the stopping of the lower, conceptual mind. What appears at this point is something akin to fireflies or sparks darting in and out of the field of consciousness.

**The Air Element dissolving into the Winds:** At this point in the death process the breath ceases. It is the same in the meditation process. The winds<sup>53</sup> are withdrawn into the central channel at the area of the heart. The internal sign that this is taking

place is akin to the vision of a sputtering candle or flame of a lamp. At this point in the actual process of death, the person to all accounts of modern medicine is clinically dead.

**The Stage of “White Appearance”:** What appears to the consciousness at this point is something akin to a brilliant, white moon which pervades a clear, vacuous sky. This marks the dissolution of the coarser winds at the heart, the “winds” being the vehicles of consciousness, akin to the horse of a rider, the “rider” being one’s consciousness. [From this point onward in the death process the consciousness is abstracted into the outer petals of the causal lotus. This marks the beginning of the reassessment of the present life so commonly recounted in the death process in accounts of near-death experiences.]

**The Stage of “Red Increase” (also called “very empty”):** This has the appearance of a red, orangish sun rising, pervading the clear sky. This marks the dissolution of the subtle winds at the heart. [In the death process, this marks the assessment of the wisdom gained in life, and is connected with the inner petals of the causal lotus.<sup>54</sup>]

**The Stage of “Black Near-Attainment” (“approximate attainment” or “proximity”):** Black near-attainment has two stages. Firstly, the white and red drops meet at the heart chakra and enclose the most subtle wind. This marks the stage of entry of consciousness into the central bud of the causal lotus. There is at this point the appearance of a black, cloudless sky, like the darkest of nights. This is “**black near-attainment with recollection.**” One has memory of what is experienced at this point. Later in this stage, the consciousness falls into a swoon, prior to emerging into the clear light. This is the second stage, the stage of “**black near-attainment without recollection.**” One is unable to recall what is experienced after this stage.

It is at this point it is imperative that bridge be built in consciousness in order that the insights gained in meditation in the clear lights can be

brought back into waking consciousness. In astrology this latter stage of black near-attainment is archetypally marked for us in the zodiac by the sign Sagittarius—“piercing the heart with his arrows, and then upon the flight of the arrow...”<sup>55</sup>—one emerges into the clear light and ascends to the mountaintop, symbolically, in Capricorn. This “piercing the heart” can be taken to mean “taking death onto the path” in terms of our present context. This also marks the end of the winding path in the shamatha diagram, mentioned at the beginning of this article. In fact, the entire winding path represented in the diagram marks the stages of the zodiac from Aries through to Sagittarius, going in order through the signs.<sup>56</sup> Once one has at least completed a tenuous bridge of light, which will eventually radiate as the full “rainbow bridge,” the Buddhist path of seeing<sup>57</sup> is quickly engaged, because the rainbow bridge enables one to experience truth directly and not as a concept, and to bring those experiences back into the waking consciousness without distortion. Hence, one has a direct experience of emptiness—a true vision—in other words, to use the Buddhist terms.

At this point, one can progress on to the blending and attainment of the other clear lights, outlined next, which correspond to the levels of Triadal consciousness. The “mother clear light” is one’s primordial mind, having been with us since the very beginning of our path as human beings. Primordial mind is pure *manas* as far as the human being is concerned. From here one progresses to the “example clear light,” which is *buddhi*, followed by “meaning clear light,” which is *atma*. These latter two lights are fully engaged only after one is “transfigured,” as it were. These “clear lights” are what is engaged on the “Path of Vision.”

In addition to the aforementioned seven stages, there are successive gradations of “Clear Light.”<sup>58</sup> They are:

**The Mother Clear Light (“the clear light” or “utter emptiness”):** After the consciousness has swooned in the previous stage [Black Near-Attainment without recollection], the awareness awakens to the mother clear light. This is the primordial

mind, the mind that is experienced at death. This is the “light at the end of the tunnel” so often described in near-death accounts.<sup>59</sup> It is said that when this stage has been reached in the death process, that process is then complete. The heart beats its last. There is no possibility of return to the body at that point. In the meditative process, attainment of this state is the prerequisite for all advanced meditative practise—the prerequisite to the path. Meditation on emptiness at this point produces the nirmanakaya<sup>60</sup> of the meditator. Some people, upon reaching this state, think they have achieved the realization of emptiness, and thus a sort of end goal, but this marks only the beginning of the path of true meditation. From this point onward if the meditation process is fully active we have what is called “taking birth onto the path” to the nirmanakaya. From its appearance, this is an empty, concept-free mind. From here, the mother clear light must be conjoined with:

**The Example (Child) Clear Light:** (also known as the “**all-empty clear light,**” or the “**child clear light of the path**”): This is the clear light that realizes emptiness—the ultimate spiritual path. Then, there is “**The Meaning Clear Light**”: This has many names, according to one’s tradition. Once this has been achieved, one can proceed to totally dissolve the five major winds at the heart. The end process of generating meaning clear light and full enlightenment are one and the same. The mind that realizes meaning clear light is the mind that directly cognizes emptiness—the mind of a buddha. Buddhahood has been achieved. This stage marks the realization of the dharmakaya.<sup>61</sup>

Of these four stages of emptiness, their recognition and usefulness—white appearance, red increase, black near-attainment and mother clear light—especially at the time of death, it is said:

If during one’s lifetime one did not cultivate this ability to place the mind in the view of emptiness, then there will be no way to do so now. Therefore it is fundamental to the success of the bardo yogas that during

one’s lifetime one cultivates two qualities: the ability to place the mind in a stable understanding of emptiness; and the yogic means of inducing the four blisses.<sup>62</sup> One must apply this technology here for taking “the child clear light” as “the clear light of the path.”

...To gain the ability [to do this at the time of death] one must practice it in this lifetime. During the waking state one brings the vital energies into the central channel and there causes them to abide and dissolve; one must gain familiarity in this way with the four emptinesses [which arise from the four blisses], and particularly “utter emptiness” [i.e., the fourth emptiness, or mother clear light]. Also, during sleep one blends awareness with the clear light of sleep, no matter how deep one’s sleep is. When one trains during the waking and sleeping states in this way, the strength of control over the subtle energies and mind that one achieves will provide one with the power to blend “mother and child clear lights” at the time of death.<sup>63</sup>

From this we might see the basis for one being able to take a major initiation (initiations beyond the Transfiguration) at the time of death.

The associations of the three successive states of clear light with manas, buddhi and atma, respectively, will perhaps be apparent. There is much that has, of necessity, been left out of these descriptions. In the past, most of these points were addressed in commentaries on Secret Mantra (Vajrayana), which are given only to pledged disciples, although these points are now readily available in print.<sup>64</sup> In point of fact, in the books on esoteric psychology and esoteric astrology, the books by Alice Bailey, no information is given about the stages of this dissolution process, although hints are given. At that point in Western history when those books were written, the practices of Secret Mantra were just that—secret—and were orally transmitted. One such point which is hinted at in the Bailey material is that the building of the bridge to soul-consciousness is connected with the three

latter of the seven preliminary stages—white appearance, red increase and black near-attainment—which lead to the realization of the mother clear light. This mother clear light is the light of the higher Self on its lowest level—*manas*.<sup>65</sup>

### Phowa and the Antaḥkaraṇa

Although it may sound macabre or even dangerous to focus upon the death process as a path in meditation, we unconsciously practice this process of dissolution every day, but without withdrawing the life thread, and we do this during the hours of sleep. Death is but a longer interlude of the same process. If we could focus the consciousness when we go through these stages of withdrawal while still living, recognize them and work with them, then we would consciously be constructing the Antaḥkaraṇa, especially in the near-attainment stages outlined above. We would then be able to use the clear light experienced at death as a basis for higher spiritual attainments at the time of death. We can also make progress along the way during the hours of sleep if we can stabilize the mind in this way, but during sleep we do not undergo the full process.<sup>66</sup> This blending of the clear lights is fully engaged in practices of Secret Mantra. But are there practices in the Buddhist traditions that are available to the West which train one in consciousness transference at the time of death that are not so complicated as those of Secret Mantra and do not require an empowerment and commitments, and if so, what are they?

In fact, there is a Buddhist practice which trains one in this very technique of transferring one's consciousness to a buddha-field—*phowa* (Tibetan: *pho ba*)—which aids greatly in the stabilization and focus of the mind. This technique is also known as “consciousness transference.”<sup>67</sup> The core of the practice will presently be outlined.<sup>68</sup> One of the things that makes this particular practice of interest here is that it is not a practice of Secret Mantra, nor does it focus upon the process of dissolution in death and sleep, so it is more palatable to some people. It is also said to be particularly suited to people who have no experience in the practices of Secret Mantra.

Phowa also helps one to recognize the stages of abstraction, in addition to helping one to bridge the gap in recollection between the black near-attainment with recollection and the clear light previously mentioned. Although in the practice, this is done without any focus upon the aforementioned gap. It is strongly recommended that one be initiated into a long-life practice in concert with phowa, to be practiced periodically while one is training, lest one becomes too practiced at dying. There are three such “long-life” practices—White Tara, Ushnishavijaya and Amitayus—and since these are lower tantras, they are fairly simple and require only a relatively small commitment of time and effort. Phowa, along with the long-life practice, is very swift at clarifying, strengthening and combining the life thread and the consciousness thread, in giving us great ease in exiting and returning to the body in meditation, as well as removing the fear of death, and ultimately of conquering death itself. “Conquering death” here means ceasing the karmic need for having to reincarnate.

In Secret Mantra, the construction of the Antaḥkaraṇa is not specifically outlined as such nor is the term ever mentioned. Instead, it comes about as a result of training over time through the practice of dissolution and taking death onto the path. And this brings up an interesting point: In the monastic setting, especially in the earlier days of Buddhist monasticism, these practices were only given to people who already had established calm abiding in their mind-stream to some degree, or to whom the practice was recommended by a qualified teacher. Nowadays, in the West, many of the practices are available to virtually anyone, which is not really the best of situations. The great majority of advanced Buddhist meditative techniques require an initiation and a commitment of time, behavior and persistent practice. It is also recommended that one attend a commentary retreat, if one wants to realize fully the benefits of a particular practice. A commentary retreat will last anywhere from a few days to a few weeks, depending upon the complexity of the sadhana and the depth of presentation. Such practices are not for everyone, only the more committed of people, and

they are best undertaken from a Rinpoche or Lama—one who has seen the practice through to its completion—one who has “conquered death” or is a fully qualified dharma practitioner (living buddha).

Some of the lower tantras take only a few minutes a day to complete, whereas the higher tantras can take several hours. Phowa practice, for instance, can take as little as thirty minutes or last for much longer, depending upon one’s motivation and commitment. But as with any of these meditation methods, and indeed as with any discipline, rhythm and persistence are necessary. Naturally, those that take several hours are the ones that more intensively institute and complete the processes that lead to attainment, as they are full of visualizations. However, for busy Westerners such disciplines are best not engaged unless one has a driving inner commitment and supportive relationships and/or circumstances that make their practice feasible. Such a combination of circumstances is rare in this day and age, which is why many people either abandon the world and go into retreat to do them, or abandon the practice and go back to their ordinary lives. Usually one will either have the drive to do them but little or no support, or the support will be there, but the willingness to do them on the part of the novice practitioner will be absent.

The particulars of the phowa practice are too involved to outline here but the essence of it is as follows, although the outline provided here is not to be taken as a basis of the practice. First of all, it is recommended that one first gain facility in the recognition of the stages of dissolution and is able to hold the mind steady in each of the successive stages. Of course, one can do the practice as an exercise, but for it to

have effect the mind must be held steady. One visualizes on the crown of one’s head (the lotus of the crown chakra) Buddha Amitabha<sup>69</sup> or one’s root teacher in aspect of Amitabha, with a continuous channel thus being formed between one’s heart and the heart of Amitabha (this would be the central spinal channel). The teacher or visualized Buddha represents all the stages of the path and all the realizations attained thereon—one’s own buddha-nature. The lower end of one’s own channel is visualized as being plugged a hand’s breadth below the navel by the mound of merit one has accumulated over one’s countless lifetimes. This

would resemble a pile of rice, for instance. One’s eight sense doors<sup>70</sup> are simultaneously blocked, preventing egress of the consciousness through any of those other doors during the practice. The Brahma aperture is the only one that leads to a pure land<sup>71</sup>—to full enlightenment, in other words.

One invokes the aid of Amitabha or one’s guru with strong intention (“desperation”) to be taken to the pure land (if Amitabha, that would be Sukhavati). In other words, the intention is that one’s consciousness be transferred to a buddha-field, there to meditate “in the light supernal,” or in one’s own buddha-nature blended with that of the buddha or teacher. One’s consciousness is visualized in the heart as a small ball of light, which can be formed in preliminary stages of the practice through the dissolution process, although it is not necessary to do so. From the heart of Amitabha, through the central channel, a cord of light descends on the end of which is a grasping claw, seen more in the vein of a helping hand, which descends to one’s consciousness, which gently grasps it

**The Antaḥkaraṇa represents the clear central channel in the spine through which kundalini can rise unimpeded. When one, through mental development, mental equipoise and directed will, has reached the point in their development where the bridge is completed, and it is possible to directly experience the divine via the kundalini, there will be a direct cognition of “emptiness” to use the Buddhist terms and life is changed forever.**

and then pulls it upwards into the heart of Amitabha (or one's guru). At the same time, one's consciousness is pushed upward through the central channel by the sheer force of one's accumulated merits from below. Thus we get the sense of one being simultaneously pulled upward and pushed upward through a chimney. At that point, one would meditate on emptiness in Sukhavati (pure land) or in the trikaya (three bodies) of the buddha involved.

So long as the central channel remains intact life can return to the body, but in actual phowa practice at the time of death, this would be severed at the Brahma aperture and sealed once one has been taken to one's appropriate pure land. This practice can be done for others, too—any sentient life with a physical body, really—but it must be done at the time of the other person's death and be done by one with a strong mental focus. If done for animals, for instance, the aim would ultimately be to help bring them into the human kingdom. One may have heard of other less virtuous reasons for doing this for animals, but those practices are best left aside. For animals, this would be an unusual branch of service, and it might be expected that there would be special circumstances surrounding such practice as well as specific training as it pertains to one's own safety, and in being able to recognize the readiness of the animal for advancement.

Signs of success in phowa vary, but aside from the light experienced in the meditation, there are other signs, such as that of a blister forming on the crown of one's head, or the hair atop one's head standing on end. If one does this for another, then the signs will appear on the head of the other person as well as perhaps on one's own head. Once such a thing has been observed one should then engage the long-life practice for oneself in order to ensure the anchoring of the life thread in the heart, if one intends to live for a time. There are several things to note here with regard to the Antaḥkaraṇa: firstly, both the life and the consciousness threads are employed (the anchoring in the heart and crown chakras) in the phowa practice. A continuous channel is formed between one's own spinal channel and the heart of the buddha-nature, which is visual-

ized over one's head and then indestructibly sealed to one's crown. The channel which is formed has been previously purified through practice and marks a continuous and uninterrupted means of conscious interplay between the practitioner and the teacher, the teacher or buddha standing as a symbol—but also as an intermediary—between oneself and the pure land, or buddha-field. In the end, this is one's own buddha-nature. The process can be repeated as often as is necessary.

Phowa is actually quite a beautiful and moving practice. Much has been left out of the description, but the core of the practice is there. It instills detachment, removes the fear of death and suffering and strengthens faith in one's teacher(s) and oneself. It develops an easy and effective channel of ingress and egress between oneself and one's ashram, or inner group, loosens the grip of the material upon the spiritual and yet enables the influence of the noumenal upon the phenomenal. These points are not stated in the practice itself, but they are more or less easily inferred. Its purpose can perhaps be summarized by the following verses from the closing of the practice, especially if done for others:

*Arya Avalokiteshvara, treasure of the victorious ones,*

*I beseech thee myself as well as all sentient beings,*

*Grant me freedom from the ocean of cyclic existence rapidly and*

*Grant this not merely to myself but to all mother and father*

*Sentient beings of the six categories of being.*

*Bestow on me rapidly the vast and profound peerless minds of enlightenment and*

*Purify rapidly all of the countless afflictions Which I have accumulated since beginningless time.*

*Grant me as well as to all beings entry into Sukhavati and*

*Grant me to see Buddha Amitabha as well as your own presence.*

*Should this not occur may I be protected by  
a spiritual guide*

*In life after life and never be separated  
from the teachings and*

*Led rapidly to full enlightenment.*

## Concluding Remarks

This exegesis has provided brief insight into the basis of the Antaḥkaraṇa and its construction, as well as the trans-Himalayan roots from which its foundations spring. Given that the Antaḥkaraṇa is so essential to spiritual life and service, it benefits us to familiarize ourselves with the Western teachings on the Antaḥkaraṇa as well as its Eastern antecedents, such as the Buddhist Vajrayana practice of taking death and birth, and the Phowa practice for transferring consciousness at the time of death. However, it might be advisable for us to begin by asking ourselves a few common-sense questions, such as: “Where will these practices lead in my everyday life?” “How will they affect my relations?” “Am I able to do these practices and still meet my essential needs and the demands of the world around me?” “How much time can I commit to these advanced practices?” More importantly, “How desperate am I?” If there is no compelling inner urge to expand our field of service, then it might be better to stay away from extra practices that would hasten our development, especially along the bodhisattava line.

These practices are abstracting. They take us away from worldly concerns, except for meeting the immediate spiritual needs of those around us. They render one impersonal, which is not to say that one becomes cold toward others. It simply means one loses attachments to others, and that can be disconcerting initially to us and to loved ones and people close to us. These practices are also demanding and because of the extra time they take and the effects they produce, they can be viewed by others to be a kind of betrayal or abandonment—a feeling that the practitioner no longer cares, despite the fact that deep caring is what motivates one to take on these practices in the first place. One’s cares and concerns simply change and move from the personal to the universal. The point is that once one chooses to acceler-

ate the construction of the Antaḥkaraṇa, life is never the same. What once seemed of importance drops away and one’s only concern from then onwards and increasingly is, “Have I done enough to alleviate the suffering of others and hasten their progress along the way?”

The true desperation, mentioned at the start of this article, one feels when choosing the quick path is not that one “has so little time left” (for one’s own development), but rather, “Why am I so ineffective in what I do for others, and how can I hasten that effectiveness?” That is the crux of why one should seek a quicker path to union with the divine. It is the life-blood of the all bodhisattvas, so-to-speak. It is the reason the Antaḥkaraṇa is being developed in the first place, for the Spirit knows no sense of separation, and anything that can bring greater light into the world is a great service indeed. And it is just such a light that the completed Antaḥkaraṇa provides.

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<sup>1</sup> “The Nine Stages of Shamatha.” Image is in the public domain when used for educational purposes only.

<sup>2</sup> “Taking birth and death as a path” is Buddhist terminology for specific intervals of meditation that use death and birth as vehicles for the attainment of full enlightenment or the emanation of a buddha-field, respectively.

<sup>3</sup> Following are a few notes on the diagram: There are two types of mind inferred, as represented in the monkey and the elephant. The monk can be seen to represent the soul, initially, and later the monad itself. The monkey represents the distracting factor that is ever-present with the mental elemental as it goes about its business of latching onto every passing current of thought. The elephant represents the aspect of will with respect to mind, since willpower is reflected in the mind. In the early stages the mind is tamasic (asleep) and lethargic, represented by the black coloration, reflecting only the mad-monkey stage and having no volition of its own. It is led by the monkey at that stage. The monk observes at this point and then moves to begin engagement with the mind. The monk carries a noose and a goad, representing the directing power of his will. The monk only begins to engage the elephant directly in the third stage, when he is finally able to attach the noose to the el-

ephant. As the stages of meditation progress, the elephant is awakened to the will of the monk and becomes a force that can be increasingly utilized by the soul, as represented in the last stages of the diagram. At these latter stages, the monkey is totally absent, and purpose (willpower) is the only guiding principle of the mind. There are a few stages wherein a rabbit appears on the back of the elephant, and this represents a transitional period, wherein a subtle lethargy can sabotage the efforts of the meditator. The rabbit is the representative of the subtle lethargy.

4 “Higher realizations” here meaning superhuman faculties—the so-called “higher siddhis.”

5 The “major initiations” are the solar initiations. The first two human initiations, “birth” and “baptism” are preparatory to the major initiations.

6 Translations of Sanskrit terms are taken from [www.sanskritdictionary.org](http://www.sanskritdictionary.org). (accessed January 22, 2015).

7 In Buddhism *manas* is seen as a mental factor, an effect arising from the interaction between consciousness and matter, and as such carries a subtle sense of “I”-ness, hence the term “Ego.” This would appear to be a contradiction of the idea that the soul knows no sense of separation, but this is only from a relative perspective. Once one delves deeply into such matters, even the Triad comes into question. All this is in the realm of Buddhist logic, but can only be touched upon here.

8 The Buddhist paths are: 1) the Path of Accumulation, 2) the Path of Preparation, 3) the Path of Seeing, 4) the Path of Meditation and 5) the Path of No-More-Learning. These have a correspondence, respectively, with the five human initiations, “Birth” through “Revelation,” as outlined in the books of Alice A. Bailey. The first two paths mark the period covered in the initiations of threshold. For a fuller explanation of the grounds and paths, see: Kir-ti Tsenshap Rinpoche, and Ian Coghlan, translated by Voula Zarpani, *Principles of Buddhist Tantra: A Commentary on Choje Ngawang Palden's Illumination of the Tantric Tradition: The Principles of the Grounds and Paths of the Four Great Secret Classes of Tantra* (Boston, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2011), as one example text.

9 Helena Blavatsky, *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, Vol. V; series 1879-1880 (Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1966), 80, fn.

10 Helena Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine I* (Pasadena, CA: Theosophical Publishing House, 1984), 69, 70, fn.

11 Helena Blavatsky, *Theosophical Glossary*, heading under: “Antahkarana.”

12 In the books of Alice Bailey there are 450 references to Antahkarana, thus what is represented here is the synthesis of those points. Letters and words in brackets [ ] indicate insertions by the author to connect the references and to enable the flow of text, or to differentiate terms. Italicized words are in the quotes already. Bolded italics are by the author for emphasis. Ellipses indicate unnecessary text from the quotes that was omitted.

13 Alice A. Bailey, *Education in the New Age* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing Co., 1954), 146.

14 Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing Co., 1955), 194.

15 Bailey, *Education in the New Age*, 146.

16 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing Co., 1960), 468.

17 Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing Co., 1951), 457.

18 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II*, 46.

19 Bailey, *Education in the New Age*, 148.

20 Op cit.

21 Ibid., 7.

22 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 467.

23 Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age I* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing Co., 1944), 38. The symbolic and abstract minds are merged when the Antahkarana is completed.

24 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 483.

25 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II*, 19.

26 Ibid., 52.

27 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II*, 209.

28 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II*, 347, 348.

29 Bailey, *Education in the New Age*, 96, 97.

30 The science of vision is fully engaged upon the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Buddhist Paths.

31 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 48.

32 Ibid., 64.

33 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 494.

34 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II*, 59.

35 Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing Co., 1957), 606. The “Great Renunciation” is a Buddhist term describing the fourth initiation, or crucifixion.

<sup>36</sup> Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 491.

<sup>37</sup> A sadhana is essentially a “road map” for consciousness and meditative script rolled into one. They can be very short or long, but the purpose is to enable one to act “as if” one is already enlightened, and in that way to move very quickly, relatively speaking, to full enlightenment. “Full enlightenment” here means buddhahood.

<sup>38</sup> The word used was “lamasery,” but the term itself is incorrect, implying a place of training for lamas, and is considered to be insulting in the eyes of some Buddhist scholars. Monasteries are places of teaching and training, and lamas have already achieved, i.e., are fully enlightened. They have reached the stage of “no-more-learning.” Monastery would be the correct term instead of lamasery.

<sup>39</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing Co., 1950), 179. See also: Alice A. Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing Co., 1950), 113. “The Western races must move forward into spiritual supremacy, without obliterating the Eastern contribution, and the functioning of the Law of Rebirth holds the clue to this and demonstrates this necessity.”

<sup>40</sup> Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation*, 302. Bolded italics added for emphasis.

<sup>41</sup> Keith Dowman, *Sky Dancer, the Secret Life and Songs of the Lady Yeshe Tsoygel* (Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1996), 86, 262. “The gross bodies of men and women are equally suited [for practice], but if a woman has strong aspiration, her potential (for existential realization) is greater.” From Padmasambhava’s instructions to Yeshe Tsoygel.

<sup>42</sup> Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II*, 556 “This *as if* behavior is one of the most occult of practices. It in reality presupposes the imposition of the highest grasped aspiration upon the normal personality in the form of changed behavior.”

<sup>43</sup> Secret Mantra is otherwise known as highest yoga tantra, or *anuttarayogatantra*. These are Vajrayana practices, are quite involved, require empowerments and a larger commitment of time and daily practice, usually amounting to several hours a day. They are normally presented within a monastic mindset, but they can be effectively practiced by lay people. The sexual aspect, which many people in the West usually associate with the word “tantra,” is not

normally presented in such empowerments and commentaries. In a Buddhist setting Secret Mantra is commonly called “the supreme, quick path to enlightenment,” which makes it attractive to many people. But the matter should be fully investigated and discussed with people who have engaged such practices, lay and monastic, before taking one on, because Westerners commonly have no idea of the commitments involved or what it means to engage such a practice. They are a life-long commitment.

<sup>44</sup> Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II*, 321.

<sup>45</sup> The “body, speech and mind” of a buddha refers to a buddha’s emanations, or *trikaya*, in Sanskrit. These are the *nirmanakaya* (body), the *sambhogakaya* (speech) and *dharmakaya* (mind) of a buddha. As such, OM in this case connects one with the trikaya indicated in the body of a mantra. The mantra, *Om mani padme hum*, for instance, invokes Avalokiteshvara (Chenrezig) and connects one with his trikaya.

<sup>46</sup> “Emptiness” is the realization that all phenomena have no inherent existence of their own, including personalities, souls and Triads. In other words, everything is the result of a dependent arising (karmic outcome). Emptiness is not nihilism, though. It is the realization of the ultimate state of being. Its realization is a state beyond any description. The ultimate in emptiness for a human being is first experienced in nirvana, but even that state is seen to be inadequate at a later stage and is abandoned. There are thus varying grades of “emptiness,” with the greatest being realized at full enlightenment. The matter is very abstract, but is the foundation and goal of all Buddhist logic.

<sup>47</sup> In Buddhist logic each of the five senses is seen as a separate type of consciousness, each one being associated with an element.

<sup>48</sup> “Conquering death” in this context means ending the karmic necessity for incarnation, which is achieved at the fourth initiation.

<sup>49</sup> Rinpoche has a specific meaning in Tibetan Buddhism. It is one who has undergone the Buddhist “Great Renunciation,” and has thus almost completed the full realization of the grounds and the paths. In effect, they have “attained nirvana” and thereafter incarnate at will.

<sup>50</sup> A lama (*bla ma* in Tibetan) is a fully endowed teacher of the dharma—a living buddha—one

who has completed fully the grounds and the paths.

<sup>51</sup> Opinions on this stage will differ, but at the stage of Chohan one has surpassed even the need for nirvana and has entered more or less fully into the monadic state of being. So far as a human being is concerned, the monad represents full enlightenment.

<sup>52</sup> Excerpted from Malvin Artley, *The Full Moons: Topical Letters in Esoteric Astrology*, Appendix 8: The Levels of Dissolution in Death and Meditation, (Boston, EBookIt.com, 2014). For a complete presentation, see: Ven. Khensur Kangurwa Lobsang Thubten Rinpoche, *A Weekend on Death and Dying*, (available through Tibetan Buddhist Institute, Adelaide, South Australia). See also: Glen H. Mullin, *The Six Yogas Of Naropa: Tsongkhapa's Commentary Entitled A Book Of Three Inspirations: A Treatise On The Stages Of Training In The Profound Path Of Naro's Six Dharmas*, Kindle Locations 2462-2467, Kindle Edition (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1996).

<sup>53</sup> The winds should not be conflated with the elements. There are five winds (*prana* in Sanskrit, *rlung* in Tibetan): life-grasping, upward-moving, downward-cleansing, fire-accompanying and all-pervading. The winds are the vehicles of consciousness. The elements underlie form.

<sup>54</sup> The causal lotus is a chakra, or energy vortex, composed of more subtle matter of the mental plane at the level of the heart chakra. Its pattern and level of unfoldment are a clear indication of the spiritual evolution of a person. A full description is given in *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, starting on p. 1109. The causal lotus is the main energy vortex of the Ego, or soul in incarnation.

<sup>55</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology* (New York, NY: Lucis Publishing Co., 1951), 61. Further clues are given in the comparison of Aries/Sagittarius/Aquarius on p. 174 of the same book. There are two points of meditative equilibrium indicated by the signs (ibid, pp. 189, 190)—Libra, marking what is called “thorough pacification” in the stages of shamatha and Sagittarius, which marks the final stage of shamatha, or “placement in equipoise” (samadhi). An equivalence between the archer on the white horse with Sagittarius to the monk on the back of the elephant in the

shamatha diagram will perhaps not be lost on the reader.

<sup>56</sup> Hints of this are given throughout Bailey’s *Esoteric Astrology*. It is rather “convenient” that the number of elephants on the winding path in the shamatha diagram equal the number of zodiacal signs (Aries through Sagittarius) that lead to the one-pointed focus necessary to enable one to attain the greater initiations, indicated by Capricorn through Pisces. The graded stages of spiritual progress as marked by the zodiacal signs start with Aries, being the sign of commencement of effort and end in Pisces—the so-called “wheel going counter-clockwise.” This is outlined in *Esoteric Astrology*, pp.60–61. No lasting spiritual progress is engaged until one’s mind is brought to heel. There is a proposed further, higher correspondence of these nine signs with the stages of *vipassana*, or meditation with insight. For the full proposed latter outline, see *The Full Moons: Topical Letters in Esoteric Astrology*, e-book edition, Table II, 364.

<sup>57</sup> The “path of seeing” is the third of the five Buddhist paths (of the grounds and the paths, or *sa lam* in Tibetan), and marks the attainment of “transfiguration,” or the first direct, abiding experience of emptiness, which is brought about by the rising of ultimate bodhi-chitta (active kundalini). It marks a definitive point of attainment and also sets the stage for the higher aspects of meditative practice. One is from then onwards an “arya being,” or bodhisattva. This path begins the first Buddhist ground, which is also called “the Very Joyful.” The words, “Joy is a special wisdom” [*Supramundane I*, 1938, Agni Yoga Society, 231.] has a particular connection with this path, although here it is bliss, not joy, that is first fully experienced—what one might call “the first kiss of the monad.”

<sup>58</sup> There are many names for the various clear lights, but the main thing to be noted is that they are all beyond conceptualization, i.e., they are accessed at “Triadal” levels and beyond. At this point in meditative practice one is actively utilizing and dissolving the subtle winds in the various chakras and for this reason empowerment into a practice and the requisite commentaries are a must, one thus having access to a person who has mastered the processes therein.

- <sup>59</sup> This is the opinion of the author, based upon reading numerous accounts of near-death experiences, the study of the Buddhist accounts of death and dying and of the correlations between these and the extant esoteric literature. The “tunnel” frequently described in near-death sounds very much like the descriptions of black near-attainment. This is a subject that will remain controversial for some time into the future and the reader may want to investigate the matter further. For descriptions of the “tunnel” experience, there is a good thumbnail collection with commentary at: <http://www.near-death.com/experiences/re-search16.html> (accessed January 25, 2015).
- <sup>60</sup> Nirmanakaya: One of the three “bodies of a buddha,” the other two being the sambhogakaya and the dharmakaya. These in turn have correspondences to the personality, soul and spirit of a human being, respectively. Of the three, the dharmakaya (the “truth body”) is the most subtle and is not, strictly speaking, considered to be an emanation. Instead, the dharmakaya is the source, the actual buddha-nature, the essential will and wisdom, which underlies the other two. The sambhogakaya is sometimes called the “bliss body” of a buddha, although all three are commonly stated to be blissful emanations. The nirmanakaya is the “emanation body”.
- <sup>61</sup> The mother clear light is the basis of all advanced spiritual attainment. It is, in the end, one’s first encounter with the Triad. In advanced practices it is blended with these successive stages of clear light to form the bases for the higher spiritual attainments. These clear lights are experienced and engaged beyond any conceptual basis. They are part and parcel of the Triad. In this vein, “attainments,” “realizations,” “siddhis” and “Triadal consciousness” are all synonymous terms. Although this is not in strict agreement with some Western presentations, it is seen as such in Buddhist presentations, as they are all experienced when these levels are reached and engaged.
- <sup>62</sup> Glen Mullin, *The Six Yogas Of Naropa: Tsongkhapa's Commentary Entitled A Book Of Three Inspirations: A Treatise On The Stages Of Training In The Profound Path Of Naro's Six Dharmas* (Kindle Locations 1798-1805. Kindle Edition.) “It is important in each of these four chakra meditations that the mind is held on the mantric syllable at the center of each individual chakra, which is [located at] the center of the central channel, called avadhuti, as this makes it easier to collect the vital energies [at the specific chakra being meditated upon]. At each of the four sites a unique experience of bliss is aroused and one must cultivate the ability to consciously recognize these in one’s own experience.” The four blisses are: “bliss,” experienced at the crown; “supreme bliss,” experienced at the throat; “special bliss,” experienced at the heart; and “innate bliss,” experienced at the navel. These are experienced during meditations on the inner heat yoga, or tummo.
- <sup>63</sup> Ibid., (Kindle Locations 2462-2467).
- <sup>64</sup> See, for instance: Sogyel Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* (New York, NY: Harper Collins 1992).
- <sup>65</sup> Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II*, 194. The mother clear light would be equated with “manas” in atma/buddhi/manas, or the spiritual triad.
- <sup>66</sup> See: *The Six Yogas of Naropa*, the two chapters on “Illusory Body Yoga” and “Bardo Yoga.”
- <sup>67</sup> There is a chapter devoted to this in *The Six Yogas of Naropa*, titled, “Consciousness Transference.”
- <sup>68</sup> For a full description, see: Kyabje Khensur Kangurwa Lobsang Thubten Rinpoche, *A Commentary on Entering into the Battlefield of the Victorious Ones: the Phowa of Amitabha* (Adelaide: Tibetan Buddhist Institute, 2009).
- <sup>69</sup> Amitabha is the adi buddha of pure lands, immortality and infinite light.
- <sup>70</sup> The eight sense doors lead to karmic rebirth. They are: between the eyebrows, the eyes, the ears, the nostrils, the mouth, the navel, the urinary tract and the anus. They are normally blocked in the practice by means of Sanskrit syllables appropriate to the aperture.
- <sup>71</sup> Pure land here should not be conflated with Pure Land Buddhism, which features mainly in China and Japan. A “pure land” (Sanskrit: *buddha-ksetra*) is essentially the *nirmanakaya* (emanation body) plus the environment of a fully enlightened being, or buddha. There are thus many such pure lands. The pure land of Buddha Kalachakra, for instance, is Shambhala. More to the point, though, a pure land is emanated for purposes of service—the field in

which the inner work of an ashram takes place. It is a place of teaching, of retinue, of attainment and duration.



# Cedercrans' Writings compared to Bailey's Technique of Integration for the Seventh Ray

Zachary F. Lansdowne

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## Summary

The seven rays are said to denote seven primary differentiations of energy, and doctrines on the seven rays have been expounded by various theosophical writers. In 1942, Alice Bailey, a writer in the theosophical tradition, published the *Technique of Integration for the Seventh Ray*, but admitted that her technique “was definitely abstruse and couched in language quite symbolic,” so that it is difficult to understand. From 1948 to 1963, Lucille Cedercrans, a writer using theosophical terminology, presented a teaching called the “New Thought-form Presentation of the Wisdom,” and said that her teaching is associated with the Seventh Ray. This article clarifies Bailey’s technique by showing that it is illustrated by passages from Cedercrans’ writings.

## The Masters Djwhal Khul and Rakoczi

Helena Blavatsky (1831– 1891), founder of the Theosophical Society, may have been the first person to introduce to the West the concept of the Masters of the Wisdom.<sup>1</sup> These Masters are reputed to be enlightened beings and are sometimes referred to as the Elder Brothers, Adepts, or Mahatmas. They are said to have come from the human race and achieved their higher status by following the same steps that people tread today.

Alice Bailey (1880 – 1949), a member of the Theosophical Society before leaving it to pursue her own activities, says that the majority of her books were telepathically dictated to her by a Master of the Wisdom. Bailey identifies this Master as “the Tibetan,” who is also known by the name Djwhal Khul or by the abbreviation D.K.:

In the early days of writing for the Tibetan, I had to write at regular hours and it was clear, concise, definite dictation. It was given word for word, in such a manner that I might claim that I definitely heard a voice. Therefore, it might be said that I started with a clairaudient technique, but I very soon found, as our minds got attuned, that this was unnecessary and that if I concentrated enough and my attention was adequately focussed I could register and write down the thoughts of the Tibetan (His carefully formulated and expressed ideas) as He dropped them into my mind.<sup>2</sup>

The title page of each of Bailey’s books, however, designates “Alice A. Bailey” as the person responsible for its intellectual content, so this article refers to her books as though they were her own work. Bailey mentions another Master who is relevant for this article and who is known by the name Rakoczi or by the abbreviation R.:

The Master Who concerns Himself especially with the future development of racial affairs in Europe, and with the mental outgrowth in America and Australia, is the Master Rakoczi ... The Master R. is upon the seventh Ray, that of Ceremonial Magic or Order, and He works largely through esoteric ritual and ceremonial, being vitally

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## About the Author

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interested in the effects, hitherto unrecognized, of the ceremonial of the Freemasons, of the various fraternities and of the Churches everywhere.<sup>3</sup>

The above quotation refers to the notion of the *seven rays*, which are mentioned in both the ancient Hindu *Rig Veda* and modern Theosophy.<sup>4</sup> Bailey gives this definition: “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.”<sup>5</sup> The above quotation says that the “Master R. is upon the seventh Ray,” thereby showing that the seven rays provide a way of characterizing Masters according to the qualities that they exhibit. Bailey also says, “Every unit of the human race is on some one of the seven rays,”<sup>6</sup> so the seven rays provide a way of characterizing both Masters and human beings.

Bailey makes a prediction that is relevant for this article: “Certain picked disciples from all these five Ashrams have been or will be trained for the work of contacting the public.”<sup>7</sup> Here, *Ashram* is defined as “The centre to which the Master gathers the disciples and aspirants for personal instruction.”<sup>8</sup> Bailey includes the Master R.’s Ashram as one of the five designated Ashrams, so her prediction implies that a certain picked disciple from the Master R.’s Ashram will contact the public. Her prediction was written in November 1948, so more than 65 years have now passed. During that period of time, is there any evidence that a disciple from the Master R.’s Ashram has contacted the public, and if so, who is that disciple?

## Lucille Cedercrans

*Dakini Wisdom*, the publisher of Lucille Cedercrans’ biography, provides this brief account:

A woman of unusual opposites, Lois Lucille Stickle Johnson Cedercrans Schaible (b.4/4/21 – d.6/21/84) did not finish high school, yet she was wise and knowledgeable beyond any traditional education. She brought a new form of the wisdom of the ages into this world. In striking contrast to

the conservatism of her Depression-era, rural upbringing and early adulthood, her methods and training for awakening spiritual growth in herself and others were more esoteric and incredible than expected in that time.

Undeterred by the doubts of others or more gnawingly her own, undaunted by the enormity of her task, her six children, or her lack of formal education, and never disheartened by her many physical ails, Lucille forged open the gateway to wisdom for hundreds of followers from Spokane, Washington, to Washington DC.

Most people know Lucille Cedercrans Schaible as the author of meditation resources such as *The Nature of the Soul*, *The Soul and Its Instrument*, or *Corrective/Creative Thinking*. Developed from 1948 to 1963, her work is called the New Thought-form Presentation of the Wisdom (NTFPW). In the early 1970s, she began to shift her focus to Tibetan Buddhism, which she was authorized to teach until her death in 1984.<sup>9</sup>

The foregoing profile indicates that she was known by many different names. The title page of each of her books, however, designates “Lucille Cedercrans” as the person responsible for its intellectual content, and so that is the name used in what follows.

Cedercrans appears to have had a function similar to Bailey’s, because both women said that they wrote their books by bringing through communication from a Master. Gretchen Groth in *Luminous Sitting, Tortuous Walking*, which is her biography of Cedercrans, gives this account:

Lucille’s main contact was Master R (also called simply R) ... In the beginning, however, she only knew R or Master R as the Presence ... She reported that early in her training, R said he could be called GR or R. During the first fifteen years, she referred to him as R or Master R. The name GR, however, garnered new interest once she began teaching Tibetan Buddhism in 1973. Guru Rinpoche (or GR) is Padmasambhava who

brought Buddhism to Tibet in the eighth century ... The teachings from R that she presented to her Buddhist groups in the 1970s and 1980s presented traditional Tibetan Buddhism meditative practices and-concepts ... To the Buddhist Sangha or group, this contact of Lucille's was clearly presented as (and understood to be) Guru Rinpoche or Padmasambhava—not Master Rakoczi.<sup>10</sup>

Cedercrans describes the process by which her material was written:

Masters don't write the lesson material. I write it. They don't determine the words that will be used. I determine the words that will be used. They have taken those principles of truth which are incorporated in the lesson material and placed them, put them into abstract thought-forms. Now these abstractions are above the level of words; they are above the frequency of pictures. They are in the frequency of meaning itself ... We receive that transference of meaning into our consciousness and there in meditation we have to interpret that meaning and to translate it into whatever language we are using.<sup>11</sup>

Thus Bailey and Cedercrans seem to have used different methods of communication: Bailey describes herself, in a quotation given earlier, as receiving the words of the Master D.K. and then writing those words down; but Cedercrans describes herself as receiving the abstract meaning from the Master R. and then determining the words that are used.

Cedercrans' books appear similar in purpose and terminology to Bailey's books, which were written earlier. Nevertheless, Cedercrans recounts her initial unfamiliarity with Bailey's material:

I was shocked, and dismayed in 1958 to learn that persons close to A. A. B. [Alice A. Bailey] and perhaps even A. A. B. herself had accused me of lifting content from the D.K. books. This was never true. I had not read any part of them until my own work, *Nature of the Soul*, was written. And even now I have never read one of the Bai-

ley books from cover to cover. I was just too busy. You see the Presence requested that I not read any of the literature, neither Bailey, the Theosophical Society, Besant, Blavatsky, nor any Hindu or Buddhist literature until after my training was complete. Since I ... never went beyond the 8<sup>th</sup> grade in school, I had never heard of any religion, philosophy or teachings such as these that I was receiving when the Presence merged with me.<sup>12</sup>

Cedercrans calls her work the “New Thought-form Presentation of the Wisdom,” “NTFPW,” or more simply “the Wisdom,”<sup>13</sup> and she associates it with the Seventh Ray. For example, *Applied Wisdom*, which is an extensive compilation of her material, makes this statement:

As the Seventh Ray comes into more active play in this beginning of a new age, a modern teaching anent the fundamentals of magic is needed. This *New Thought-form Presentation of the Wisdom* holds such teaching in solution, to be released through Lucille Cedercrans when there are adequately oriented and trained discipleship groups available to put it into right use.<sup>14</sup>

### Technique of Integration for the Seventh Ray

Bailey claims that her “Seven Techniques of Integration” depict “the pattern of the thought and the process of the life” of people guided by each of the seven rays.<sup>15</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>16</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>17</sup> In this context, the term “soul” denotes the “superconscious self,”<sup>18</sup> and “personality” denotes the mental, emotional, and physical bodies.<sup>19</sup>

If Bailey's claim is correct, then her techniques depict the archetypal patterns that underlie all methods of integration that are inspired by the superconscious realm. 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 were valid, 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. Bailey's claim can be tested with Cedercrans' books, because of the previously discussed evidence that Cedercrans was an inspired writer.

This article is concerned with the Seventh Ray. Bailey's name for this ray is "Ray of Ceremonial Magic or Order,"<sup>20</sup> and Cedercrans' name is similar: "Ray of Ceremonial Magic or Divine Law and Order."<sup>21</sup> Cedercrans provides these explanations of the ray's name: "Magic is the manipulation of the divine law to produce an ordered series of effects in time and space";<sup>22</sup> "the concept of Divine Law and Order—ordered sequence according to the overshadowing Divine Plan for humanity."<sup>23</sup> Cedercrans also distinguishes between white and black magic: "The white magician is concerned with those effects that relate to the betterment of humanity as a whole ... The black magician is concerned with him or her self and their own rise to power or the accumulation of material gain."<sup>24</sup>

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

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

"I, at the centre, stand, the worker in the field of magic. I know some rules, some magical controls, some Words of Power, some forces which I can direct. What shall

I do? Danger there is. The task that I have undertaken is not easy of accomplishment, yet I love power. I love to see the forms emerge, created by my mind, and do their work, fulfill the plan and disappear. I can create. The rituals of the Temple of the Lord are known to me. How shall I work?

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

*The word goes forth from soul to form:* "Stand in the centre of the pentagram, drawn upon that high place in the East within the light which ever shines. From that illumined centre work. Leave not the pentagram. Stand steady in the midst. Then draw a line from that which is without to that which is within and see the Plan take form."<sup>25</sup>

The rest of this article analyzes Bailey's Technique of Integration for the Seventh Ray: our interpretation of each segment of the technique is given in italics and is followed by parentheses that contain the interpreted segment, which in turn is followed by an explanation of the segment's symbols. Our approach for deciphering these symbols is to identify and then apply Cedercrans' associated statements. 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>26</sup> Our commentary is also divided into these five phases.

## Alignment

Before analyzing Bailey's technique, let us give some background information. According to Theosophy, the planetary life consists of seven worlds that are often called "planes" and have the following names: 1) lo-gic; 2) monadic; 3) spiritual, or atmic; 4) intuitional, or buddhic; 5) mental; 6) emotional, or astral; and 7) physical.<sup>27</sup> Even though these planes of existence are said to interpenetrate and be interrelated, Bailey mentions "the inner

and higher worlds,”<sup>28</sup> which shows that these planes are thought of as being arranged metaphorically in either an inner and outer manner, or a higher and lower manner. For example, the mental, emotional, and physical planes, which are spoken of as “the three worlds of human endeavor,”<sup>29</sup> are thought of as being either the three outermost planes or the three lowest planes.

Professor Mary Kassian reports, “*Disciple* literally means ‘a learner’ (from Greek, *manthan*, ‘to learn’ and Latin, *discipulus*, ‘pupil; learner’).”<sup>30</sup> In this article, a *disciple* refers to any person who is learning how to expand his or her consciousness during any phase of the integration process. Such usage is consistent with Bailey’s statement: “for all are disciples from the humblest aspirant up to, and beyond, the Christ Himself.”<sup>31</sup>

In the first phase of the integration process, the disciples bring their mental, emotional, and physical bodies into increased *alignment* with the soul. As a result, the personality, or “lower self,” which consists of these three bodies, is able to receive impressions from the soul, or “higher self.”<sup>32</sup> The technique’s first paragraph, which uses the first-person grammatical perspective, depicts a seventh-ray disciple’s pattern of thought during the alignment phase, as explained next.

*I seek to bring my will and mind together* (“I seek to bring the two together”). As mentioned earlier, the preceding words in italics constitute our interpretation of a segment of Bailey’s technique, the preceding words in parentheses constitute the interpreted segment, and the following words explain the segment’s symbols. Cedercrans says, “The magician (regardless of whether aligned with the white or dark forces), must consciously appropriate and wield ... three laws in order to create a predetermined circumstance or situation in the magician’s life and affairs.”<sup>33</sup> The technique’s first sentence depicts the disciple as the initiator of activity, and it can be explained by Cedercrans’ first law:

1. The Law of Polarity—when the polar forces of Will and Mind are brought into a relationship with one another, the creative

process begins. A magnetic field is created within the mind by that polarity.<sup>34</sup>

Bailey does not explicitly mention the “Law of Polarity,” but she does write about the “mystery of Polarity,” and says, “It signifies essentially the form-building work in substance, and its energising by the spiritual aspect.”<sup>35</sup> Bailey also mentions “the mental substance of our mind,”<sup>36</sup> and “vibrations, engendered by will, working through love-wisdom, and energising substance,”<sup>37</sup> so the mystery of polarity could be concerned with the polarities of will and mind. Moreover, she explicitly mentions these two polarities: “No one can be a ... magician until the will and the thought work in unison.”<sup>38</sup> Cedercrans’ “Law of Polarity” appears to clarify these earlier hints and phrases from Bailey, so “the two” are taken as the will and mind. Thus, when the disciple brings these polarities together, he or she is wielding the Law of Polarity so as to initiate the creative process.

*By maintaining the polar relationship, which is between my will and mind, I create a thought-form; and by maintaining the triangular relationship, which is among my will, mind, and thought-form, I manifest the thought-form in the physical plane* (“The plan is in my hands”). The second sentence can be explained by Cedercrans’ second and third laws:

2. The Law of Magnetic Control—when a magnetic field is created within the mind and maintained there, mental substance is set into motion in the pattern dictated by the will. A thought is born via the magnetic control of substance.

3. The Law of Precipitation—when a thought is born, a triangle of precipitating energy has been brought into juxtaposition with time and space.<sup>39</sup>

Bailey mentions “The Law of Magnetic Control, governing the control of the personality by the spiritual nature, via the soul nature,”<sup>40</sup> which has the same name as Cedercrans’ second law. Bailey’s description is vague, however, so it is not clear whether her law is actually the same as Cedercrans’ second law. If their laws are assumed to be the same, then

Cedercrans once again appears to clarify some of Bailey's earlier material. Bailey also mentions "the law ... of active precipitation," and says that it "produces manifested existence,"<sup>41</sup> so this law seems to be the same as Cedercrans' third law.

According to Cedercrans' second law, maintenance of the polar relationship, which is between the will and mind, creates a thought-form. In the second sentence, "the plan" is taken as a thought-form, because Cedercrans says, "A thought-form, regardless of its nature is a planned activity, for energy follows thought,"<sup>42</sup> so "the plan" signifies that the disciple is wielding the Law of Magnetic Control. As suggested by Cedercrans' third law, maintenance of the triangular relationship, which is among the will, mind, and thought-form, manifests the thought-form. The phrase "in my hands" portrays taking physical possession of something, so this phrase signifies that the disciple is wielding the Law of Precipitation.

*Shall I work with cause or with effects?* ("How shall I work?"). The adverb *how* means "in what manner or way." As Cedercrans explains, the basic way of working is either with cause or with effects:

The mental plane is that area of creative substance that is causative to the physical plane manifestation. People who live in, and direct their affairs from this frequency of substance work with cause rather than with effects. This is the basic difference between the person who is mentally polarized and the person who still lives within an emotional focus. The latter is constantly challenged by, and must work in and with, effects. Causes are for the most part unknown to them, and they are a victim of circumstance.<sup>43</sup>

Bailey also speaks about these two ways of working:

The predominant work of the occult student is the manipulation of force, and the entering of that world wherein forces are actively set in motion which result in phenomenal effects. He has to study and comprehend practically and intelligently the working of

the law of Cause and Effect, and he leaves off dealing with effects and centres his attention on their producing causes.<sup>44</sup>

*Shall I emphasize the betterment of humanity as a whole, or my own separative goals?* ("Where lay the emphasis?"). As Cedercrans explains, disciples make many small choices that collectively establish a pattern emphasizing one of two directions:

People who place their feet upon the path of mental development move either to the right, toward white magic, or to the left, toward black magic. They are confronted with the forked path of decision as they make those many small choices having to do with the routine of daily living. They are learning the creative process and establishing those patterns in mental substance which direct the weight of their creativity, toward the forces of light for the betterment of humanity or toward the forces of darkness for what they think is personal gain.<sup>45</sup>

Bailey gives a related description: "It will be apparent at this point how important is *motive*, for it determines the line of activity and differentiates man's activity into what is called (by esotericists) black and white magic."<sup>46</sup>

*My will carries a purpose that is above and beyond my personal self, because it is impressed with a divine intent* ("In the far distance stands the One Who Is"). Cedercrans describes the inherent divine intent:

Seekers who come thus far upon the path of mental development examine the development of their will. If their will is an extension of Spirit, and not just a part of their own personal property, it is already impressed with a Divine Intent. That is, it carries a Purpose that is above and beyond their personal self.<sup>47</sup>

Bailey also writes about "the unified divine intent lying behind all appearances and all qualities."<sup>48</sup>

*The physical plane contains my handiwork, perhaps as music, art, literature, or inventions* ("Here at my hand is form"). "Here" indicates the physical plane, because that is where hu-

man beings are conscious, so “form” denotes something on the physical plane. Cedercrans provides these examples: “a thought-form is materialized as ... music, art, literature, inventions, etc.”<sup>49</sup> Being skillful in producing physical forms is a seventh-ray characteristic, as Bailey explains:

It [the Seventh Ray] is the ray of form, of the perfect sculptor, who sees and produces ideal beauty, of the designer of beautiful forms and patterns of any sort ... The literary work of the seventh ray man would be remarkable for its ultra-polished style, and such a writer would think far more of the manner than of the matter in his work, but would always be fluent both in writing and speech.<sup>50</sup>

*The power of my thought produces physical forms by means of physical-plane activity, etheric substance, and desire* (“at my hand is form, activity, substance, and desire”). The word “hand” could be a symbol of power, as in Isaiah 23:11, “He stretched out his hand over the sea, he shook the kingdoms,”<sup>51</sup> so the phrase “at my hand” could have this meaning: through my power. The word “activity” is taken as physical-plane activity, because Cedercrans mentions, “intelligent activity in the physical.”<sup>52</sup> The word “substance” is taken as referring to what Theosophy calls the “etheric body,” which is the subtle body of vitality that underlies the dense physical body,<sup>53</sup> because Cedercrans says, “Etheric substance is what is commonly thought of as the energy or force of action. Actually it is the *substance* of action.”<sup>54</sup> Desire refers to the desire or emotional body, about which Cedercrans says, “The astral body and plane is the power factor in manifestation. Until it is understood, controlled and properly directed, the student cannot engage in creative work.”<sup>55</sup>

Each factor in the given sequence is the immediate effect of the succeeding one, so the entire sequence exemplifies the rule, “Potencies produce precipitation,” on which Bailey comments, “When correctly understood, it will govern the method of work and the thought life of the worker in white magic.”<sup>56</sup> Bailey de-

scribes the same sequence of factors but in the reverse order:

The thinker on his own plane formulates a thought embodying some purpose or some desire. The mind vibrates in response to this idea and simultaneously produces a corresponding reaction in the kamic, desire or emotional body. The energy body, the etheric sheath vibrates synchronously, and thereby the brain responds and energises the nerve-system throughout the dense physical body, so that the impulse of the thinker works out into physical plane activity.<sup>57</sup>

*Can I relate these factors and thus manifest the divine plan?* (“Can I relate these and fashion thus a form for God?”). “A form for God” is taken as the manifestation of the divine plan, because Cedercrans says, “the White Magician ... molds substance into those forms which will carry the consciousness of the Divine Plan out into appearance in the Light of Day.”<sup>58</sup> Bailey similarly writes, “The white magician works from the soul level out into the manifested world and seeks to carry out the divine plan.”<sup>59</sup>

*Toward what objective shall I send my thought as a spoken word, which causes a manifestation in time and space?* (“Where shall I send my thought, my power the word that I can speak?”). Cedercrans tells students to think before speaking:

The words of the student also have a life of their own—are the cause of certain manifestations in time and space—and have an effect upon all other lives ... A word once spoken, cannot be recalled. A chain of effects has been set into motion and will result in physical-plane manifestation. When one considers that a word is not only a manifestation of a thought, but that it is also the direction into physical-plane manifestation of a thought, one pauses before he speaks.<sup>60</sup>

In the technique, “where” is taken as “toward what objective,” and “power” as, in Cedercrans’ words, “the cause of certain mani-

festations in time and space.” Bailey also tells students to think before speaking:

When we speak we evoke a thought and make it present, and we bring that which is concealed within us into audible expression. Speech reveals, and right speech can create a form of beneficent purpose, just as wrong speech can produce a form which has a malignant objective. Without realizing this, however, ceaselessly and irresponsibly, day after day, we speak; we use words; we multiply sounds; and surround ourselves with form worlds of our own creation. Is it not essential, therefore, that before we speak we should think, thus remembering the injunction, “You must attain to knowledge, ere you can attain to speech”?<sup>61</sup>

The technique’s first paragraph, which has just been analyzed, portrays the disciple as pondering his or her own questions. By pondering these questions, the disciple produces the needed *alignment*, as Bailey explains:

As he realises the task to be carried out and the nature of the work to be done by the seventh ray worker, and appreciates the fact that it is the magical work of producing those forms on earth which will embody the spirit of God (and in our particular time, this necessitates the building of new forms), each seventh ray disciple will see himself as a relating agent, as the one who stands in the midst of the building processes, attending to his portion of the task. This, if really grasped and deeply considered will have the effect of producing alignment.<sup>62</sup>

### Crisis of Evocation

Bailey writes, “The soul is a unit of energy, vibrating in unison with one of the seven ray Lives, and coloured by a particular ray light.”<sup>63</sup> In other words, each soul has the quality of a particular ray, which is called its “soul ray.” In the second phase of the integration process, the disciples sense intuitively their soul ray, which in this case is the Seventh Ray, because they have increased their alignment with their soul. The inconsistency between their sensed potential, which is working as a

white magician, and their emotional nature, which could lead to black magic, brings them to an inner *crisis* in which they look for alternative ways of proceeding. As Milton Friedman (1912 – 2006), a recipient of the Nobel Prize in Economics, says, “Only a crisis—actual or perceived—produces real change. When that crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas that are lying around.”<sup>64</sup>

The seventh-ray technique’s second paragraph, which is also written with the first-person grammatical perspective, treats the seventh-ray crisis by depicting two subsidiary techniques. These two techniques support each other and are intended to be used concurrently throughout the second phase. The first subsidiary technique, which consists of the first and second sentences, corresponds exactly to what Cedercrans calls the “transmutation technique,”<sup>65</sup> and its purpose is to transmute the subconscious nature. The second subsidiary technique consists of the remaining sentences of the paragraph, and its purpose is to observe and remove negative emotional habits. Both subsidiary techniques resolve the seventh-ray crisis by bringing forth the guidance of the soul.

*I, applying the transmutation technique, am focused at the ajna center, which is the etheric center between the eyes (“I, at the centre”); am aligned with the soul via my aspiration to it (“stand”); and am also aligned with my subconscious nature via my recognition of its existence (“the worker in the field of magic”).* Our claim is that the first sentence in the second paragraph corresponds to the first step in the transmutation technique, which Cedercrans describes as follows: “The disciple has established the triangular alignment between himself focused in the center between the brows, his Soul via his aspiration to it, and his subconscious via his recognition of its existence.”<sup>66</sup> To justify this claim, let us consider each symbol in the first sentence.

The *centre* is “the center between the brows,” which is located in the etheric or vital body, and is called the “ajna center” by both Cedercrans and Bailey. Cedercrans describes

its location: “The ajna center is located between the eyes from three to six inches outside the forehead and extending into the forehead.”<sup>67</sup> Bailey describes its use: “Centre your consciousness in the ajna centre—the centre of personality force and integration.”<sup>68</sup>

*Stand* has the symbolic meaning of being aligned with the soul, because the standing position brings the various parts of the physical body into a direct line, and Bailey describes alignment with the soul as also establishing a direct line: “the alignment factor is related to the control by your soul, and the establishing of a direct line of contact between your soul and your brain, via your mind.”<sup>69</sup> Romans 5:2 uses “stand” in a similar way: “this grace wherein we stand.”

A *field* denotes a domain or area of activity or interest. During the second phase of the integration process, the disciples’ *field of magic* is their own personality, because, in Bailey words, “the seventh ray disciple ... begins, however, with himself, and seeks to bring into expression the plan of his soul in his own setting and worldly situation.”<sup>70</sup> In particular, Bailey says, “The student of magic aims, above all, to purify his desires.”<sup>71</sup> Purification of desires entails cleansing the subconscious nature, because the latter includes, in Bailey’s words, “all the unformulated wishes and urges which drive a man into activity, plus the suppressed and unrecognised desires, and the unexpressed ideas which are present, though unrealized.”<sup>72</sup> The transmutation technique provides instructions on cleansing the subconscious nature, so it treats this nature as its field of magic.

*I apply the rule of just being the observer, permitting the soul to reveal what it will of the content within my subconscious nature* (“I know some rules”). The seventh-ray technique uses the language of ceremonial magic. Manly

Hall (1901 – 1990), an esoteric philosopher, gives this definition: “Ceremonial magic is the ancient art of invoking and controlling spirits by a scientific application of certain formulae.”<sup>73</sup> In the second sentence of the second paragraph, “rules” precede “controls,” which suggests that the “rules” are for invoking spirits and the “controls” are for controlling the spirits that are invoked. The Bible sometimes associates spirits with negative emotions, such as “anguish of spirit” (Exodus 6:9), “vexation of spirit” (Ecclesiastes 1:14), and “spirit of fear” (2 Timothy 1:7). In the context of the transmutation technique, the spirits that the disciple needs to invoke

are his or her own suppressed negative emotions.

Cedercrans gives the rule for invoking suppressed negative emotions: “The disciple ... then becomes the observer, permitting (not demanding, but permitting) the Soul to reveal what it will of the content within the subconscious.”<sup>74</sup> Bailey describes the same rule in the following way: “Depend upon the unalterable tendency of the subconscious nature to penetrate to the surface of consciousness as a reflex activity in the establishing of continuity of consciousness. This reflex activity of the lower nature corresponds to the development of continuity between the superconscious and the consciousness.”<sup>75</sup> Here, “continuity” is equivalent to alignment, “the superconscious” to the soul, and “the consciousness” to the observing self.

*By applying the Law of Love, I transmute whatever suppressed negative emotions that are revealed* (“some magical controls”). Bailey mentions “The Law of Love, whereby the lower desire nature is transmuted,”<sup>76</sup> and gives this summary of the law: “Let a man so live that his life is harmless.”<sup>77</sup> Cedercrans also says to “Transmute whatever negativity is revealed into its polar opposite via the application of

**A man does not anchor a concept of truth, he does not become that truth, until he proceeds as if he were that truth, until he puts it into action ... Focus your consciousness in the highest understanding of truth which you can attain, and apply that truth in relation to others.**

Love,”<sup>78</sup> and gives this illustration of the disciple’s effort:

He then becomes aware of an emotion. Let us say it is an intense resentment of some person known during childhood. The original resentment manifests now in his adult life toward anyone who is in a position of authority. This is revealed with sudden clarity.

He then transmutes the negative force by realizing and projecting love to:

- a. himself as a child
- b. the person originally involved
- c. the original situation
- d. and all persons who are in positions of authority anywhere in the world.<sup>79</sup>

*I enunciate words, with the full purpose of the will, to facilitate the foregoing revealing and transmuting process* (“some Words of Power”). Bailey defines a “Word of Power” as “enunciated sound ... with the full purpose of the will behind it.”<sup>80</sup> Cedercrans suggests the use of the following affirmation, in which the term *instrument* denotes the personality:

The Light of the Soul is thrown downward into the instrument to reveal, cleanse, and purify that which is karmically ready to be brought to Light in Divine Law and Order. I stand clear, observing only.<sup>81</sup>

*As the final step in the transmutation technique, I apply my highest vision of truth in relation to others, so that my subconscious nature transmutes this vision into itself* (“some forces which I can direct”). Cedercrans describes the final step in the transmutation technique: “Spend a few moments radiating the Light of Truth through the instrument and into the environment.”<sup>82</sup> This article’s approach for deciphering the symbols in the seventh-ray technique is to identify and then apply Cedercrans’ associated statements; but here her associated statement is also symbolic, so it needs to be deciphered. Elsewhere she gives this explanation:

A man does not anchor a concept of truth, he does not become that truth, until he

proceeds as if he were that truth, until he puts it into action ... Focus your consciousness in the highest understanding of truth which you can attain, and apply that truth in relation to others.<sup>83</sup>

Accordingly, “radiating the Light of Truth through the instrument and into the environment” is construed as applying the highest vision of truth in relation to others. Such application directs the forces of the subconscious nature, as Cedercrans also explains:

Part of expansion of consciousness is arrived at by superseding the limitations that the subconscious has accepted as factual or necessary. The minute you supersede a limitation, the minute you demonstrate through intelligent activity the truth you have grasped on mental levels, it is embodied by the subconsciousness and it transmutes it into itself.<sup>84</sup>

Bailey gives a similar account: “The present vision must become the past experience. Its light of revelation will fade out as the experience becomes a habit, and therefore falls below the threshold of consciousness.”<sup>85</sup> Thus, in the seventh-ray technique, “some forces which I can direct” refer to both the disciple’s highest vision of truth and subconscious nature.

*I, assuming the attitude of the observer, learn what my emotional nature will do in response to external conditions* (“What shall I do?”). This question depicts the first step in the second subsidiary technique, which has the purpose of observing and removing negative emotional habits. If the “I” is taken as the disciple’s emotional nature, then the question “What shall I do?” depicts the disciple’s attitude of the observer, because it reflects the disciple’s effort to observe what his or her emotional nature will do in response to various external conditions. Cedercrans gives this description:

Establish the Attitude of the Observer:

Lift yourself out of the emotional nature. Realize that it is a distinct aspect of your personality, and that it will continue its usual activities without your help. Just sit back and watch it react to conditions. Ob-

serve its habits, its sudden storms, its likes, its dislikes. Keep completely apart from this sudden strange aspect of yourself, and learn through observation its purpose, and, eventually, how it can be controlled.<sup>86</sup>

Bailey gives a similar description: “the task of the disciple is to become consciously aware—like a detached onlooking Observer—of these energies and their expressing qualities as they function within himself.”<sup>87</sup>

*I see that there is danger from being tempted to pursue my own separative goals, which is black magic (“Danger there is”). Cedercrans describes this danger:*

The man suddenly realizes that he is a creator, that by a simple manipulation of Will and Intelligence, he can produce what-so-ever form he will choose. Consider the effect upon the subconscious wish-life, upon the past ambitions and dreams which have yet to be fulfilled, upon the sense of ego itself. It is easy to renounce ambitions and desires which have little hope of fulfillment insofar as the consciousness is concerned. But what of the moment when that consciousness realizes that it *can* carry out any course of action, any ambition or desire it may choose, when the world is offered as its toy, its pleasure?<sup>88</sup>

Bailey also describes this danger:

If the man concerned is materially minded, selfishly ambitious and unloving, the inpouring energy will stimulate the personality nature and he will immediately be warring furiously with all that we mean by the instinctual, psychic, intellectual nature. When all these three are stimulated, the disciple is often for a time swung off the centre into a maelstrom of magical work of the lower kind—sex magic and many forms of black magic.<sup>89</sup>

*I have undertaken the task of manifesting the divine plan, which is white magic, but this task is not easy to accomplish because it entails perceiving an abstract vision of the plan (“The task that I have undertaken is not easy of accomplishment”). Here, the “task” is what the technique’s first paragraph calls to “fashion*

thus a form for God,” which is interpreted as manifesting the divine plan. Why is this task not easy to accomplish? Cedercrans says that the disciple must perceive an abstract vision of the divine plan:

The disciple in the Hierarchy is not permitted by Law to build the forms that will carry the Divine Plan into manifestation. The disciple in the Hierarchy can give that Plan an abstract form, but its birth in the three worlds depends upon the ability of the disciple in the body of humanity to grasp that abstraction, to embody it, and to give it concrete form.<sup>90</sup>

In the above quotation, “the disciple in the Hierarchy” denotes a Master of the Wisdom, because Cedercrans mentions “the Hierarchy of Masters.”<sup>91</sup> Given that the word *disciple* literally means “a learner,” Cedercrans’ use of this word indicates that even Masters are learning how to expand their consciousness. Bailey has a similar perspective:

The point reached by a Master is high, but only relatively so, and you must not forget that when attained by Him it seems low indeed, for He measures it up with the vista expanding before Him. Each expansion of consciousness, each step upon the ladder, but opens before the Initiate another sphere to be embraced, and another step ahead to be taken.<sup>92</sup>

*Yet my glamour of personal potency hinders that perception (“yet I love power”).* The word *yet* can mean “in spite of that,” which suggests that its clause portrays the disciple’s recognition of a hindrance. Bailey gives this definition: “*The Problem of Glamour* is found when the mental illusion is intensified by desire.”<sup>93</sup> If “love” signifies desire, which is one of its standard meanings, and if “power” signifies the mental illusion of personal potency, then “I love power” signifies the disciple’s recognition of the glamour of personal potency. Cedercrans mentions this glamour: “the glamour of power insofar as the self is concerned.”<sup>94</sup> Bailey considers this glamour to be a seventh-ray characteristic: “the seventh ray worker ... is glamoured by the beauty of his motive, and deceived by the acquired potency

of his personality.”<sup>95</sup> Bailey also describes what the worker must do to perceive an abstract vision of the divine plan: “the intelligent recognition of what is to be revealed ... requires on his part a definite emergence from the world of glamour so that there can be a clear perception of the new vision.”<sup>96</sup> Accordingly, the glamour of personal potency hinders that perception.

*I recognize the presence of this glamour’s differentiations: glamour of the emerging manifested forces (“I love to see the forms emerge”), glamour of the relation of the opposites (“created by my mind”), glamour of magical work (“and do their work”), glamour of that which brings together (“fulfill the plan”), and glamour of the subterranean powers (“and disappear”).* According to Bailey, the glammers depicted in this sentence are all related to the Seventh Ray. Moreover, these glammers are actually differentiations, or subcategories, of the glamour of personal potency, which was mentioned in the preceding sentence. Thus the present sentence represents the culminating step of self-observation, because the disciple is portrayed as observing his or her emotional nature with extreme care and discrimination.

Cedercrans describes a similar step of self-observation:

The probationer disciple observes all of his activities, noting the particular form each one tends to take, recognizing, for example, the form his thought takes in speech, in feeling, and in deed. He sees his own thought portrayed in form, notes the quality of the thought via the clarity and the desirability of the forms used to portray it.<sup>97</sup>

*I can, through my own effort, initiate new growth and create my own fate (“I can create”).* Cedercrans describes the disciple’s sudden grasp of this realization:

Now, suddenly, he discovers that he can, through his own effort, initiate a new growth and development! He can conceive a goal of spiritual maturity within himself, and initiate the experiences which will produce an embodiment of that goal ... No longer is he hampered by fate or karma, for

he has reached that place wherein he sees himself as the creator of his own fate. Via the creative process of thought, he can become that which he would be.<sup>98</sup>

This realization is important, because, in Bailey’s words, “all progress must be self-induced, self-initiated, and be the result of an inner activity.”<sup>99</sup>

*I know the rhythms of the soul-infused personality, including harmlessness in the mental body, serenity in the emotional body, and right action in the physical body (“The rituals of the Temple of the Lord are known to me”).* “Rituals” are rhythms, because Bailey makes that association: “One of the first lessons that humanity will learn under the potent influence of the seventh ray is that the soul controls its instrument, the personality, through ritual, or through the imposition of a regular rhythm, for rhythm is what really designates a ritual.”<sup>100</sup>

Cedercrans gives this explanation:

We speak of rhythms, responses, patterns. Contemplate the fact that everything that lives, everything that is, has its own particular movement, it moves in its world of affairs. It moves in a particular rhythm, according to its responses, and so forms particular patterns of activity.<sup>101</sup>

The “Lord” is taken as the soul, because Bailey says, “The soul is a Lord of love and wisdom.”<sup>102</sup> A *temple* can be defined as “any place or object when God dwells within it,” so “the Temple of the Lord” is taken as the personality when the soul dwells within it. Such a temple is sometimes called “the soul-infused personality.”<sup>103</sup> Cedercrans’ describes the rhythms of the soul-infused personality:

The inner thought-life gradually undergoes a transformation which eliminates negativity and the nonessentials, to build in those thought-patterns which characterize the Soul-infused persona. The emotional life assumes an attitude of serenity and radiatory Love; while the physical body, from the cellular structure to the whole vehicle itself, is galvanized into right action. During this rebuilding process, the aspirant endeavors to practice harmlessness. He lifts the vibra-

tory frequency of his bodies via a strict disciplinary training, which has to do largely with his attitude toward others, and so becomes harmless in thought, word, and deed.<sup>104</sup>

Consequently, the rhythms of the soul-infused personality include harmlessness in the mental body, serenity in the emotional body, and right action in the physical body. After learning the nature of these newer rhythms, the disciple's next step is to find a way of expressing them, so that the older rhythms die out entirely.

*I align myself with the soul by turning my attention to it, and then invoke its guidance* ("How shall I work?"). This question depicts the final step in the second subsidiary technique. If the "I" is taken as the disciple's focused consciousness, and if the question "How shall I work?" is addressed to the soul, then the disciple has become aligned with the soul by turning his or her attention to it, and the question's words depict the disciple's invocation of the soul's guidance. Cedercrans provides the following instructions for this effort of meditation:

Align yourself with the Soul by turning your attention to the concept of a Soul. Spend a few moments in silent contemplation of being aligned with your Higher Self via the medium of mental substance.

You are now ready to enter into communication with the Soul, to contact it via a seed-thought. The mind is given a thought which quickens its vibratory frequency in such a manner as to span the distance in awareness between the persona focussed in the mental nature and the Overshadowing Soul. Let your first seed-thought be that of "dedication." *"I, the personality, dedicate my consciousness and my bodies to the Soul."*

Just so long as the mind is speaking, it is closed to communion with the Soul. It must become quiet, attentive, alert. The seed-thought is dropped as words. The energy of the thought remains as a line of contact (a bridge in mental substance) and needs no repetition. The mind is still, attentive, re-

ceptive. When the moment of absolute silence has come, the Soul makes itself known.<sup>105</sup>

## Light

**B**ecause of their crisis of evocation, the disciples initiate an on-going meditation practice that evokes the soul's guidance, as depicted in the last sentence of the technique's second paragraph. Eventually, they enter the phase of *light* and see clearly the changes that they need to make in their direction, method, and attitude. The technique's third paragraph treats this phase, and consists of eight sequential disciplines that are evoked during the meditation practice. The third paragraph is written with the second-person grammatical perspective, so each discipline is in the form of an injunction from the soul.

*Become polarized in the mental body by overcoming the distractions of your emotional nature* ("Love not the work"). To "love ... the work" encompasses two kinds of desire: desire to perform magical work, and desire for its effects. As discussed earlier, magical work entails formulating a thought-form and then manifesting that thought-form in the physical world. Desired effects of magical work might include pride from viewing a manifestation as a triumph. The first discipline, which is to "love not the work," entails overcoming the desires associated with magical work, and it might be difficult to apply, because *all* of the glammers listed in the preceding section are desires associated with magical work.

As Cedercrans explains, the purpose of the first discipline is to achieve mental polarization:

Only from the mind is it possible to direct one's life and affairs according to a predetermined plan. Thus, mental polarization becomes the first major goal toward which the student strives ... What is it that distracts a man or woman from mental polarization? Their emotional nature, of course—that which constitutes the sum total of their desires, their basic feelings and the evaluations based upon those feelings, and their built-in emotional response mechanism.<sup>106</sup>

Bailey gives similar instruction: “Polarise yourself consciously upon the mental plane, tuning out all lower vibrations and reactions.”<sup>107</sup>

Before the remainder of the third paragraph is addressed, it may be helpful to provide some background information. In her book, *Esoteric Psychology*, volume II, Bailey presents what she calls the “Seven Laws of Soul or Group Life,” but admits that her presentation is “difficult and controversial.”<sup>108</sup> She does, however, give the following clue regarding her presentation: “The thread which will guide us out of the bewildering maze of thought into which we must perforce enter, is the golden one of *group* love, *group* understanding, *group* relations and *group* conduct.”<sup>109</sup>

In her book, *Creative Thinking*, Cedercrans presents a somewhat lucid description of what she calls the “seven Divine Laws and Energies of Cosmic Love,” and gives this clue: “These seven are also known as the seven rays and ... we shall consider them from a somewhat different path of approach, formulating their practical application as techniques by which the sincere student may begin to embody love.”<sup>110</sup> Although their presentations are quite different, both Bailey and Cedercrans seem to be describing the same set of laws in the same order, so Cedercrans again appears to clarify Bailey’s earlier material. Instructions on how to implement these seven laws are given as the remaining seven disciplines depicted in the third paragraph, as discussed next.

*Let your devotion to the divine plan invoke group love into your life* (“Let love of God’s eternal Plan control your life”). Cedercrans presents the first law as saying in effect, “The Power of God may be invoked into manifestation via the focused Will to Love.”<sup>111</sup> Here, the “Power of God” is taken as group love, because Bailey says, “*Group love* is ... the motivating power of the Masters of the Wisdom”;<sup>112</sup> and the “focused Will to Love” is taken as the will to be devoted to the divine plan, because Cedercrans says, “The modern probationer must learn to direct his devotion to the Plan, rather than the focal points through which the Plan is brought into relation with

humanity.”<sup>113</sup> In her discussion of the first law, Bailey explains what devotion to the divine plan entails: “The willingness to sacrifice the lesser when the greater is sensed ... The spontaneous relinquishing of long-held ideals when a greater and more inclusive presents itself ... The sacrifice of pride and the sacrifice of personality when the vastness of the work and the urgency of the need are realized.”<sup>114</sup>

*Let the group love in your mind produce right understanding or wisdom* (“Let love of God’s eternal Plan control ... your mind”). Cedercrans presents the second law as saying in effect, “The energy of Love in the Mind produces right understanding or Wisdom.”<sup>115</sup> In her discussion of the second law, Bailey describes the effect if all of the aspiring groups in the world were to apply it: “light and inspiration and spiritual revelation can be released in such a flood of power that it will work definite changes in the human consciousness.”<sup>116</sup>

*Let your group love impulse and carry out a planned activity of service, which manifests some fragment of the divine plan for humanity* (“Let love of God’s eternal Plan control ... your hand”). Bailey says, “Let the disciple learn the use of the hand in service,”<sup>117</sup> and “the root meaning of the word ‘manifestation’ ... comes from two Latin words, meaning ‘to touch or handle by the hand’ (*manus*, the hand, and *fendere*, to touch),”<sup>118</sup> so the word “hand” connotes both service and physical manifestation. Cedercrans presents the third law as saying in effect, “A planned activity of service impelled by love and carried out in Love results in the manifestation of some fragment of the Divine Plan for Humanity.”<sup>119</sup> In her discussion of the third law, Bailey says: “This unfolding of what we might call ‘the consciousness of the heart’ or the development of true feeling ... is the quality which leads to service.”<sup>120</sup> Group love is “the consciousness of the heart,” so Cedercrans’ comment is similar to Bailey’s.

*Let your ajna center, which is like a third eye, direct the radiation of your group love into the mental, emotional, and physical planes, thereby transmuting darkness into light, ignorance into wisdom, and discord into harmony* (“Let

love of God's eternal Plan control ... your eye"). Here, "eye" is taken as the ajna center, because Bailey mentions "the ajna centre, which is like a third eye or directing agent for the blended and fused energies of the personality."<sup>121</sup> Cedercrans presents the fourth law as saying in effect, "The radiation of Love in the three planes of human endeavor transmutes darkness into Light, ignorance into Wisdom, and discord into harmony."<sup>122</sup> In regard to the fourth law, Bailey makes a similar but more abstruse comment: "When in active expression, it causes an active scattering or rejection of the aspects of form life."<sup>123</sup>

*Let your group love be formulated into concrete science and knowledge, which bring into being a new state of consciousness and a new physical manifestation* ("Work towards the unity of plan and purpose which must find its lasting place on earth"). Cedercrans presents the fifth law as saying in effect, "When Divine Love is formulated into concrete science and knowledge, a new heaven and a new earth shall come into being."<sup>124</sup> This statement of the fifth law is consistent with the technique's injunction, if "plan" is construed as the concrete formulation of love's abstract "purpose."

Cedercrans' statement alludes to Revelation 21:1: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." "A new heaven" is taken as a new state of consciousness, and "a new earth" as a new physical manifestation. Cedercrans explains the relationship between these two polarities:

Cause is now, and it is a state of consciousness. Never is a past circumstance the cause of a present or future manifestation. Both are effects of a state of consciousness. You ... attribute present manifesting conditions to past manifested conditions, failing to re-

alize that you create each situation as it occurs. Cause and effect are simultaneous, they are co-existent and cannot be separated.<sup>125</sup>

In her discussion of the fifth law, Bailey says, "He [the server] can cast the search-light of the mind into the world of the soul, and know and recognise those truths which must, for him, become his experienced knowledge ... Some forms of creative activity must likewise be found and the server must be active along some humanitarian, artistic, literary, philosophic or scientific lines."<sup>126</sup> Here, "know and recognize those truths" indicates the formulation of concrete science and knowledge; "become his experienced knowledge" indicates bringing into

being a new state of consciousness; and "be active along some humanitarian, artistic, literary, philosophic or scientific lines" indicates bringing into being a new physical manifestation. Thus Bailey's discussion of the fifth law is consistent with Cedercrans' statement of it.

*Let your group love be expanded by recognizing the Christ Principle indwelling everyone, which is work in behalf of the divine plan* ("Work with the Plan"). Cedercrans presents the sixth law as saying in effect, "The Christ shall reappear when humanity recognizes the Christ Principle indwelling everyone."<sup>127</sup> This formulation is consistent with the technique's injunction, "Work with the Plan," because Cedercrans also says, "regarding the Reappearance of the Christ ... it is for this event that each one who is dedicated to serve the Plan now works."<sup>128</sup>

In her brief commentary on the sixth law, Bailey provides this clue: "The disciple and the initiate can dimly begin to recognise the effect of the sixth and the seventh laws, but no one else at this time ... because only those who are

**It is easy to renounce ambitions and desires which have little hope of fulfillment insofar as the consciousness is concerned. But what of the moment when that consciousness realizes that it can carry out any course of action, any ambition or desire it may choose, when the world is offered as its toy, its pleasure.**

initiated or in preparation for initiation can begin to understand them.”<sup>129</sup> Thus, to recognize the effects of the sixth and seventh laws, one must have developed one’s corresponding inner abilities. Bailey describes the inner ability that is relevant for the sixth law: “*Spiritual vision or true perception ... opens up the world of the intuitional or buddhic plane, and takes its possessor beyond the abstract levels of the mental plane.*”<sup>130</sup> Recognizing the Christ Principle entails spiritual vision, because Bailey speaks of “the buddhic or Christ principle,”<sup>131</sup> implying that the Christ Principle exists on the buddhic plane.

*Let activity be initiated towards achieving a higher alignment, so that you cooperate with the Law of Evolution to reach the next phase of your spiritual development* (“focus upon your share in that great work”). Cedercrans presents the seventh law as saying in effect, “Through the initiation of a planned activity of growth, human beings may cooperate with the Law of Evolution to reach a desired goal of spiritual development.”<sup>132</sup> In her discussion of the seventh law, Bailey makes a related comment:

The peace which lies ahead of the race is the peace of serenity and of joy—a serenity, based upon spiritual understanding; and a joy which is untouched by circumstance. This joy and serenity is not an astral condition but a soul reaction. These qualities are not achieved as the result of disciplining the emotional nature, but demonstrate as a natural, automatic reaction of the soul. This is the reward of a definitely achieved alignment.<sup>133</sup>

This comment suggests that “a definitely achieved alignment” is attained during the next phase of spiritual development, so the inner ability that is relevant for the seventh law is the readiness to initiate activity towards achieving this higher alignment.

## Revelation

When the disciples enter the fourth phase, they receive the *revelation* of the path and what they need to do in connection with it. Each disciple receives the revelation of only his or her next step ahead, which, when taken,

enables the subsequent step to be revealed. This phase is treated in the initial portion of the technique’s fourth paragraph, which continues with the second-person grammatical perspective.

*Let each step of your way be revealed by an intuition that goes forth from soul to personality* (“*The word goes forth from soul to form*”). Cedercrans mentions “the intuitive faculty of the Soul,”<sup>134</sup> and Bailey mentions “the intuitions which are sent to you from your soul,”<sup>135</sup> so “*the word*” is an intuition that goes forth from the soul. Bailey speaks of “the personality or form,”<sup>136</sup> showing that she uses these two terms as synonyms. The implication is that, at the beginning of the fourth phase, the disciple has to learn to replace external authorities with the inner authority of the soul, as Bailey explains:

He has to learn to do the right thing as he sees and knows it, irrespective of the opinion of earth’s greatest and most quoted. He must depend upon himself and upon the conclusions he himself has come to in his moments of spiritual communion and illumination.<sup>137</sup>

*Focus your consciousness in the causal body, which is located on the abstract levels of the mental plane within the world of ideas* (“Stand in the centre of the pentagram, drawn upon that high place in the East within the light which ever shines”). A *pentagram* is a five-pointed star that has been assigned various symbolic meanings. For example, Eliphas Levi (1810 – 1875), an early occult author, says, “The pentagram is the figure of the human body, having the four limbs, and a single point representing the head.”<sup>138</sup> Richard Webster, a contemporary occult author, says, “Because it is drawn in a continuous line, the pentagram also represents the interconnectedness of everything in the universe.”<sup>139</sup>

What is the meaning of the pentagram in the context of the technique’s fourth paragraph, which says to “Stand in the centre of the pentagram”? Bruce Lyon, a contemporary writer in the theosophical tradition, asserts, “The pentagram is the causal body,” but he does not give any supporting argument.<sup>140</sup> What is the

*causal body*? I. K. Taimni (1898 – 1978), a theosophical writer, says, “The first function of the Causal body is that it serves as the organ of abstract thought,” and refers to the mental body, or mind, as “the vehicle of concrete thoughts.”<sup>141</sup> Bailey says, “The content of the causal body is the accumulation by slow and gradual process of the good in each life,”<sup>142</sup> so the causal body evolves over time. We agree with Lyon’s assertion that the pentagram symbolizes the causal body, and provide three supporting arguments.

First, Cedercrans lists the bodies of a human being in the following order: “Causal Body, Mental Body, Astral Body, Etheric Body, and Periphery or Physical Appearance.”<sup>143</sup> Thus the causal body is the fifth body encountered when going from the physical appearance to the inner worlds. Accordingly, the pentagram symbolizes the causal body, because the number of points in the pentagram represents the position, or rank, of the causal body in the sequential order of bodies.

As another example of this kind of symbolic significance, Bailey’s mentions “the square representing humanity, the fourth kingdom in nature.”<sup>144</sup> Here, the first, second, and third kingdoms are said to be the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, respectively.<sup>145</sup> Thus the square symbolizes humanity, because the number of points in the square represents the position of humanity in the sequential order of kingdoms.

Second, Cedercrans writes,

Focused into and through the causal body are the five dominating Rays that constitute the equipment of the Soul; the Ray upon which the Soul is found, the three sub-rays upon which the three vehicles are found, and the sub-ray that constitutes the way of least resistance for the integration of the three-fold personality.<sup>146</sup>

Accordingly, the pentagram symbolizes the causal body, because the pentagram’s five points represent the “five dominating Rays” that are focused into and through the causal body.

Cedercrans’ foregoing description of the “five dominating Rays” is similar to, and is clarified by, Bailey’s related description of what she calls the “five controlling rays.”<sup>147</sup> Bailey speaks of “the soul or egoic ray,”<sup>148</sup> and says, “the personality ray is always a subray of the egoic ray,”<sup>149</sup> so she agrees that the personality ray, which constitutes the way of least resistance for integrating the personality, is a sub-ray of the soul ray. In addition, Bailey writes, “Eventually, the soul ray or influence becomes the dominating factor, and the rays of the lower bodies become the sub-rays of this controlling ray.”<sup>150</sup> Although Cedercrans seems to identify the rays of the lower bodies as sub-rays of the soul ray, Bailey indicates that such a condition happens only when the soul ray is the dominating factor.

Third, Cedercrans describes the stage in which “The polarization will have shifted into the causal body and from here the Soul will utilize the three lower vehicles as instruments of contact within its sphere of service.”<sup>151</sup> Bailey also describes this stage: “He [the disciple] must learn to contact the lower mind simply as an instrument whereby he can reach the higher, and thus transcend it, until he becomes polarized in the causal body. Then, through the medium of the causal body, he links up with the abstract levels.”<sup>152</sup> The third paragraph of the seventh-ray technique gives instruction on becoming polarized in the mental body, so one might expect that the fourth, and final, paragraph gives instruction on becoming polarized in the causal body, because that is the next alignment to be achieved on what could be called the “Upward Way.”<sup>153</sup> Accordingly, “Stand in the centre of the pentagram” has this meaning: focus your consciousness in the causal body.

The *East* is the direction from which light comes from the sun during sunrise. The sun can be a symbol of the soul, such as in Malachi 4:2: “But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings.” Thus “the East” can symbolize the direction from which light comes from the soul, such as in Ezekiel 43:2: “And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east.” Consequently, in the tech-

nique, “that high place in the East” is given this meaning: the place through which light comes from the soul.

The mental plane is said to comprise seven subplanes that fall into two groups: the lowest four subplanes are the concrete, or form, levels; the highest three subplanes are the abstract, or formless, levels.<sup>154</sup> Cedercrans says, “He [the disciple] goes above and beyond the vibratory frequency of race mind consciousness, even in its highest concept, to the abstract plane of ideas where he will sense, at first, the feeble impulse of the new law as it emanates from the Soul on its own plane of existence.”<sup>155</sup> Accordingly, the abstract levels of the mental plane constitute the place through which light comes from the soul. Bailey corroborates this analysis by mentioning “the causal body on the abstract levels of the mental plane,”<sup>156</sup> so “drawn upon that high place in the East” has this meaning: located on the abstract levels of the mental plane.

*Light* can be a symbol of spiritual or intellectual illumination. Cedercrans mentions “the world of ideas, of abstract reality,” and says, “As human beings begin to use their mental body, they develop what we call the intuitive faculty. Their own consciousness bridges the gap between the mental plane and the overshadowing world of ideas.”<sup>157</sup> Bailey also mentions obtaining illumination by “penetrating into the world of ideas and of abstract truth.”<sup>158</sup> Thus, “the light which ever shines” is taken as the world of ideas, because this world conveys illumination and is always available to human beings.

*After the causal body has been illumined by a new idea, work from the causal body to formulate concrete thoughts that embody the abstract meaning of the idea* (“From that illumined centre work”). Cedercrans gives this explanation, using the term *instrument* to represent the mental body:

Now you must put that mental body to work; use it as your instrument. Don't let it use you. Remember that within it are many forms, some of which will be in direct conflict with the Truth you have intuited, many which would distort and twist your abstrac-

tion into such a form that even you would fail to understand it, and your moment of intuitive perception would be lost even to yourself.

At this point the disciple must pause, get a firm grasp of the abstraction, hang on to it, so to speak, until its vibration is so strong as to set into motion the form-making substance of the mental body. In this manner, the abstraction creates its own form according to the type, strength, and quality of its vibration.<sup>159</sup>

Bailey also describes these steps:

Ideas, when intuitively contacted by the disciple or initiate, ... must be brought consciously down to abstract levels of thinking where (expressing it symbolically) they form the blueprints, prior to the institution of the creative process which will give them phenomenal existence and being. I would have you, therefore, remember the three factors: 1. *The Intuition* which contacts and reveals new ideas. 2. *The Abstract World* in which they are given form and substance and which is to the thoughtform eventually created what the etheric body is to the dense physical vehicle. 3. *Concrete Thought* producing the concretising of the thoughtform and thus making the idea available to mankind.<sup>160</sup>

*Stabilize your consciousness in the causal body, which wards off the danger of misinterpretation from emotional levels* (“Leave not the pentagram”). In ceremonial magic, the pentagram is used as an apotropaic symbol, which means that it is intended to ward off evil. For example, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749 – 1832), a German writer and statesman, in his *Faust* (1808) describes a pentagram as preventing Mephistopheles, who is a demon featured in German folklore, from leaving a room:

*Mephistopheles*—“To tell the truth, I can't leave, there's a little obstacle: the swan-foot-print of the incubus on your threshold.”

*Faust*—“So the pentagram's giving you trouble?”<sup>161</sup>

Bailey also refers to the apotropaic property of the pentagram: “stand in the East, within the protection of the pentagram.”<sup>162</sup> Consequently, there is a fourth argument that supports the assertion that the pentagram represents the causal body: the pentagram’s significance of being an apotropaic symbol is fulfilled by the causal body, because staying in the causal body wards off the danger of misinterpretation from emotional levels. Cedercrans gives the following explanation:

There is another point of danger here in regard to misinterpretation, and that is from astral levels. The abstraction which has been intuited not only sets up a vibration in the mental body, but as it makes its impact upon the astral vehicle, that vehicle too will begin to vibrate. See to it that it vibrates to the abstraction and not to conflict between that which is intuited and an old form within itself. Should this occur, the truth will take on astral glamour, and be of no use to those whom the disciple seeks to serve. Again, the answer is a poised consciousness held above and in control of the instrument.<sup>163</sup>

Here, “a poised consciousness held above and in control of the instrument” is equivalent to a consciousness stabilized in the causal body, because the term *instrument* denotes the mental body, as shown by a previous quotation.

Bailey mentions “the aligning of the three vehicles, the physical, the emotional, and the lower mind body, within the causal periphery, and their stabilizing there by an effort of the will.”<sup>164</sup> According to this quotation, after the physical, emotional, and mental bodies are aligned with the causal body, a subsequent step is needed to stabilize that alignment. This step is depicted by the technique’s instruction, “Leave not the pentagram,” and it appears to be lengthy, because, in Bailey’s words, “by strenuous meditation, and the faculty of one-pointed application to the duty in hand (which is after all the fruit of meditation worked out in daily living) will come the increased faculty to hold steadily the higher vibration.”<sup>165</sup> By fulfilling this step, however, the disciples com-

plete the fourth phase of the integration process.

## Integration

*Integration* is the fifth and final phase of the integration process. This phase refers to uniting personality with soul so that they act in unison and function as a single organism. The technique’s final two sentences, which continue with the second-person perspective, provide the seventh-ray pattern for this phase.

*Be stabilized in the causal body, while preserving soul consciousness and directing the personality’s activity, until you perceive an abstract vision of the divine plan* (“Stand steady in the midst”). The personality spans the physical plane, emotional plane, and the concrete levels of the mental plane. The causal body is located on the abstract levels of the mental plane, as mentioned earlier. Where is the soul located? Cedercrans writes about “the Buddhic sphere, the natural habitat of the Soul,”<sup>166</sup> referring to the buddhic plane, which is the plane just above the mental plane. Consequently, the word “midst” denotes the causal body, because it occupies the middle position between the personality and soul. Bailey corroborates this analysis by writing, “For the advanced disciple and the initiate, the midway spot is the causal body.”<sup>167</sup>

At the beginning of the fourth phase, the instruction is to “Stand in the centre of the pentagram,” which means to focus consciousness in the causal body. At the beginning of the fifth phase, the instruction is to “Stand steady in the midst,” which means to stabilize consciousness in the causal body. The word “midst,” however, suggests an additional effort: to preserve awareness that the causal body is the middle factor, which means to preserve awareness of the higher and lower factors—namely, the soul and personality. Accordingly, “Stand steady in the midst” tells the disciple to be stabilized in the causal body while preserving soul consciousness and directing the personality’s activity. Bailey corroborates this analysis:

This particular technique of meditation ... demands the ability to focus the conscious-

ness in the soul form, the spiritual body, and, at the same time, to preserve soul consciousness, mind consciousness and brain consciousness—no easy task for the neophyte and something which lies far ahead for the majority of students who read these words.<sup>168</sup>

Here, “spiritual body” is a synonym for causal body,<sup>169</sup> and preserving “mind consciousness and brain consciousness” permits directing the personality’s activity.<sup>170</sup> Cedercrans provides the following instruction for the disciple’s effort:

Remembering that his Overshadowing Soul is in meditation deep, he endeavors to lift his frequency and so align himself that an interplay of energy is set up between himself in meditation, and his Soul in meditation.

The first seed thought the student uses with this meditation form is that of identity. He identifies as Soul, realizing that he is an extension of the Overshadowing Spiritual Soul. He is both incarnate in form, and above, free of form. *“And having pervaded this instrument with a bit of myself, I remain. I am.”*

With as full a realization of this seed thought as is possible, he awaits the “touch” of the Soul ... After having received the “touch” or impact, he then formulates it into concrete knowledge, relating it to himself and his environment. Here the Plan for his instrument (disciplines to be exercised, qualities to be built in, etc.) and the Plan of service to his environment (relationship of Soul identification to environment) are formulated.<sup>171</sup>

In this quotation, the “‘touch’ of the Soul” must be an abstract vision of the divine plan, because the disciple subsequently “formulates it into concrete knowledge” of the “Plan.”

*Then work from what is without, beginning at the point of external need, to what is within, ending at the discovery of its subjective causes* (“Then draw a line from that which is without to that which is within”). Cedercrans gives a short explanation: “First, what is the path of

approach to the fulfillment of any need? It is from without, beginning at its point of outer manifestation, to within, ending at its point of origin, its cause.”<sup>172</sup> This explanation resembles the initial clause in the technique’s last sentence, because it uses the same words (“without” and “within”) and a similar metaphor (“path” instead of “line”). She also gives a more lengthy explanation:

For every physical manifestation there is its etheric, astral, and mental counterpart. It is, then, necessary at first to trace the object or effect to its cause, through these three planes of form manifestation, in order to become acquainted with the mental state of consciousness, the astral condition, and the etheric flow of energies, all three of which are the combined subjective cause of the apparent manifesting form.<sup>173</sup>

Bailey gives a similar account: “Always in the process of arriving at an understanding of nature, the occultist works inwards from the external form in order to discover the sound which created it, or the aggregate of forces which produced the external shape.”<sup>174</sup>

*Finally, work from above downwards, bringing the divine plan into its proper form on mental, emotional, and physical levels* (“and see the Plan take form”). The final clause indicates how to satisfy the various levels of need discovered in the preceding clause, and it depicts movement in a direction that is opposite to that depicted in the preceding clause. Cedercrans gives an explanation using the metaphor of going downward from above:

We then realize the inner reality on Soul levels, finding here our solution; and we proceed to work from above downward, bringing our solution into its proper form on mental, astral, and etheric levels. From there we know that the physical will respond with a manifestation of the perfected form.<sup>175</sup>

Bailey gives a similar explanation but using the metaphor of going outward from the inside: “In creative work, the adept starts on the inside and—knowing the idea which he seeks to embody in form—he utters certain words or

sounds and thus calls in certain forces which produce (through their interplay) a form of some kind.<sup>176</sup>

## Conclusions

The preceding interpretation of Bailey's Technique of Integration for the Seventh Ray is based on Cedercrans' writings and is recapitulated as follows:

*I seek to bring my will and mind together. By maintaining the polar relationship, which is between my will and mind, I create a thought-form; and by maintaining the triangular relationship, which is among my will, mind, and thought-form, I manifest the thought-form in the physical plane. Shall I work with cause or with effects? Shall I emphasize the betterment of humanity as a whole, or my own separative goals? My will carries a purpose that is above and beyond my personal self, because it is impressed with a divine intent. The physical plane contains my handiwork, perhaps as music, art, literature, or inventions. The power of my thought produces physical forms by means of physical-plane activity, etheric substance, and desire. Can I relate these factors and thus manifest the divine plan? Toward what objective shall I send my thought as a spoken word, which causes a manifestation in time and space?*

*I, applying the transmutation technique, am focused at the ajna center, which is the etheric center between the eyes; am aligned with the soul via my aspiration to it; and am also aligned with my subconscious nature via my recognition of its existence. I apply the rule of just being the observer, permitting the soul to reveal what it will of the content within my subconscious nature. By applying the Law of Love, I transmute whatever suppressed negative emotions that are revealed. I enunciate words, with the full purpose of the will, to facilitate the foregoing revealing and transmuting process. As the final step in the transmutation technique, I apply my highest vision of truth in relation to others, so that my subconscious nature transmutes this vision into itself. I, assuming the attitude of the observer, learn what my emotional nature will do in response to external conditions. I see that there is dan-*

*ger from being tempted to pursue my own separative goals, which is black magic. I have undertaken the task of manifesting the divine plan, which is white magic, but this task is not easy to accomplish because it entails perceiving an abstract vision of the plan. Yet my glamour of personal potency hinders that perception. I recognize the presence of this glamour's differentiations: glamour of the emerging manifested forces, glamour of the relation of the opposites, glamour of magical work, glamour of that which brings together, and glamour of the subterranean powers. I can, through my own effort, initiate new growth and create my own fate. I know the rhythms of the soul-infused personality, including harmlessness in the mental body, serenity in the emotional body, and right action in the physical body. I align myself with the soul by turning my attention to it, and then invoke its guidance.*

*Become polarized in the mental body by overcoming the distractions of your emotional nature. Let your devotion to the divine plan invoke group love into your life. Let the group love in your mind produce right understanding or wisdom. Let your group love impulse and carry out a planned activity of service, which manifests some fragment of the divine plan for humanity. Let your ajna center, which is like a third eye, direct the radiation of your group love into the mental, emotional, and physical planes, thereby transmuting darkness into light, ignorance into wisdom, and discord into harmony. Let your group love be formulated into concrete science and knowledge, which bring into being a new state of consciousness and a new physical manifestation. Let your group love be expanded by recognizing the Christ Principle indwelling everyone, which is work in behalf of the divine plan. Let activity be initiated towards achieving a higher alignment, so that you cooperate with the Law of Evolution to reach the next phase of your spiritual development.*

*Let each step of your way be revealed by an intuition that goes forth from soul to personality. Focus your consciousness in the causal body, which is located on the abstract levels of the mental plane within the world of ideas. After the causal body has been illumined by a*

*new idea, work from the causal body to formulate concrete thoughts that embody the abstract meaning of the idea. Stabilize your consciousness in the causal body, which wards off the danger of misinterpretation from emotional levels. Be stabilized in the causal body, while preserving soul consciousness and directing the personality's activity, until you perceive an abstract vision of the divine plan. Then work from what is without, beginning at the point of external need, to what is within, ending at the discovery of its subjective causes. Finally, work from above downwards, bringing the divine plan into its proper form on mental, emotional, and physical levels.*

What is the relationship between Cedercrans' and Bailey's material? Both writers use similar terminology and present methods that are fundamentally the same. Cedercrans appears to build upon Bailey's earlier material, in the sense of clarifying some of Bailey's obscure hints and phrases. For example, Cedercrans' three laws of magic, which are given in this article's section entitled "Alignment," appear to clarify Bailey's related descriptions. Cedercrans' "seven Divine Laws and Energies of Cosmic Love," which are described in the section entitled "Light," appear to clarify Bailey's "Seven Laws of Soul or Group Life."

Moreover, Bailey's Technique of Integration for the Seventh Ray seems to have anticipated the subsequent publication of Cedercrans' material, because every segment of this abstruse technique appears to be clarified by Cedercrans' corresponding passages. For example, the initial portion of the technique's first paragraph seems to fit exactly with Cedercrans' three laws of magic. The initial portion of the technique's second paragraph seems to fit exactly with what Cedercrans calls the "transmutation technique." The latter portion of the technique's third paragraph seems to fit exactly with Cedercrans' presentation of the "seven Divine Laws and Energies of Cosmic Love."

According to earlier quotations, Bailey's material was projected by the Master D.K., whereas Cedercrans' material was projected by the Master R. Nevertheless, in one of Cedercrans'

books, the Master R. is quoted as acknowledging "that triangle of Masters responsible for the creation of this Thoughtform Presentation of the Wisdom—the Master M., the Master D.K., and myself, Master R."<sup>177</sup> According to this acknowledgement, the Master D.K. was involved in the creation of both Bailey's and Cedercrans' materials, which suggests that their materials were created in a coordinated way. As the two preceding paragraphs have shown, there is textual evidence that supports the suggested coordination. Blavatsky referred to Morya (or M.) as "my Master Morya,"<sup>178</sup> so the Master R.'s acknowledgement also suggests that Cedercrans' material is a continuation and extension of both Blavatsky's and Bailey's earlier materials.

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

Let us consider the following hypothesis: Bailey's "Techniques of Integration" for the seven rays depict symbolically the archetypal patterns of integration that disciples are intuitively directed to apply to themselves. This hypothesis can be tested by comparing Bailey's ray techniques with various methods of psychological or spiritual integration that are thought to be inspired. The foregoing demonstration, which shows the similarity between the seventh-ray technique and Cedercrans' writings, supports this hypothesis, because of the evidence that Cedercrans was an inspired writer.

Previous articles show the similarity of the *Bhagavad Gita* to the first-ray technique,<sup>179</sup> the *Second Epistle of Peter* to the second-ray technique,<sup>180</sup> *Epictetus' Discourses* to the third-ray technique,<sup>181</sup> the *Tao Te Ching* to the fourth-ray technique,<sup>182</sup> *Emerson's Essays* to the fifth-ray technique,<sup>183</sup> and *Ecclesiastes* to the sixth-ray technique.<sup>184</sup> Thus there is increasing evidence that the above hypothesis is correct,

namely, that Bailey's ray techniques do symbolically depict the archetypal patterns of integration.

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- <sup>2</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Unfinished Autobiography* (1951; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1987), 167.
- <sup>3</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar* (1922; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1974), 58-59.
- <sup>4</sup> Zachary F. Lansdowne, "Vedic Teachings on the Seven Rays," *Esoteric Quarterly*, Spring 2010.
- <sup>5</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I (1936; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1979), 316.
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 126-127.
- <sup>7</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. II (1955; reprint. New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1972), 597.
- <sup>8</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation* (1922; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1974), 350.
- <sup>9</sup> Dakini Wisdom, "About Lucille," <http://www.dakini-wisdom.com/AboutLucille.htm> (accessed August 27, 2014).
- <sup>10</sup> Gretchen A. Groth, *Luminous Sitting, Tortuous Walking: Lucille Cedercrans Schaible* (Denver, CO: Dakini Wisdom, 2011), 42-43.
- <sup>11</sup> Wisdom Impressions, "The Work of Lucille Cedercrans," <http://www.wisdomimpressions.com/lucille.html> (accessed September 8, 2014).
- <sup>12</sup> Groth, *Luminous Sitting, Tortuous Walking*, 17-18.
- <sup>13</sup> Lucille Cedercrans, *Applied Wisdom* (Roseville, MN: Wisdom Impressions, 2007), vol. III, 1812.
- <sup>14</sup> Cedercrans, *Applied Wisdom*, vol. I, 6.
- <sup>15</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II (1942; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1981), 345, 352.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 346-347, 378.
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 351.
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 439.
- <sup>19</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I, 339.
- <sup>20</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (1925; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1973), 5.
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- <sup>21</sup> Lucille Cedercrans, *The Nature of the Soul* (Roseville, MN: Wisdom Impressions, 2011), 149.
- <sup>22</sup> Lucille Cedercrans, *Creative Thinking* (Roseville, MN: Wisdom Impressions, 2001), 205.
- <sup>23</sup> Cedercrans, *Applied Wisdom*, vol. I, 606.
- <sup>24</sup> Cedercrans, *Creative Thinking*, 205-206.
- <sup>25</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 375-376.
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 347.
- <sup>27</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 117.
- <sup>28</sup> Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. II, 401.
- <sup>29</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Light of the Soul* (1927; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1978), 389.
- <sup>30</sup> Mary A. Kassian, *Conversation Peace* (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2004), 226.
- <sup>31</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, vi.
- <sup>32</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 48.
- <sup>33</sup> Cedercrans, *Creative Thinking*, 216.
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>35</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 874.
- <sup>36</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *From Intellect to Intuition* (1932; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1960), 224.
- <sup>37</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 339.
- <sup>38</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I, 9.
- <sup>39</sup> Cedercrans, *Creative Thinking*, 216.
- <sup>40</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 152.
- <sup>41</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic* (1934; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1979), 278.
- <sup>42</sup> Cedercrans, *Creative Thinking*, 239.
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 204.
- <sup>44</sup> Bailey, *The Light of the Soul*, 144.
- <sup>45</sup> Cedercrans, *Creative Thinking*, 206.
- <sup>46</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 389.
- <sup>47</sup> Cedercrans, *Creative Thinking*, 230.
- <sup>48</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I, 37.
- <sup>49</sup> Lucille Cedercrans, *The Path of Initiation* (Roseville, MN: Wisdom Impressions, 2004), 40.
- <sup>50</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I, 210-211.
- <sup>51</sup> All biblical quotations are taken from the King James Version.
- <sup>52</sup> Cedercrans, *The Nature of the Soul*, 50.
- <sup>53</sup> Arthur E. Powell, *The Etheric Double* (1925; reprint; Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1979).
- <sup>54</sup> Cedercrans, *Creative Thinking*, 352.
- <sup>55</sup> Lucille Cedercrans, *The Soul and Its Instrument* (Roseville, MN: Wisdom Impressions, 1995), 65.

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77 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I, 301.  
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123 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 147.  
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125 Cedercrans, *Applied Wisdom*, vol. I, 443.  
126 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 178, 197.  
127 Cedercrans, *Creative Thinking*, 401.  
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129 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 199.  
130 Bailey, *The Light of the Soul*, 69.  
131 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 352.  
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- 152 Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation*, 268.
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- 155 Cedercrans, *Applied Wisdom*, vol. I, 353.
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- 157 Cedercrans, *Creative Thinking*, 388, 465.
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- 171 Cedercrans, *The Nature of the Soul*, 144.
- 172 Cedercrans, *Applied Wisdom*, vol. II, 1276.
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# The Tibetan Tetralogy of W. Y. Evans-Wentz: A Retrospective Assessment- Part II

Iván Kovács

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*The Dharma-Kaya of thine own mind thou shalt see; and seeing  
That, thou shalt have seen the All – The Vision Infinite, the Round  
of Death and Birth and the State of Freedom.*

Milarepa, *Jetsun-Khabum*<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

Part I in this series about the American Tibetologist, W. Y. Evans-Wentz dealt with his biography, succeeded by a short summary of his Tibetan tetralogy. This was followed by an in-depth discussion of his first book, *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Part II now continues with the discussion of the remaining three books of the tetralogy: *Tibet's Great Yogi Milarepa*; *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines*; and *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*. The discussions also consider the valuable comments of Donald S. Lopez, Jr., who wrote the forewords to the 2000 edition of Evans-Wentz's tetralogy as published by Oxford University Press. In discussing the *Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, a critical response is being made to C. G. Jung's controversial Psychological Commentary. The conclusion briefly discusses the merits and sincerity of Evans-Wentz's scholarship, and his importance as a pioneering Tibetologist.

## The Second Book of the Tetralogy: *Tibet's Great Yogi Milarepa*

Some Thoughts from Donald S. Lopez,  
Jr.'s Foreword

Perhaps the greatest compliment that Donald S. Lopez, Jr. can pay to the popularity of *Tibet's Great Yogi Milarepa* in his foreword is to refer the reader to the "eloquent testimony"<sup>2</sup> of the translator, Kazi Dawa Samdup himself, who praises the biography as follows:

Although written more than eight hundred years ago, it is from beginning to end set

down in such a plain and simple style of language that any ordinary Tibetan of today who can read at all can read it with ease and enjoyment. When we add to this that it tells the life-story of one who is looked up to and admired by all Tibetans, of every sect and school, as the Ideal Ascetic, or *Yogi*, and that he is no less esteemed as a poet and song-writer, whose songs are in everybody's mouth among the common people, somewhat like the songs of Burns in Scotland, we see how it is that this life of Milarepa is one of the most famous and favorite books of Tibet. For it is well admired by those who know how to write books as by those who only know how to read them when written.<sup>3</sup>

Lopez also points out that Evans-Wentz stresses two important things in his introduction about the biography of Milarepa: first, that the biography has a universal quality, placing Milarepa alongside Christian Gnostics, Hindu yogins, and Muslim Sufis as a master of wisdom. Secondly, as a proof of the text's authority, Evans-Wentz repeatedly points out that it is an eyewitness work: "the details of Mila's life were narrated by the master himself to

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## About the Author

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

Rechung, and Rechung himself was present for the miracles that attended Milarepa's passing."<sup>4</sup>

As regards the above, Lopez proposes that "two rather different points might also be usefully made." He argues that Milarepa's worldwide fame is largely due to the success of Evans-Wentz's work, "[b]ut the life of Milarepa is above all a Tibetan work, . . . and should therefore not be universalized to the point that it no longer belongs to its native land."<sup>5</sup>

The other point which Lopez makes is that, "although the life of Milarepa appears to be a first-person account, recorded by his closest disciple, . . . it is in fact a work of high literary achievement, composed some 350 years after the master's death."<sup>6</sup> Lopez points out that this is no reason to assume that the story is therefore fictional, because other biographies of Milarepa have appeared that preceded Gtsang smyon Heruka's work in 1484, and that the literary qualities of Heruka's work should therefore not be denied, but rather celebrated.<sup>7</sup>

Lopez devotes the remainder of his introduction to a summary of the biography, drawing the reader's attention to the formal aspects of the writing. We learn how the biography opens with a lengthy introductory paean, which extends over 10 pages, singing the praises of Milarepa's exemplary and fabulous life. This, Lopez writes, is followed by the telling of the story which begins with the words "Thus did I hear," the traditional beginning of a Buddhist sutra, a discourse by the Buddha. Lopez explains as follows:

By using these famous words to open his text, the author signals to the reader that they are about to hear the teaching of a Buddha, and that the rapporteur of the teaching, in this case, Rechung, speaks with the authority of a witness. A Buddhist sutra will then identify where the Buddha was staying when the discourse was delivered, and who was in the audience. That same convention is followed here.<sup>8</sup>

Lopez writes how Rechung briefly departs from the formula to recount a dream in which he is in a pure land. There he is invited to at-

tend a discourse by the Buddha Akshobhya, one of the central tantric Buddhas, who speaks of the miraculous deeds of the great Buddhas and bodhisattvas that have lived in the past, concluding with Tilopa, Naropa, and Marpa—Milarepa's own teacher. These stories Rechung has heard from Milarepa before, but in less detail. Akshobhya ends his discourse by announcing that the next day he will tell a story which is more wonderful than the ones already told: the story of Milarepa. As the audience departs in anticipation of the next day's teaching, it wonders about Milarepa's present whereabouts, but Rechung knows that at that moment Milarepa is living in a cave in southern Tibet.<sup>9</sup>

Lopez explains how Rechung's dream introduces a theme which will persist throughout the biography, namely that there are two parallel universes:

In one, Milarepa is an impoverished beggar living in a cold cave; in the other, he is an enlightened buddha residing in a pure land; in one Marpa is a cruel and greedy drunk, demanding payment in exchange for his teachings; in the other, he is a compassionate buddha able to purge the sins of murder from his disciple; in one, Milarepa is a dangerous sorcerer to be avoided at all costs; in the other, he is a kind teacher willing to teach all who approach; in one, Milarepa is a murderer, in the other, a buddha.<sup>10</sup>

Lopez draws our attention to the fact that when Rechung awakes from his dream, he realizes that its purpose was to prompt him to ask Milarepa to disclose his own story, but like the Buddha, Mila's initial reaction is to demur. When Rechung insists, Milarepa "consents to 'turn the wheel of dharma,' the traditional term for the Buddha's teaching."<sup>11</sup> At this point the narrative shifts to the first person, and Milarepa reveals the story of his life. Lopez points out that as Milarepa is addressing his disciples in response to Rechung's request, each chapter begins in Rechung's voice, as he, for example, asks, "Master, didst thou set off at once to the wild solitudes after receiving the Truths, or didst thou continue to live with thy *Guru*?"<sup>12</sup>

It is toward the end of the story, Lopez tells us, that one of Milarepa's disciples tries to praise his master by claiming that he is a Buddha, and asks Mila which Buddha it might be. To clarify this aspect of Milarepa's buddhahood, Lopez explains as follows:

Tibetans believe not only that enlightened beings take rebirth in the world out of their infinite compassion, but that such beings can be identified. . . These beings are said to have complete control over their rebirth, choosing the time, the place, and the parents in advance . . . It is a further tenet of the Mahayana that the suffering and privation that the Buddha appeared to undergo in his quest for his enlightenment were all a display; the Buddha had in fact been enlightened aeons ago but pretended to renounce the world, practice asceticism, achieve enlightenment, and die, in order to inspire others to follow the path.<sup>13</sup>

At this point it needs to be mentioned that the ability to identify important personages according to their previous lives is an age-old tradition in Tibet. It has been specifically practiced as regards the discovery of the identity of a reincarnating Dalai Lama, as well as the identities of important lamas who are believed to have reincarnated. Such persons among the Tibetans are known as *tulkus*.

Lopez explains how Milarepa's disciple, who is aware of the parallel universe known as the buddha land, believes Milarepa to be the reincarnation of a fully enlightened being, and thus his years of privation in the caves of snowy Tibet only a performance. Thus the disciple asks after Milarepa's true identity. Instead of being flattered by such a question Milarepa responds by saying that there could be no greater insult than to suggest that he is an emanation of a Buddha. To do so would imply the denial of the great suffering he had to undergo in order for Marpa to expunge from him the sins of his youth. It would also minimize the extraordinary efforts he had to make over many years in solitary caves, subsisting only on nettles, so that he could achieve enlightenment in one lifetime. To believe that Milarepa was already enlightened to begin with would

be a denial of the central message of his life, namely that anyone who murders thirty-five people or less is able to achieve buddhahood in the same lifetime.<sup>14</sup>

Lopez also points out that the *Life of Milarepa* is not simply about buddhahood, but also concerned with what remains behind:

Hence, the final stages of the story are very much concerned with Mila's legacy, again pointing toward the questions of lineage and legitimacy that would have been pertinent in the centuries after his death. Mila is made to recite the names of his disciples, both major and minor, and to enumerate the many caves in which he meditated, caves that in the future would serve both as potent places of pilgrimage and as sacred sites for the practice of meditators.<sup>15</sup>

Surrounding the events of Milarepa's death the laypeople are less concerned with his final instructions and more with making sure that he dies in their region and their quarrel over his corpse is motivated by their desire for those blessings that are imminent in the locality of a saint's passing. It also becomes clear that the more advanced of Milarepa's disciples are also unable to rise above such mundane concerns. They are disillusioned at the absence of relics among his ashes, and Rechung himself finds it necessary to sing a song in which he implores Mila to bestow them. The dakinis (female spirits acting as spiritual muses)<sup>16</sup> respond with a song pointing out to the disciples that their own realization be considered as a relic of their master. Even after the disciples witness the miraculous crystal stupa (a mound-like structure containing Buddhist relics)<sup>17</sup> they still despair at the absence of relics. Finally, Milarepa relents and sends them to unearth a piece of cloth and a lump of sugar that can be endlessly divided among the disciples, the cloth as an amulet and the sugar as a taste of enlightenment, both without being exhausted.<sup>18</sup>

Lopez concludes his summary as follows:

It is impossible to comment on all of the remarkable aspects of the story. *The Life of Milarepa* deserves a detailed literary and historical analysis, considering everything

from the economics of Buddhist institutions in Tibet to the subtle use of figures of speech in Mila's famous songs. But Evans-Wentz and Kazi Dawa Sendup provide an excellent place to begin.<sup>19</sup>



Milarepa<sup>20</sup>

### W. Y. Evans-Wentz's Contribution to Tibet's Great Yogi Milarepa

In his foreword to *Tibet's Great Yogi Milarepa*, Donald S. Lopez, Jr. remarks that "Evans-Wentz's introduction and notes are unobtrusive, although generally unhelpful."<sup>21</sup> This writer would beg to differ. Although, as Lopez points out, Evans-Wentz's observations and conclusions are at times faulty, as for example the somewhat simplistic way of distinguishing between the sects of Tibetan Buddhism based on the color of the lamas' hats (Red Hats, Yellow Hats, and Black Hats),<sup>22</sup> much information, whether directly or indirectly related to the text, will be welcome to a keen and curious reader. By simply looking at the various sections of Evans-Wentz's introduction, the reader will notice that there are a variety of interesting topics that are discussed.

When writing about the historical value of the biographical narrative, Evans-Wentz points out that as it has come down to us, it can be considered as a faithful account of the sayings and doings of Milarepa, with due allowance for a certain amount of folk-lore and popular mythology, and perhaps as historically accurate as parts of the *New Testament*.<sup>23</sup> He puts emphasis on the fact that "(t)o all who appreciate Buddhist Philosophy, more especially in its Mahayana form, this book should bring fresh insight. To mystics the world over it should prove to be, as Rechung, its author, would call it, a most precious Jewel . . ."<sup>24</sup>

As regards the apostolic succession of the Kargyupta sect, to which Milarepa belonged, Evans-Wentz takes the reader back in time to the period when King Song-tsen Gam-po (who died about A. D. 650) reigned as the first Buddhist King of Tibet, and was characterized by the mystical Vajra-Yana form of Buddhism, which the Kargyuptas afterward adopted.<sup>25</sup> A key figure of this form of Buddhism was Sambhota who, at the king's request travelled to India to collect Buddhist books, and returned to Tibet with an extensive library, "and so saved for the world much of the learning of India which afterwards was lost in the land of its origin."<sup>26</sup>

Evans-Wentz relates how in A. D. 1038, Atisha, the first of the Reformers of Lamaism arrived in Tibet from India, and introduced celibacy and a higher morality among the priesthood. Although Atisha is considered one of the Gurus of the Kargyupta sect, he has been sidelined by the Kargyuptas mainly because he sought to gain Enlightenment by intellectual means alone, rather than meditation. For this reason, it fell to the lot of the Great Guru Tilopa to become the first of the great apostles of the Kargyupta Hierarchy.<sup>27</sup> Tilopa's importance is ascribed to the fact that he claimed to have received his Mahamudra Philosophy directly from the Celestial Buddha Dorje-Chang, which he, in turn, handed down orally to Naropa, and Naropa transmitted it to Marpa, who was Milarepa's guru. The Kargyuptas "regard Dorje-Chang (Vajra-Dhara) as an equal to the Adi, or Primordial, Buddha,"

and he is thus the “Manifester of the Grace of the Adi-Buddha and inseparable from Him.”<sup>28</sup>

Regarding Milarepa’s heir in the Kargyuupa succession, it was not Rechung, the author of this biography, but the first of Milarepa’s disciples, Dvag-po-Lharje, also known as Je-Gampo-pa, because he was believed to have been the reincarnation of the first Buddhist ruler of Tibet, King Song-tsen Gam-po. Evans-Wentz concludes his narration about the apostolic succession in which he writes: “Je-Gampo-pa himself died in the year 1152, two years after he had founded the Monastery of Ts’ur-lka, the chief seat of the Kargyuptas, and ever since then the Kargyuupa Line of *Gurus* has remained unbroken.”<sup>29</sup>

About Milarepa himself, Evans-Wentz concludes his introduction as follows:

Milarepa, the Socrates of Asia, counted the world’s Intellectualisms, its prizes, and its pleasures as naught; his supreme quest was for that personal discovery of Truth, which, as he teaches us, can be won only by introspection and self analysis, through weighing life’s values in the scale of the *Bodhi-Illuminated mind* . . . How many parallels, too, may be drawn between (Milarepa’s) precepts recorded in this *Biography* and those of another Great Master of Life, will be seen by making comparison with the Sermon on the Mount.<sup>30</sup>

### **A Short Sampling of the Text of *Tibet’s Great Yogi Milarepa***

The ensuing discussion and summary of Milarepa’s biography would not be complete without an appropriate sampling of the text itself, which has been chosen from Part II, entitled *The Path of Light*, Chapter VII. It describes the culmination of Milarepa’s training under his Guru, Marpa the Translator, and is taken from a lengthy description by Milarepa to his master, of what he has learnt:

To sum up, a vivid state of mental quiescence accompanied by energy, and a keen power of analysis, by a clear and inquisitive intellect, are indispensable requirements; like the lowest rung of the ladder, they are absolutely necessary to enable one to as-

ceend. But in the process of meditating on this state of mental quiescence (*Shi-nay*), by mental concentration, either on forms and shapes, or on shapeless and formless things, the very first effort must be made in a compassionate mood, with the aim of dedicating the merit of one’s efforts to the Universal Good. Secondly, the goal of one’s aspirations must be well defined and clear, soaring in the regions transcending thought. Finally, there is need of mentally praying and wishing for blessings on others so earnestly that one’s mind-processes also transcend thought. These, I understand, to be the highest of all Paths.<sup>31</sup>

This short passage alone will lend itself to a great deal of thought and analysis for those readers who have in any way progressed beyond the beginning stages of meditation, and who are desirous of eventually reaching for the ultimate prize of human attainment, or liberation from the wheel of life, as it is realized in the bliss of Nirvana.

## **The Third Book of the Tetralogy: *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines***

### **Some Perspective on the Texts by Donald S. Lopez, Jr. and W. Y. Evans-Wentz**

**O**f all four books of Evans-Wentz’s tetralogy, *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines* is the most obscure, and despite the copious editorial comments and footnotes by Evans-Wentz that try to make sense of its texts, it is the least successful as regards their correct interpretation. In Donald S. Lopez, Jr.’s foreword to the book, this is largely ascribed to Evans-Wentz’s somewhat one-sided interest in esoteric matters, which in its particulars was primarily aimed at Hindu yoga, rather than Tibetan Buddhism, and “(i)t is this system that Evans-Wentz seeks to identify with the disparate Tibetan texts translated in this volume.”<sup>32</sup>

In his general introduction to *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines*, Evans-Wentz explains that the seven “Books” (i.e. texts), are arranged in a definite order or sequence. He points out that

in all schools of yoga, neophytes who are to follow the Path need to know the rules and regulations that apply to the yogic career which they have chosen, and these rules are the subject matter of Book I. As Lopez sums it up in his foreword, “(t)he first of these (books) is a collection of aphorisms by Milarepa’s most famous disciple, Sgam po pa . . . entitled *A Garland of Jewels [of] the Supreme Path* . . . (and) has twenty-eight chapters, each containing (with three exceptions) ten admonitions concerning the practice of the Buddhist path: ‘the ten things to be avoided,’ ‘the ten things one must know,’ etc.”<sup>33</sup> Lopez explains that the text itself cannot be identified as characterizing any single sect of Tibetan Buddhism, but rather is intended as useful and easily memorized advice for anyone embarking upon the Buddhist path.<sup>34</sup>

Evans-Wentz’s short comment from his general introduction on Book II explains that the yogi is confronted with the problem of the nature of the mind and of reality. If the yogi is able to solve this problem in accordance with the instructions as they are set forth in this book, he will have mastered both himself and his mental processes. Then, having attained bodhic (intuitional) insight, the yogi can safely advance to the more specialized practices that are expounded in Book III.<sup>35</sup>

Lopez’s comment on Book II is more detailed and specific. He points out that the title of this book, *Notes on the Mahamudra*, has not been quite accurately rendered into English. Evans-Wentz translated “Mahamudra” as “The Great Symbol,” but Lopez claims that a more accurate rendering would be “The Great Seal.” The Great Seal is understood to be a state of enlightened awareness in which phenomenal appearance and noumenal emptiness are unified. Such a state is considered to be primordially present and not something that is newly creat-

ed, i.e. every moment of consciousness is considered to bear its seal. Lopez explains that “(i)ntead of emphasizing the attainment of an extraordinary level of consciousness, the Great Seal literature exalts the ordinary state of mind as both the natural and ultimate state, characterized by lucidity and simplicity.”<sup>36</sup> The ordinary mind is contrasted with the worldly mind, with the understanding that the ordinary mind is comparable to a mirror that reflects reality exactly as it is, whereas the worldly mind is considered as distorted by its mistaken perception of subject and object as real. Lopez explains that rather than trying to destroy the worldly mind, as other systems do, in the Great Seal, the worldly mind is acknowledged for its ultimate identity with

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the ordinary mind, because every deluded thought contains within it the lucidity and simplicity of the ordinary mind. To attain wisdom, all that needs to be done by the yogi is to recognize this identity, and acknowledge that the natural purity pervades all existence, including the worldly or deluded mind.<sup>37</sup>

Returning to Evans-Wentz’s commentary, he informs the reader that once the *Bodhic* insight as taught in Book II has been attained, one can, “without danger, attempt the more specialized *yogic* practices expounded in Book III. Of these the most difficult and dangerous (notice how Evans-Wentz contradicts himself at this point) is the sixth, namely, the transference of the mundane consciousness; and this is set forth in more detail in Book IV.”<sup>38</sup> To gain more clarity on this issue it is necessary to revert back to Lopez and compare what he says:

These various practices (as set forth in Book III) . . . represent a collection of various tantric teachings that were current in Bengal in the eleventh century. They are all considered highly advanced teachings intended to result in buddhahood. Within the

fourfold tantric division, they are teachings of the completion stage . . . of highest Yoga Tantra . . .”

Book III contains six teachings which are “inner heat, illusory body, clear light, dream, bardo, and consciousness transfer.”<sup>39</sup> The first of these, inner heat, is the foundational practice, and takes up almost half of Book III, and also applies to the other five teachings. As it involves the central channel of the spine, the chakras or energy centers of the yogi, and subtle energies, it can be considered a type of kundalini yoga, and Lopez informs us that Milarepa was considered to be adept at it. Lopez elaborates on this as follows:

The ability to cause the winds (i.e. subtle energies) to enter the central channel (of the spine) provides the meditator with access to various profound states of consciousness essential to the attainment of buddhahood, most importantly the mind of clear light, the subject of the fourth of the six teachings . . . It is the most profound state of consciousness that, upon realization of emptiness, is transformed into the omniscience of a buddha.<sup>40</sup>

Lopez explains that the first four of the six teachings are intended to bestow buddhahood in this lifetime, and if this is not possible, the last two provide means for doing so after death. In this regard, the teaching on consciousness transfer describe a technique “for forcibly causing one’s consciousness to travel up through the central channel (of the spine), exit from the aperture in the crown of the head, and travel to a pure land (a Buddhist heaven), (which is) an ideal realm for the achievement of enlightenment.” If consciousness transfer is not achievable, there still remains the opportunity in the after death state (bardo), which is similar to that described in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, in which the recognition of the clear light offers the opportunity of liberation, or if this is not possible, to follow instructions that show how to attain an auspicious rebirth.<sup>41</sup>

Book IV is entirely about consciousness transfer and Lopez explains that it is similar to what has already been given in Book III, except that it is more detailed. It consists of two teachings,

the first of these dealing with consciousness transfer at the moment of death, so that the consciousness can be sent to a pure land. The second teaching is intended for those who are already adept at consciousness transfer and are instructed how to use such knowledge when helping someone recently deceased, and directing them into an auspicious realm, either to a pure land, or an advanced stage of the bodhisattva path.<sup>42</sup>

In his short summary of Book V, Evans-Wentz informs the reader that the yogi is instructed in a very occult yogic method on how to attain the mental state of non-ego, (or as he calls it “impersonalization”), which is largely pre-Buddhistic. He warns that “(n)one save a very carefully trained and *guru*-guided *yogin* ought ever to attempt this *yoga*.”<sup>43</sup>

In his summary of Book V, Lopez begins with a cursory description of the ritual which is an integral part of this teaching, but it is more practicable first to identify this teaching’s objective, which is the confrontation of the practitioner’s vices, which are considered the root cause of suffering, and thus need to be eliminated on the path to buddhahood.<sup>44</sup> Lopez points out that in Buddhism demons are regarded as the projections of desire, hatred, and ignorance, and “according to an Indian enumeration, one’s own mind and body are regarded as ‘the demon of the aggregates’ and one of the demons to be eliminated (in the ritual of this teaching) is attachment to one’s own body.”<sup>45</sup> (The personification of one’s vices in the form of demons might be somewhat foreign to a person who subscribes to the workings of a rational mind, but those individuals who are able to access the astral plane with their psychic abilities will confirm that such a belief is not entirely without foundation.) The intention of confronting one’s “demons” as obstacles to liberation is certainly laudable, but considering the method employed to achieve this objective, which this particular teaching prescribes, all one can say is that it is most extreme and bizarre. Lopez describes how this teaching known as the *chöd* ritual is performed and the practitioner is expected to frequent cemeteries and other sites fraught with danger, where he or she will pitch a tent, perform a

dance, beat a drum, and blow on a trumpet made from a human thigh bone.<sup>46</sup> This is to be followed up by a meditation in which the practitioner imagines his or her consciousness in the form of the goddess Vajrayogini, abiding in the central channel. Lopez details the procedure as follows:

She exits from the aperture at the crown of the head, at which point the meditator's body is imagined to collapse. Vajrayogini cuts off the crown of the skull of the prostrate body, which is immediately transformed into a huge cauldron, into which the body is thrown. The boiling of the body produces an elixir that is offered to all the buddhas, bodhisattvas, and to all sentient beings and spirits, both benevolent and malevolent . . . By severing the skull from the body, one cuts attachment to the body, resulting in wisdom . . . Because the body is the object of such great attachment, the gift of the body is often praised as the highest form of the perfection of giving.<sup>47</sup>

If one considers that Buddhism is supposed to be a spiritual path that follows the famed Middle Way, which is intended to avoid all excesses and extremes, the practice of *chöd* is most definitely baffling and incomprehensible. This teaching, as expounded in Book V, is the most fascinating as regards *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines*, and an integral part of the more exotic Buddhist practices, but it is unlikely that any sane person who has been brought up in the Western tradition will go so far as to experiment with it and try it out for himself. In fact, this applies to most of the teachings in *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines*, and is endorsed by Lopez himself, who in a somewhat humorous way puts it as follows: "The texts translated in Books II, III, IV, and V are very much of the 'don't try this at home' variety. There is thus a certain salvation in the many errors in the translations: they prevent the reader from attempting to put them into practice."<sup>48</sup>

In his short summary of Book VI, Evans-Wentz simply points out that it deals with the Five Wisdoms<sup>49</sup> and Lopez elaborates on this as follows:

The sixth text in *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines* is a brief work . . . entitled *Mode of Being of the Long Hum Endowed with the Five Wisdoms* . . . The mantra *hum* is one of the most prevalent and potent in tantric Buddhism. In the mantra *om ab hum*, a white *om* is visualized in the head chakra, a red *ab* is visualized at the throat chakra, and a blue *hum* is visualized at the heart chakra. In many tantric meditations, infinite *hums* are emanated from the heart to fill the universe and are then gathered back into a single *hum* in the meditator's heart. The entire universe then melts into emptiness, beginning at the edges and moving inward, until the body of the meditator, visualized as a buddha, also dissolves, leaving only the letter *hum*. The *hum* then begins to dissolve from the bottom, until it too disappears into emptiness.<sup>50</sup>

Lopez explains that in its orthographic representation, the mantra consists of five parts, and in this particular text, each of those parts is made to correspond to one of the Buddha lineages and to the five wisdoms of a Buddha, which are "the wisdom of the sphere of reality, the mirror-like wisdom, the wisdom of equality, the wisdom of specific understanding, and the wisdom of accomplishment."<sup>51</sup>

About the last book in *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines*, Book VII, Evans-Wentz states that "the essence of the most transcendental of all Mahayanic teachings is set before the *yogin* for profound meditation and realization."<sup>52</sup> What Evans-Wentz calls the "most transcendental" is nothing less than the most famous of Buddhist sutras, the *Heart Sutra*, which Lopez identifies as being "renowned for its terse exposition of the doctrine of emptiness."<sup>53</sup> Lopez informs us that it is known by heart by Buddhists throughout Tibet, Korea, China, and Japan, and that it is among the most commented upon of Buddhist texts. Rather than burden the reader with a sampling of the rather cumbersome, and thus outdated, translation of the *Heart Sutra* as rendered by Evans-Wentz, here follows a sampling of a modern translation. Although the reader is free to give the text his or her own interpretation, a hint as to its understanding might be appropriate, by drawing the

reader's attention to the significance of the concept of *maya*, which views all life in its manifest form as illusory.

All things are empty:  
 Nothing is born, nothing dies,  
 Nothing is pure, nothing is stained,  
 Nothing increases and nothing decreases.

.....  
 There is no ignorance,  
 And no end to ignorance.  
 There is no old age and death,  
 And no end to old age and death.  
 There is no suffering, no cause of suffering,

No end to suffering, no cause of suffering,  
 No end of suffering, no path to follow.  
 There is no attainment of wisdom,  
 And no wisdom to attain.

The Bodhisattvas rely on the Perfection of Wisdom,  
 And so with no delusions,  
 They feel no fear,  
 And have Nirvana here and now.

All the Buddhas,  
 Past, present, and future,  
 Rely on the Perfection of Wisdom,  
 And live in full enlightenment.  
 The Perfection of Wisdom is the greatest mantra.

It is the clearest mantra,  
 The highest mantra,  
 The mantra that removes suffering.

This is truth that cannot be doubted.  
 Say it so:

Gone,  
 Gone,  
 Gone over,  
 Gone fully over.  
 Awakened!  
 So be it!<sup>54</sup>

### **The Fourth Book of the Tetralogy: *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation***

#### **Background to the Texts**

While the third book of Evans-Wentz's tetralogy was identified as the most ob-

scure as regards its subject matter, and for this reason largely misinterpreted, Donald S. Lopez, Jr. considers the fourth and last book, *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation* as "the least successful volume . . . at least as a representation of Tibetan Buddhism. Like the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, it is a book that occupies two separate worlds, the world of Evans-Wentz, with his unique blend of Theosophy and Vedanta, and the world of the translated texts, that is, the world of Tibetan Buddhism."<sup>55</sup>

Another major reason affecting the quality of this book can be ascribed to the fact that due to Kazi Dawa Samdup's premature death Evans-Wentz had to depend on less-skilled translators. The only contribution Kazi Dawa Samdup has made to *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation* is as translator of the third text, which is a mere 14 pages of the entire book.<sup>56</sup> There was the added problem regarding the translation of the second of three independent texts. This text is considered a Nyingma work, which was rendered into English by two Geluk monks. It needs to be mentioned that Nyingma and Geluk are two distinct Tibetan Buddhist sects, Nyingma being the oldest and Geluk the newest, thus an obvious problem when the text to be translated and the translators belong to different camps.<sup>57</sup>



**Padmasambhava**<sup>58</sup>

**Book I: An Epitome of the Life and Teachings of Tibet's Great Guru Padma-Sambhava**

As summarized in Lopez's foreword, the first text (Book I) of *The Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation* is a biography of Padmasambhava, and attributed to Padmasambhava himself, who allegedly dictated it to his consort, the queen Ye shes mtsho rgyal, and was then hidden by him in the Tibetan landscape, so that it could be found at an appropriate time in the future when Tibet was ready to receive its teaching. The text was supposedly found by O rgyan gling pa in 1352, who claimed to have discovered it in the heart of a stone image of a guardian deity at the entrance to the Crystal Rock cave in the Yarlung Valley. However, modern scholars regard this text, and in fact, other so-called treasure texts, as originating not at the time of Padmasambhava, who is believed to have visited Tibet at the end of the eighth century, but rather at the time of their discovery, and as having been compiled or authored by the discoverers themselves.<sup>59</sup>

Lopez declares that regardless of its true origins as regards its authorship, the biography is a remarkable work.<sup>60</sup> He goes on to list the significant points of its narrative as follows:

Padmasambhava's glorious lineage as an emanation of the Buddha of infinite Light, Amithaba; the Buddha's prophecy, as he is about to pass into nirvana, that twelve years hence he would appear as Padmasambhava to teach the secret mantras; his miraculous appearance as a beautiful eight-year-old child in the middle of a lotus blossom in the middle of Dhanakosa Lake (hence his name Padmasambhava, "Lotus Born"); his life as a prince, in which . . . he . . . marries a beautiful princess, before deciding to renounce the world . . . his tutelage under the Buddha's attendant Ananda . . . his defeat of the opponents of Buddhism; some thousand years later, his invitation to Tibet to subdue the demons and establish his first monastery at Bsam yas; and his departure to the land of the raksasas.<sup>61</sup>

Lopez also points out that in the course of the narrative "there are long excursions into Bud-

dhist doctrine, as well as descriptions of the qualifications necessary for the future discoverers of Padasambhava's hidden treasure texts."<sup>62</sup> He concludes by saying that the work is a favorite among Tibetans due to its brilliant description of their great culture hero and the fascinating description of his great and miraculous deeds.<sup>63</sup>

**Book II: The Profound Doctrine of Self-Liberation by Meditation upon the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities**

In Lopez's foreword we learn that the doctrine of this text is also referred to as the Great Perfection. Its teachings, which are also found in Bon, (the pre-Buddhist, shamanistic religion of Tibet), describe the mind as the primordial basis, which possess qualities "such as presence, spontaneity, luminosity, original purity, unobstructed freedom, expanse, clarity, self-liberation, openness, effortlessness, and intrinsic awareness."<sup>64</sup> This type of awareness, called in Tibetan *rig pa*, cannot be accessed through conceptual elaboration or logical awareness, because "the primordial basis is an eternally pure state free from the dualism of subject and object, infinite and perfect from the beginning, ever complete."<sup>65</sup> Some scholars prefer to call this text the "Great Completeness" rather than "Great Perfection," because the latter term implies that at some point the intrinsic awareness became perfect; while, in actual fact, it has always been so. It is the mind that creates the appearances of the world, the sphere of human suffering, and all such appearances need to be understood as illusory. The deluded mind believes its own creations to be real, and thereby forgets its true nature of original purity. Thus for the mind to try to liberate itself is futile, because it is already liberated. The technique to arrive at this realization is to employ a variety of practices which enable the practitioner to eliminate karmic obstacles, at which point the mind needs to eliminate all thought, and then experience itself by recognizing its true nature. The mind needs to become like a mirror that reflects whatever object stands before it, without allowing itself to be affected by the object.<sup>66</sup>

As regards Evans-Wentz's involvement with this text, Lopez states that he clearly recognizes its importance, and he is both passionate and eloquent in his exposition, but misguided in his interpretation. He actually appeals more often to Plotinus or Ramana Maharshi than to any Tibetan, or even Buddhist, source. For Evans-Wentz, awareness is "the One Mind . . . the Universal Mind, the Over-Mind, the Cosmic Consciousness."<sup>67</sup> Lopez is adamant that "(s)uch language is foreign to Buddhist thought in general and to the Great Perfection in particular."<sup>68</sup>

### **Book III: *The Last Testamentary Teachings of the Guru Phadampa Sangay***

According to Lopez's summary, Book III consists of Evans-Wentz's selection from an unfinished translation left by Kazi Dawa Samdup. It is a collection of aphorisms attributed to the Indian yogi Pha dam pa sangs rgyas, who is said to have visited Tibet on several occasions in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries before his death in 1117. The aphorisms are addressed to the people of Ding ri, where Pha dam pa sangs rgyas founded a monastery. It contains Buddhist teachings on impermanence and the uncertainty of the time of death, on the importance of good deeds such as pilgrimage and prayer, and admonitions to have faith in the guru, as well as instructions on meditation.<sup>69</sup>

### **Some Reflections on C. G. Jung's Psychological Commentary on the *Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation***

As regards Jung's commentary on the *Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation*, Lopez writes the following: "One finds here the same misreading of the *Self-Liberation through Naked Vision Recognizing Awareness* . . . that one found in his commentary to *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. There are the same gross cultural stereotypes of East and West, the same admonitions that Europeans not practice yoga, the same unsuccessful attempt to interpret 'Eastern' consciousness in the light of his theory of the unconscious . . . A thorough study of Jung's misreading, wilful and otherwise, of 'Eastern Religions' remains to be written."<sup>70</sup>

Although this writer intends nothing like a "thorough study," nevertheless, he wants to take up the challenge proposed by Lopez, by simply pointing out, which in his view, are some of the most obvious statements by Jung with which he disagrees. It needs to be remembered that this writer's viewpoints are, in their turn, largely shaped by the teachings of Alice A. Bailey and the Tibetan Master, Djwhal Khul, and consequently open to challenge by adherents of other schools.

Before proceeding with a closer look at Jung's commentary, it needs to be said that independent of his opinions and views on Oriental philosophy and Eastern religions, his status as a great pioneer of Western psychology remains unchallenged. His contribution in this regard, such as the concepts of the collective unconscious, the archetype, the complex, and synchronicity, were well ahead of his one-time coworker, Sigmund Freud, and did much good to point Western psychology in the right direction. It is only when he tries to explain the oriental point of view in terms of his own system of thinking that their validity is brought into question.

Although Jung's tone and style strike one as confident and persuasive, his commentary is often characterized by broad generalizations, whether he is trying to distinguish between the Eastern or Western mind, or their respective religions. Likewise, when he comments on Eastern religion, there is no distinction made between Hinduism and Buddhism, or in fact, any other branch of Eastern religion, such as e.g., Zoroastrianism, Taoism and Confucianism.

What is also clearly apparent is that the types he describes are too distinct and stereotypical, without any possibility, or hope, of commonality or complement between them. To quote his own words, Jung's view on the difference between East and West is explicit and uncompromising:

I refrain from describing what would happen to Eastern man should he forget his ideal of Buddhahood, for I do not want to give such an unfair advantage to my Western prejudices. But I cannot help raising the

question of whether it is possible, or indeed advisable, for either to imitate the other's standpoint. The difference between them is so vast that one can see no reasonable possibility of this, much less its advisability. You cannot mix fire and water. The Eastern attitude stultifies the West, and vice versa. You cannot be a good Christian and redeem yourself, nor can you be a Buddha and worship God. It is much better to accept the conflict, for it admits only of an irrational solution, if any.<sup>71</sup>

At first glance the above comparison appears to be true, but only takes Christianity and Buddhism into account. In fact, the ethical objectives of both these religions appear to be identical, as well as their attitudes and cautionary warnings as regards the sensuous or worldly view and lifestyle. Christians are commanded to love, and Buddhists are encouraged to practice compassion. The one speaks of salvation, the other of liberation, and both lead respectively to heaven and nirvana. Had Jung attempted a comparison between the *New Testament* and the *Bhagavad Gita*, the "fire and water" comparison would have been even less appropriate, with no reason for "stultifying" from either side. Those readers who are familiar with both scriptures will admit that there is not a single controversy between the spiritual objectives and ethical standards of their teaching.

The other important issue which needs to be addressed is the question of consciousness, and its related vehicles of perception, such as the mind, the ego, and the personality. If the reader considers what was said about Jung's commentary on the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* and the problems arising from his comparison between his Collective Unconscious and the Dharma-Kaya, it is necessary to exercise caution, rather than reaching seemingly obvious, but invalid conclusions.

To understand the psychic components that go into the making of a human being, it is necessary to understand the Self as defined in Jungian psychology. According to Jung's system "(t)he ego is the center of consciousness, whereas the Self is the center of the total per-

sonality, which includes consciousness, the unconscious, and the ego. The Self is both the whole and the center. While the ego is a self-contained little center of the circle contained within the whole, the Self can be understood as the greater circle."<sup>72</sup>

The esoteric view, based on Hinduism, and adapted by Alice A. Bailey and the Tibetan Master, Djwhal Khul, is somewhat different, and at first appearance more complicated, but once understood, direct and clear-cut. First, there is the most easily understood distinction between the lower and higher selves, or more specifically, the personality and the Soul. The personality, consisting of the physical-etheric, emotional, and lower mental vehicles, is that unit of consciousness whereby a human being is understood to be able to interact with the manifest, or concrete world with which we are all familiar. It is considered the seat of self-consciousness, and thus its objectives are largely considered as selfish. The Soul, on the other hand, is characterized by wisdom and love, and therefore group-conscious. It is also the mediator between atma - buddhi - manas (spirit - intuition - abstract mind), and the personality.

As can be seen from the above, the self, and the states of consciousness resulting from it are understood in rather different terms, and should thus not be explained by trying to draw parallels between them. Neither can one say that either the one or the other is right or wrong, but simply admit that truth is relative, and often dependent on various points of view, and that they can be equally valid when defined on their own terms.

In his commentary, Jung writes the following about what he understands as consciousness:

To us consciousness is inconceivable without an ego; it is equated with the relation of contents to an ego. If there is no ego there is nobody to be conscious of anything. The ego is therefore indispensable to the conscious process. The Eastern mind, however, has no difficulty in conceiving of a consciousness without an ego. Consciousness is deemed capable of transcending its ego condition; indeed in its 'higher' forms, the

ego disappears altogether. Such an ego-less mental condition can only be unconscious to us, for the simple reason that there would be nobody to witness it.<sup>73</sup>

In the above quotation Jung would have us believe that Easterners are out to destroy their egos in favor of a “higher,” albeit unconscious mental condition. Such a false conception is typical of most Western readers who come into contact with Eastern philosophy and religion, but who have not delved deep enough, and thus developed a superficial, and thus erroneous understanding of the Eastern mind. Whether one looks at the *Upanishads*, the *Yoga Sutras*, or the *Bhagavad Gita*, none of them ever suggest the necessity of having to destroy one’s ego to enable one to gain higher states of consciousness. They do suggest, however, methods of purification and discipline whereby the content of the mind is rendered more effective and organized. This is achieved by meditation and contemplation, first freeing the mind of its prejudices and wrong habits of thinking. Secondly, meditation aims at transforming the mind into a fit instrument by which it can *consciously* register impressions from higher levels of consciousness, and then by an accurate process of mental discrimination and interpretation, give those impressions a clear and definite form. The only practicable way whereby higher states of consciousness can be accessed is through occult meditation, and as any practiced meditator will testify, its discipline will result in a more focused and purposeful attitude towards life rather than an unconscious and diffused awareness, as Jung would like us to believe. One might add that the Eastern and Western spiritual practitioners are not as far apart as we are made to believe. In their respective monastic communities, the common goal is the discouragement of vices and the acquisition of virtues, and much of this is achieved by their respective disciplines and meditations which are aimed to make this possible.

In conclusion, it is appropriate to close with a few short quotations from mystics and holy men representative of both the East and the West, and thereby demonstrate that their wisdom and inspiration comes from but one

source, namely the collective treasure house of the human soul:

*Heaven is nothing other than a revelation of the Eternal One, where everything works and wills in silent love.*<sup>74</sup> (Jacob Boehme)

*There exists only the present instant . . . a Now which always and without end is itself new. There is no yesterday nor any tomorrow, but only Now, as it was a thousand years ago and as it will be a thousand years hence.*<sup>75</sup> (Meister Eckhart)

*Unless purer love and veneration be innate within one’s heart, what gain is it to build a stupa?*<sup>76</sup>  
(Milarepa)

*Compassion is not religious business, it is human business, it is essential for our own peace and mental stability, it is essential for human survival.*<sup>77</sup> (Dalai Lama XIV)

## Conclusion

Looking at Evans-Wentz in retrospect, we can safely conclude that his body of work and formidable scholarship classifies him as an important and pioneering figure of Tibetology. Whilst this article was being reviewed in preparation for publication, an anonymous reviewer pointed out that Donald S. Lopez, Jr., “like many very orthodox Buddhists, has an unfavorable bias against Evans-Wentz, probably due to Wentz’s Theosophical and Hindu connections.” This reviewer suggested that it might be emphasized that Evans-Wentz’s four pioneering works had, in fact, “a beneficial, even monumental influence on the Buddhist Movement in the West, and that as with all pioneering works of this nature, where very little is known concerning the nature of the teachings... there is bound to be many mistakes.” This reviewer expresses his amazement at the small amount of mistakes either in the translations or in Evans-Wentz’s excellent commentaries and the writer of this article cannot but wholeheartedly agree.

As regards Evans-Wentz’s sincerity towards the teachings which are propagated in his books, one only needs to consider the way he lived. Although he had a considerable amount

of money at his disposal, he was never enticed by luxury and riches, and his lifestyle was always simple and frugal. His groundbreaking efforts to make public the material contained in his Tibetan tetralogy gave many readers the opportunity to acquaint themselves with esoteric matters in general and Tibetan Buddhism in particular. The fact that Oxford University Press has deemed it important enough to republish his tetralogy in 2000, is proof enough of its value. Its republication is an assurance of Evans-Wentz's status as a classic occult writer whose books are still appreciated in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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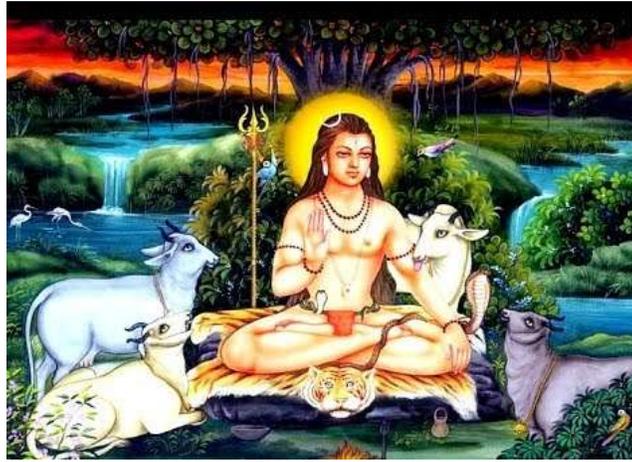
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# The Lesser-Known Nāth Yoga Sect and Its Insightful Metaphysics

Vijay Srināth Kanchi and Sunil Salunke



Gorakhnāth<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

Among the prominent Indian philosophical systems that aim for the attainment of the highest state of consciousness, and thus realize absolute truth, Yoga occupies an important place. While the Yoga technique systematized by Patanjali with its eight limbs (*AsTānga Yoga*) is very popular in both the east and the west, there are many lesser-known yoga streams in India with a varied number of limbs. These varied streams present slightly different philosophical models dealing with the origin of universe and the relation of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul, yet, each stream provides a systematic method for direct realization. One yoga system that attracted less attention, particularly in the academic circles of the west, is the Nāth sect, which has a diverse yet significant philosophy of its own. Although this sect has not attracted much attention among academicians, even today there are millions of practitioners of this sect across the Indian subcontinent, and its teachings are transmitted from preceptors to disciples in an unbroken chain which claims its lineage all the way back to Śiva, the first Yogi.

This paper attempts to bring forth the esoteric tenets of the Nāth school by comparing it with the well-known Patanjali yoga system. The paper uses a number of Sanskrit terms and expressions which for want of English equivalents, are explained in the footnotes at the end of the article.

## Introduction

Yoga is one of the most widely recognized features of Indian culture. Much of its popularity in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries is due to the contributions of yoga advocates like Yogananda, Mahesh Yogi, B.K.S. Iyengar, Ramdev Baba, etc. However, the health-conscious psyche of the modern man is more focused on the *Bahiranga Yoga* or

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the externalities, equating aerobic exercises with yoga and overlooking the more profound inner aspects and the ultimate object of human life. Indeed, yoga aims at gaining mastery over mind and in bringing about cessation of all mental activities, in addition to conditioning the physical body and the life force. The yoga tradition holds the view that, conquering mental activity will lead to different elevated levels of consciousness and at each level, as the practitioner progresses, many supra-mundane powers are bestowed upon the practitioner, and many seemingly miraculous and bizarre phenomena befall within the ordinary realm of a Yogi.

India had seen the birth of many great Yogis and saints who, despite attaining their spiritual objective and the highest aim of human life, continued their physical existence as torchbearers, preaching and grooming their disciples—out of their boundless compassion. The folklore of India, Nepal and Tibet are replete with the accounts of superhuman Yogis who claimed to have acquired total control over all physical phenomenon—including death—through an obscure science called “Kaya Siddhi”<sup>2</sup> by which they are said to have become immortal. Their disciples claim that these masters still dwell upon this earth in physical form and appear before the serious practitioner at will to assist them in assailing the daunting path of Yoga; for yoga is essentially a practice and not a theory, requiring proper instructions and guidance by a competent guru. Such accounts are extant with respect to the mysterious “Nāth Sāmpradāya”<sup>3</sup> in legends that are in vogue in states spanning across the eastern and western ends of India such as Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Punjab, Maharashtra, Kathiawar region of Gujarat, and even as far as North-West Frontier Province (Sindh and Baluchistan regions of Pakistan) and Nepal. They talk, quite reverently, of Nav Nāths or Nine Masters, who are venerated as Lord Śiva incarnates who, defying death and all the other shackles of nature, dwell in physical and esoteric planes without being recognized by ordinary humans.

### Who are the Nav Nāths?

Navanth are representative of nine robust saints in the Hindu religion. Tradition has a view that, Lord Sri Krishna directed them to reincarnate in the time of Kali Yuga (the present era of Hindu time scale) to reinvigorate the Yogic tradition. By His direction, nine Yogis of previous *yugas*—Kavi Narayan, Hari, Antariksha, Prabuddha, Pippalayan, Avirhotra, Drumila, Chamas and Karbhajan reincarnated into Machindra Nāth, Goraksh Nāth, Jalander Nāth, Kanif Nāth, Charpat Nāth, Nagesh Nāth, Bharat Nāth, Revan Nāth and Gahini Nāth respectively.

Like many other Yoga schools, Nāth *sāmpradāya* also draws its lineage to Lord Śiva and Guru Dattātreya—the two mythological and mystical figures of Indian tradition. But at a more mundane level, Nāth *sāmpradāya* is known to have been founded by Gorakshanāth or Gorakhnāth and formed into a well-organized religious sect. He is reputed to have been the disciple of Matsyendranāth and the grand-disciple of Adināth. Allen M. Briggs states that Matsyendranāth was the Avalokitesvara (one of the Bodhisattvas in Buddhism with magical powers and unlimited compassion) of Ceylon who was called to Nepal to break Goraksha’s long mental concentration which caused no rain to fall in that region for twelve years.<sup>4</sup> Matsyendranāth is identified as the Buddhist protector of Nepal whose rivalry with Goraksha is legendary. It is said that Matsyendranāth found Gorakshanāth on a dung heap as a boy of twelve (probably somewhere in Punjab) and made him his disciple. Gorakshanāth eventually gained victory over him and brought Śaivism back into Nepal, partly banishing Buddhism from that land. The *sāmpradāya* holds that Adināth is none other than Lord Śiva himself and Gorakshnāth also is looked upon and revered as identical with Śiva. (Hinduism holds the view that once you attain the highest realm, you become one and identical with the God). Nāth Sāmpradāya’s origins are attributed to him, and his sect has an enormous influence throughout the Indian subcontinent. Places as far as Bengal (Eastern India) and Kathiawar, Gujarat (western India) claim on the strength of their longstanding local traditions to be the place of his birth and

superhuman activities. The literature of these regions are full of references to Gorakhnāth and his disciples, and claim he appeared and disappeared freely in different places at the same time, and sometimes at different times, by virtue of his supernatural yogic powers, in order to shower his blessings upon the people. Keeping aside these claims and counter claims about his time and place of birth, what can be unequivocally stated is the fact that Gorakhnāth was one of most influential personalities India has ever produced after Lord Buddha and Adi Śankarāchārya. His personality and teachings bore such a deep impact on the psyche and religious practices of the people of this land and maintained sway over them for so many centuries that even today there are thousands of followers of Nāth cult in India, rigorously practicing the path of his yoga in Ashrams, and even in jungles, to say nothing of the millions of household devotees.

Nāth Yogis, the followers of Nāth-sāmpradāya, founded by Gorakhnāth are also known as Siddha Yogis as they are understood to attain *siddhi* or self-fulfillment while living in this gross body. Darśini Yogis is another name given to them as they are expected to acquire *darśan*, true vision or perfect insight into ultimate character of reality. They are not expected to aim at or be content with any lower form of Siddhi, occult power or vision, which are trifling things to a true practitioner of Yoga. A Yogi who attains highest state of self-realization is called as *Avadhūta*, for whom the duality of right and wrong, purity and impurity have no meaning. He rises above the forces and laws of nature, and is beyond all distinctions. Sometimes, his demeanor may resemble that of a child or a mad man and only a sagacious eye can distinguish him from the rest.

### **Mystery of Age and Times of Nāth Gurus**

Gorakshnāth, one of the most illustrious Yogis of Nav Nāth Sāmpradāya, is held to have lived in 8th Century AD, the same time as that of Guru Rinpoche or Padmasambhava, the founder of Tibetan Buddhism well known for his superhuman Tantrik powers, though nothing concrete is ever established about the time of

Gorakshnāth's actual physical existence. Legends abound of Yogis who lived around 8<sup>th</sup> century AD such as Kamala Sila,<sup>5</sup> Padmasambhava, Adi Śankara,<sup>6</sup> etc., who displayed various supernormal powers including transmigrating into dead bodies. Such powers were deemed to be commonplace during those times, as the life sketches of a great many Yogis of that period suggest. Dr. Mohan Singh in his book *Gorakhnāth and Medieval Hindu Mysticism*<sup>7</sup> suggested that GorakshNāth probably lived in the 9th century and belonged to Punjab. Some other scholars such as Sylvan Levi (1905), the French Orientalist and Indologist and Dr. Muhammad Shahidullah held the view that this illustrious founder of the Nāth-Yogi sect must have lived in the seventh century, if not earlier. Quite enigmatically there is a tradition recorded by an unknown author, whose work<sup>8</sup> is available in the library of Pratap Philosophy Center, Amalner, Maharashtra, India titled "An Introduction to Nāth-Yoga" which records certain strong traditionally held views and states that Jesus Christ got training in Yoga from a Nāth-Yogi teacher in the Himalayan region, possibly under the discipleship of GorakshNāth or one of his chief disciples. This view gets support from the great scholar Akshaya Kumar Benerjea in his *Philosophy of Gorakshnāth*<sup>9</sup> wherein he also recounts these traditional claims. Even today the folklore of Kashmir claims that in his early twenties Jesus made a brief sojourn to Kashmir while on his world travels. Many places in Kashmir are still associated with this strange yet questionable event. There is a tomb associated with Jesus in Srinagar called Roza bal, or Rauza bol, which means "tomb of the prophet" that points east to west, according to Jewish tradition. Stephen Knapp states that "this is the burial place of Yuz Asaph (or Asaf), The name Yuz Asaph is said to relate to Jesus"<sup>10</sup> The early manhood years of Jesus, world scholars admit, is obscure and shrouded in mystery and no one knows for certainty if Jesus had ever been on a world tour; however some researchers claim, he undertook an extensive tour and became enlightened before he was acclaimed as Son of God in Jerusalem. While Christianity's alleged linkage to Nāth

tradition is limited to Jesus' supposed encounter with some Nāth guru, Islam is more closely intertwined with the Nāth sect and Muhammad and the Sufi tradition that thrived in Indian subcontinent are linked to Gorakhnath. Professor G.W. Briggs claims in his work on Nāth cult that "A bit of record strangely states that he was the foster-father and teacher of Muhammad; and another fragment reports him as having taught Guga the Muslim creed. In Sind he is known as Dātar Jāmil Shah."<sup>11</sup> Briggs further adds that Guga, also known as Zahra Pir was a Rajput who finally became a Muslim (Muslim) and the disciple of Gorakshanāth.<sup>12</sup>

There are many records which claim that Gorakhnāth was a contemporary of Kabir, the poet Saint. Some curious records, which probably were invented by the disciples and followers of Guru Nanak and Kabir to extol the mastery of occult powers by their gurus, claim that Guru Nanak and Kabir (15<sup>th</sup> Century AD) once had individual contests with Gorakshanāth in a show of occult powers, wherein Gorakshanāth was overpowered in the display and was subdued. These stories apparently were crafted more out of faith and reverence to their masters than for any historically correct episodes. In some of the works attributed to Gorakhnāth, he calls himself as the son of Matsyendranāth and grandson of Adināth. Saint-poet Bhartrihari (5<sup>th</sup> Century AD) was also credited to have been a disciple of Gorakhnāth! Such is the enigmatic nature of the age and times of Nāth-Yogis and the origin of their *sāmpradāya*. If we do not discard these claims outright as mere myths and folklore, as deeper study of these tales compels us not to, then the only plausible solution seems to be that Gorakhnāth must have been an adept Yogi who conquered death and appeared and reappeared at different times at his will.

Unfortunately India has a poor tradition of maintaining the accurate historical records and the emphasis had always been on the philosophical content rather than on the records of time and events. Malcolm McLean (1998: 14), points out "India is not interested in historical detail but in the meaning that the lives [of the

saints] had for the devotees and which only the true devotees comprehend."<sup>13</sup>

### Distinctive Marks of Nāth-Yogis

A Nāth Yogi is also sometimes called KanphataYogi after the third and final stage of the initiation by the guru, when the central hollows of both the ears are pierced in a ceremony, and two large ear-rings are placed in them. The rings worn by the Yogi are known as *Mudras*, *Darshans*, *Kundals* or *Pabitris*. The other monastic members of this order who have not yet undergone the final ceremony of having their ears split but still lead a life of austerities and renounced worldly connections are called *Aughars*. A distinctive feature of both *Aughars* and *Darshini Yogis* is that they wear a sacred thread or *Upavita* or *Janeo* made up of woolen material with a ring called *Pabitri* attached to it. A whistle called *Nada* (meaning primordial sound) and a *Rudraksha* or a rosary bead hang on the *Pabitri*. The *Nada* or whistle symbolizes the *Anāhata Nada* or unbroken sound of *Pranava* (Omkar). The *Rudraksha* (*lit.* the eye of Rudra or Śiva) is the symbol of super conscious vision.

### Schools Contemporaneous with Nāth Yoga

At the time of Ādi Śankara's<sup>14</sup> birth (generally held to be around 8th century AD), *Vāmachāra*<sup>15</sup> (*lit.* the left-handed practice) and other Tantric Practices were at their peak and the inclination of the religious practitioners was toward occult powers, sorcery and witchcraft. And so, Ādi Śankara did all he could to banish Tantra from this land and revive *Vedāntic* tradition (the tradition which upholds the inerrancy and supremacy of Vedas and follows their rules and injunctions). Śankara eventually succeeded and while Tantric practices generally declined in India, it found its footing in Tibet, Bhutan and other provinces where it managed to flourish, though some pockets in India such as Bengal, Chattisgarh, Maharastra and Kerala are presumed to have retained these Mantra and Tantra practices undercover. Tantra and yoga were closely intertwined during this period.

Tantra relied on the five “M”s for gaining extra ordinary powers and a glimpse of the ecstatic bliss that accompanies super consciousness. The five “M”s include Maithuna (Sex), Māmsa (meat), Matsya (fish), Madya (wine) and Mudra (could mean parched grain or postures) which are taboo and forbidden by orthodoxy. There were other *Vāmachāra sampradayins* including Aghoris—the ash smeared naked ascetics who lived in *smashans* (cremation grounds) or on dung-hills and professed attainment of occult as well as spiritual powers through the use of forbidden substances and methods. They practiced drinking of alcohol and urine to quench thirst and flesh of a human corpse for food. Human skulls were used as bowls to collect and eat food. Interestingly, the only meat they refused to eat was horse-flesh. This is because, some argue, they excluded themselves from the Vedic Asvamedha or horse sacrifice.<sup>16</sup> There were Mantra Yogis who held that serious recitation of and contemplation on certain syllables or Mantra while fixing the gaze on various parts of the body such as toe, tip of the nose etc., would qualify them to acquire super normal powers. Works like *Prapancha Sāra* and *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, which are presumed to have been written during that time, elucidated the many worldly gains that a practitioner can earn through such yogic practices. The eight Siddhis, namely *Añima*, *Mahima*, *Laghima*, *Garima*, *Prapti*, *Prakamya*, *Ēsitwa* and *Vasitwa*, which are supposed to enable a Yogi to become the smallest, the largest, the lightest, the heaviest etc., were the objects of attainment. It is believed that as the Yogi learns to ascend each of the seven Chakras, he attains the above stated eight Siddhis. The Tantriks were followed in the course of time by Sādhs, Siddhas (adepts of different yogic orders) and Nāths and the succession was taken up later by the saints of the *Bhakti* (devotion) tradition. All these schools, with some variations among their practices and sometimes deriving from one another, were equally in vogue for a considerable period of time.

## The Main Tenets of Yogic Cults

For all the above mentioned yogic cults and orders, the microcosm or the human body is a miniature replica of macrocosm or the universe. Whatever one finds on the large scale is very much present in a minuscule fashion in the gross human body. If one finds sun and the moon in the sky, the same can be found represented in the human body as well. The sacred rivers of India—Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati and their sacred confluence at Prayag are also thought of as microcosmic realities in the human body. In the same fashion, the Ultimate Reality connoted by Lord Śiva is represented by the human soul—the difference being, the former is unlimited and the soul of the universe while the latter is limited and is the soul of the human body.

For these Yogis, *The Bhagavad Gita* (The Song of the Lord) and other ancient scriptures carry a hidden meaning that is not outwardly revealed. They seek to read the hidden nuances or esoteric meaning attached to every verse or *sloka*. For example, in the eighth chapter of *The Bhagavad Gita* viz., “Vignana Yoga,” Lord Krishna talks about two paths the Yogis take while leaving their mortal body—*Uttarāyaṇa* and *Dakshīyaṇa*<sup>17</sup>—and says that those who depart from their mortal coil during *Uttarāyaṇa* would attain salvation and those leaving *through* the *Dakshīyaṇa* would eventually return to this mortal world. For Nāth yoga practitioners, this is symbolic of the two yogic paths of the Ida and Pingala Nadis (the left and right channels) in the human body. They argue that if the meaning of the slokas is taken at face value, it would wrongly mean that all those whose souls depart in *Uttarāyaṇa*, in *Sukla Paksha*<sup>18</sup> and in the daytime, would all eventually attain Moksha (salvation) irrespective of their karma, which is contrary to the very foundations of Hindu Philosophy. It is a well-known fact that many saintly figures left their mortal bodies in *Dakshīyaṇa* or even in the night (darkness), and many apparently sinful persons die during *Uttarāyaṇa*, hence, the necessity to understand the subtle meanings conveyed in scriptures such as the “Gita” from a yogic point of view.

Indeed, the Yogis assign a parallel meaning to all the slokas of the *Bhagavad Gita*. For example, Yagna, an oft repeated concept in the Gita, is not, as it is normally understood, the fire sacrifice involving a physical activity, rather, it is a process of energy conversion from one form to another. For yogis, every transition or conversion of energy is seen as an intermediate state (*Bardo* in Tibetan Buddhism), or a *sandhya* (twilight period—the meeting point between day and night) and hence a crucial opportunity for attainment. This is the reason why Lord Krishna repeatedly speaks of *The Bhagavad Gita* as a secret doctrine (*Guhya* and *Guhyatama Śāstram*).

Similarly, it is maintained that Upanishads like *BrihadāraNyaka* and *Chāndogya* also carry a secret meaning meant only for Yogis. Yagyavalka's (a 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE sage and philosopher) apparently naïve replies to the Brahma-vids (assembly of the sagacious) in the *BrihadāraNyaka Upanishad*, was a coded version of a secret doctrine. Thus it is held that, the verses of four Vedas, which superficially appear to clamor for mundane accomplishments such as cattle, disciples, bountiful crops, plentiful rain, etc., are, in fact, codified messages representing higher realities that follow a definite syntax and sequence which can be only deciphered by a competent Yogi of considerable attainment. If this was not so, there is no point to the claim that those verses, which outwardly seem to be mere eulogies and supplication for mundane attainments, are the highest knowledge, and that they originated directly from the Lord Himself. This kind of esoteric usage of language is called *sandhyā*

*bhāsha* or the twilight language, which is found to be extensively employed in many eastern religious works, particularly those belonging to the Tāntric creed.

**Nāth Yogis, the followers of Nāth-sāmpradāya, founded by Gorakhnāth are also known as Siddha Yogis as they are understood to attain *siddhi* or self-fulfillment while living in this gross body. Darśini Yogis is another name given to them as they are expected to acquire *darśan*, true vision or perfect insight into ultimate character of reality. They are not expected to aim at or be content with any lower form of Siddhi, occult power or vision, which are trifling things to a true practitioner of Yoga.**

### **Nāth Yoga and the Human Body**

Within the physical human body, Yoga and Tantra envisage a complex system of channels, or *nādis*, carrying energy from the transcendental cosmos that pours in through the crown of the head. This network of *nādis* or energy channels is known as the subtle body, which re-radiates part of its accumulated energy to form the self-generated illusion that the material body experiences as the real world. This radiation is thought of as waste, and is sometimes described as a rat, sucking at the Yogi.

The inner radiations of the subtle body condense along the spinal column as *chakras* (wheels) or *padmas* (lotuses). These are identified in Patanjali's *AsTānga Yoga*, as the seven *chakras*, i.e., the center at the base of the spine, the genitals, the navel, the heart, the throat, center between the eyes and the crown at the top of the head. It is useful to keep in mind that different yogic systems have different numbers of *chakras*, depending on the major sojourns they identify in their spiritual journey. Even Nāth Yoga has sometimes six and sometimes even nine *chakras* identified in the human body. Buddhist Tantra locates *chakras* at the base of the spine, the navel, the throat and the crown of the head only. Each *chakra* corresponds to a progressively higher state of awareness, and hence to different levels of experiences and consequently, to different hitherto unencountered worlds.

Enlightenment is always described in male terms, and is thought to be achieved by driving the energy that is coiled at the base of the spine upwards toward the crown chakra. This dormant energy is denoted in feminine terms (the female kundalini or serpent energy). For the Tibetan Buddhists, *kundalini* is a personification of female energy such as a *dākinī*—(remember the *dākinī* Yeshey Tsogyel, the consort of Guru Padmasambhava, whom Guru Rinpoche transformed into a flying tigress that subdued many demonic forces?) To the Hindu, the crown chakra is the seat of Śiva, and the *kundalini* is a manifestation of Śakti. By rousing the normally sleeping serpent, and causing it to shoot up through the body to the crown, the Yogi or the Tantrika re-creates the union of the god and the goddess within himself.

Dualism (or sexual dualism as held by Tantriks) exists in the human subtle body as two vital channels—*ida* and *pingaLa*. The *ida* (Tantrik Buddhists call it *lalana*), which is red, runs along the left of the spinal cord and represents female creative energy, the moon and, ultimately, the void and knowledge. The *pingaLa* (Tantrik Buddhist's *rasana*), which is grey, runs to the right of the spinal cord and is the male creative energy, corresponding to the sun and, ultimately, compassion and practicality. So long as these two channels remain distinct the individual will continue to be trapped in the cycle of death and rebirth. These two paths are realized only by a Yogi and one who masters these two pathways is supposed to gain total control of birth and death. This is the reason why Buddhist Yoga lays emphasis on wisdom coupled with compassion as the highest virtue of a human being as it denotes union or complete balance between these two currents.

The energy generated during yogic techniques of breath control, while performing the Yogic *Mudras* and *Bandhas*<sup>19</sup> stimulates the kundalini, which blends with the unshed semen to produce *bindu* (purified semen). Bindu, like the fetus, is composed of the five elements—earth, water, fire, air and ether—and its formation in the body represents a form of conception. The bindu breaks away from the two channels and generates a new, central channel

called *sushumna* (or *avadhūtika*, the cleansed one) along which it travels to the higher chakras, and ultimately to the “lotus at the top of the head.” There it unifies all the elements of which it is composed, as well as all the dual aspects of the practitioner. The Yogi, or for that matter a Tantrik, therefore, uses various techniques such as Prānāyāma and Āsana or even ritualistic sex to fuel a kind of internal alchemy, thus transforming the material (unshed) semen into spiritual energy in order to unite the various elements of the self.

It is also said that a Yogi who practices with undivided concentration will hear ten sounds at various stages of the practice. These are the tinkling of small bells, the sound of a conch shell, the flute, the *veena* (the traditional string instrument of India), the sound of thunder, etc. Finally, the Yogi comes to realize that all these sounds—including all those sounds that are produced in the world—originate from one unbroken Omkara (Sound of God) which also resonates in his body at the *Anahata Chakra* or Heart Chakra.<sup>20</sup> In fact, all the traditional musical instruments of India—such as *veena*, *mridanga* (a traditional percussion instrument), flute, etc., are based on and are representative of these ten sounds experienced in yogic trance. Ultimately, the Yogi realizes that these sounds are produced because of the movement of ten *Vāyus* (wind currents) in the newly opened Nādi (channels) in his body. He also witnesses certain dramatic visuals through his inner eye in the realm of five Ākāshas, such as: 1) Gunarahita Ākāsha (quality-less space) 2) Para Ākāsha (The Other space, which is different from the space of the physical world), 3) Maha Ākāsha (enormous space), 4) Tatwa Ākāsha (space of primordial principles) and 5) Sūrya Ākāsha (space of sun or illumination). In these *ākāshas* a *Sādhaka* (practitioner) witnesses what are known as ChitkaLās whose description closely matches what Arjuna witnessed during the *Viswarupa Sandarshana* (witnessing of Cosmic Being and the empyrean) during the Kurukshetra war in the *Mahābhārata*.

Another distinctive feature of Nāth Yoga is its understanding of the human body (both gross and subtle), particularly its contention that

each Sanskrit syllable has a distinct place of origin in the body. For example, the syllables Va, Ṣa, Sha, Sa are said to originate in the *Mooladhara Chakra* or base *chakra* near the anus. The *SwadhisTāna Chakra* is supposed to be a six petalled lotus where the syllables Ba Bha, Ma, Ya, Ra and La manifest. In the same vein, the entire syllables of Sanskrit derive their origin from the subtle sounds within the body. Thus the yogic view holds that Sanskrit is not a language with an erratically chosen set of syllables to represent various sounds; rather each syllable has a definite meaning and place of origin in the physical and subtle bodies as well as in the cosmos. This is why Sanskrit is judged to be “the language of the Gods.”

### The Religion and Philosophy of the Nāth-Sect

Like the Yoga of Patanjali, the Yoga system followed by Nāth Yogis is a system of physical, psychical, moral and spiritual discipline for the establishment of perfect mastery over the body and the mind and ultimately for the realization of truth and the attainment of absolute liberation from all kinds of bondage and sorrow. A person, so long as he or she leads a mundane life, is not conscious of the immense powers latent within. Through the practice of Yoga, these powers are awakened and manifested, and the person then realizes the glories of his or her own inner nature. Control over the body, senses and mental propensities will lead the yogic practitioner to experience such knowledge and strength, such freedom from want and desire, such calmness and tranquility, such beauty and blissfulness, as appear impossible in the ordinary course of life.

The religious culture of the Nāth-Yogi sect has a *popular* aspect and an *esoteric* aspect. In its popular aspect the culture of the sect consists principally in the ritualistic and devotional worship of Śiva, conceived as the Supreme Lord of the universe and the highest ideal of the Yogis, and of Gorakhnāth, as the great earthly incarnation of Śiva. Śiva is the ultimate ground of being, the regulator of the phenomenal universe endowed with noblest qualities, unlimited power and wisdom and the highest deliverer from all bondage and suffer-

ing. The mercy and generosity of Śiva are especially emphasized. He is conceived as equally accessible to all classes of men and women from the highest to the lowest, irrespective of their caste and creed. This conception of Śiva’s supremacy and liberality made Him the most popular God among all classes of people, and particularly among the men and women of those classes which are deprived by Hindu orthodoxy of the right to take part in Vedic sacrifices and solemnized worship.

Philosophically bent Ācharyas (teachers) of this sect tend to equate Śiva with the Vedantic Brahman; but with a chief difference. Unlike the non-dualist Vedantists, they do not regard the Power of Śiva (Śakti- the manifested world) as unreal or illusory. They do not agree with the Vedantists’ argument that the phenomenal world is a false or deceptive product of an illusory Power— an unreal Maya or Cosmic Ignorance. For these Yogis, the world is, from the standpoint of phenomenal existence, as real as Śiva or the Supreme spirit. However, from the stand point of the Supreme reality, this world is transitory and hence has a limited real Yet, *it is a reality*. Śakti or the power of Śiva is no different from Śiva and is inseparable from Him. Śiva is held as having a static as well as a dynamic aspect. In his static aspect, He is Pure Spirit, Absolute Reality, Transcendent Consciousness, Eternal Immovable Being, and in his dynamic aspect, He is self-manifesting Power, Intelligent Will and Eternal Becoming. Thus Śiva or Brahman (Absolute Reality) is Being as well as Becoming, Spirit as well as Power, Witness-consciousness as well as self-evolving cause of the world of diversities. In His dynamic aspect—in His aspect as the self-manifesting, self-modifying Power originating, sustaining and regulating the world-order— Śiva Himself appears as Śakti; yet his non-duality is unaffected. Hence in the culture of devotion and popular worship, Śiva is sometimes worshiped as the sole Lord and sometimes worshiped along with Śakti, in the form of *Arthanāriswara*. In the former, the unity of the static and the dynamic aspect is implied, both the aspects being mentioned in the mantras and hymns; while in the latter, the two aspects are separately emphasized as two

Divine Personalities—one male and the other female—eternally and inalienably wedded to each other. Along with the worship of Śiva-Śakti, various forms of Tantric rituals and practices have also entered into this sect. The spiritual aspirants of this sect, as in any other religion or practice, have divergent inclinations toward the various paths—*Bhakti* (devotion), *Jñāna* (Knowledge) or *Dhyāna* (meditation)—which can lead them to salvation. The *Bhaktas* (devotees) of this sect think of themselves as finite and world-bound children of Śiva-Śakti and worship this infinite eternal spiritual ground of themselves and the world with all the admiration, reverence, love and devotion in their hearts. *Jñānis* (the enlightened ones) of this sect prefer to think of the self as pure spirit essentially distinguished from the body and the mind and unconditioned by spatial and temporal limitations and, as such, identical with the Absolute Spirit or Śiva. They become not only indifferent to outer worldly concerns, but also indifferent to all forms of ritualistic worship and the culture of emotional devotion, and devote themselves mainly to contemplation and meditation on the purely spiritual nature of the self and the identity of the individual self and the Absolute Spirit, of Jiva and Śiva.

### Yoga Concepts

The esoteric aspect of the religious culture of the Nāth sect principally consists in the practice of Yoga. Superficially, the Yoga system approved and adopted by the Nāth Yogis seems to differ slightly from the AsTānga Yoga as advocated by Patanjali. Nāth sect advocates *Shadanga* (six limbed) Yoga as opposed to the eight limbed Yoga of Patanjali. The first two limbs, namely the Yama (abstinences) and the Niyama (vows) are omitted from the list and hence the Yoga of this cult is held to consist of only six limbs. However, closer inspection would reveal the fact that Nāth-Yogis consider Yama and Niyama as obligatory not only to Yogic practitioners but also to every individual because these abstentions and performances are universal moral rules, incumbent upon every member of the society in the interest of the collective good. Though not a formal part of *Shadanga* Yoga great importance is still attached to the observance of Yama and Niya-

ma as preparatory practices. In place of five forms of Yama and five forms of Niyama prescribed by Patanjali, the teachers of the Nāth-Yogi School enumerate ten forms of Yama and ten forms of Niyama. It is of interest here to note that in the Maitrayaniya Upanishad (ca. 200-300 BCE), yoga is described as *Shadanga-Yoga*. But this six limbed Yoga is different from the *Shadanga Yoga* of Nāths and AsTānga Yoga of Patanjali in a minor way. The uniting discipline of the six limbs (*shadanga*), as expounded in the Maitrayaniya-Upanishad are: (1) breath control (*Prāṇāyāma*), (2) sensory inhibition (*pratyahara*), (3) meditation (*dhyana*), (4) concentration (*dharana*), (5) examination (*tarka*), and (6) ecstasy (*samadhi*).

### The Ten forms of Yama

*Ahimsa satyam asteyam brahmacaryam  
kshama dhritih*

*Daya arjavam mitaharah saucham chaiva  
yama dasa.*

As noted earlier, the ten forms of Yama in this and other systems are codified as restraints. The first of these is *Ahimsa* or non-violence or harmlessness to all creatures not only in action but also in thought and speech. *Satyam* is truthfulness that is to be practiced in speech, thought and conduct. *Asteyam* is the practice of temperance or the non-inclination towards the property of any person in any form. *Brahmacarya* is celibacy which demands total control over all sensual propensities and particularly the sexual appetite. Strict conservation of the physical and mental energy is sought. *Kshama* describes forgiveness of the faults of others. *Dhriti* can be described as patience coupled with fortitude under all circumstances. *Daya*, compassion or benevolence is the next prerequisite for spiritual aspirants. *Ārjavam* is simplicity in life. *Mitahāra* denotes balance or measure in dietary practices. *Saucham* is the concept that describes the maintenance of a pure mind in a pure body or purity in thoughts words and deeds.

These ten forms of self-restraint in the outer conduct as well as in the inner thoughts, feelings and desires are called Yama and are es-

sential in fitting the body and the mind for the practice of Yoga.

### The Ten forms of Niyama or Vows

*Tapah santosha aastikyam daanam  
Iswara-pujanam  
Siddhaanta-vyaakhya-sravanam hri mati cha  
japo hutam  
Niyamaa dasa samprokta yoga-saastra  
visaaradaih.*

The first of the Niyamas or duties and observances meant for living a healthy and spiritually enlightened and liberated life is *Tapah* or persistence, preservation and austerity. *Tapah* is meant to make the body and mind fit to face any inclemency and to discipline the mind from craving luxuries. *Santosha* is the practice of contentment coupled with a feeling of dwelling ever in happiness and the effort to be accepting and optimistic at all times. *Aastikyam* is faith in the authenticity of Vedas and instructions of the guru. It also denotes unquestioning belief in the existence of God. The practice of charity and sharing is known as *Dana*, which enables one to cultivate the sense of unity with all life. Unless one sees other beings as similar and equal to oneself, one would have little inclination to act generously or charitably. *Iswara-pujanam*, is the devoted worship of God as the True Unchanging Reality and is supposed to cleanse one's mind of impure thoughts and enable one to realize the God in all animate and inanimate things. *Siddhaanta-vyaakhya-sravanam* is the systematic hearing (or study) of the scriptures and Yoga-sastras, in the light of the spiritual experiences of an enlightened guru. This is similar, in essence, to the *Sravana* (attentive listening), *Manana* (mental repetitions) and *Nididhyāsa* (deep contemplative meditation), as put forth by Patanjali. *Hri* means sense of humility and also remorse at the perpetration of any wrong deed or thought. The cultivation of an acute intelligence that can reflect, understand and reconcile conflicting ideas is called *Mati*. A powerful tool for restraining the *citta* (the faculty of memory) from worldly indulgences and sharpening it like an arrow and giving it a one pointed focus is *Japa*, or mantric repetition of the Divine name. *Huta* is the practice of offer-

ing sacrifices to God in the form of food, drink and other objects. As the *Bhagavad Gita* states, *Yagna* (sacrifice) is constantly practiced in the universe in one form or another by all objects, both animate and inanimate, and that sacrifice, which is performed as an oblation to the Supreme Being, is the highest, hence, the significance of *Huta*.

### Asana

Of the remaining six limbs, some followers have laid special emphasis on *Āsana* and *Prāṇāyāma*—the chief elements of Hatha Yoga—to establish control over the psycho-physical system. Hatha Yoga is held to increase the power of the will, which is regarded as the basis for rapid progress in the spiritual endeavor. Hatha is a Sanskrit word meaning “sun” (ha) and “moon” (tha), representing opposing energies: hot and cold, male and female, positive and negative, similar to but not completely analogous to the yin/yang of Taoist or Daoist Philosophy. By balancing two opposites, such as the *ida* (mental) and *pingaLa* currents, the *sushumna nadi* (current of the Self) is said to rise, opening various *chakras* until *samadhi* is attained. Interestingly, even dance was held to be a means of attaining the highest objective of human existence in ancient India. Bharata Muni, known to be the first systematic expounder of dance as science in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, described 108 static *nātya kāranas* in his *Nātya Shastra* which bear semblance to the *Āsanās*. The dynamic aspects—*ida* and *pingaLa* are represented in the dynamism of *Nātya Yoga* (union with the Supreme through dance) by *lāsya* (kinesthetics) as female and *tāndava* (strong movements in dance) as male aspects. These *nātya kāranas* along with the elements of *Bhakti Yoga* are embodied in the contemporary form of *Bharatanatyam* (a south Indian dance form) where the marriage of Śiva and Śakti is depicted as one of the main themes of the dance.

Another unique feature of Nāth Yoga is *Mudra* or special exercises designed to affect the energy flow in the body and the nervous system. Although there is no mention of *Mudras* in the *Yoga Darshana* of Patanjali, this healing modality is given a prominent place in the Nāth

system. Similarly, Shatkriyas (purificatory exercises), for the maintenance of sound health, are another special feature of this sect that was not part of Patanjali's Yoga Sastra. Hatha-Yoga describes 84,000 body postures that mimic 8.4 million animal species supposed to be present in the creation. Mimicking them is meant to bestow the strength, vitality and other unique qualities of those creatures to the practitioners as well as enable him/her to become one with the creation. Of the 84,000 Āsanās mentioned in various treatises on Hatha-Yoga, 84 Āsanās are thought to be the most important and especially useful for Yogic practices. However, greatest value is attached to four kinds of Āsanās—Siddhāsana, Padmāsana, Simhāsana and Bhadrāsana. Siddhāsana (meaning accomplished, perfect or adept), is regarded as the most conducive for stimulating the Kundalini Śakti. Siddhāsana is said to be the purifier of all the 72000 Nadis and the door to liberation.

### PrāNāyāma

PrāNāyāma is an essential and inseparable aspect of Āsanās. It deals with the control of *prana* or the vital power in the human body by the conquest of five vital forces namely, PrāNa, Apāna, Vyāna, Samāna and Udāna. The merger of Prāna with Apāna is considered to bring about the dawn of true knowledge in the practitioner. Udāna is believed to catalyze the upward movement of Kundalini as well as the upward movement of unshed semen. In a normal and healthy human being the whole process of inhaling and exhaling with a brief period of suspension of breath in between the two is carried out in about four seconds. This process continues irrespective of whether the person is awake or asleep, and in a 24 hour period, it is carried out 21,600 times. The technique of PrāNāyāma consists in voluntarily lengthening, deepening and regulating the respiratory function. It is said that the brief and imperceptible state between the normal inhaling and exhaling holds a key to the door of realization, and if the interlude between the in and out breathing is concentrated upon, total cessation of mental activity can be attained. This view is held by the *VigNāna Bhairava Tantra* as well. The world renowned Saint

Rajneesh (1931–1990) fully concurs with this view. Eight kinds of withholding the breathing (Kumbhaka) are followed by the yogic practitioners and are greatly extolled in many other Yoga treatises. They are: *Surryabhedana*, *Ujjayi*, *Ṣitkari*, *Bhramari*, *Ṣitali*, *Bhastrika*, *Mūrchha*, and *Plāvani*.<sup>21</sup> *Hatha-Yoga Pradipika*, whose authorship is attributed to Swami Swātāmārāma, a 15th century India sage, glorifies the wonderful results that one can obtain by the practice of these *Kumbhakas*.

After the practice of Āsana and PrāNāyāma, Mahāmudra (the great gesture) is to be practiced. Ten such higher forms of Mudras with Bandhas and Bedhas are expounded in *Hathayoga Pradipika*. They are: *Maha-bandha*, *Maha-bedha*, *Khechari*, *Uddyana*, *Mula-bandha*, *Jalandhara-bandha*, *Viparitarani*, *Vajroli* and *Śakti Chalana*.<sup>22</sup> The aim of all these Mudras is to activate the *Sushumna Nadi* that is held to lie between *Ida* and *PingaLa Nadis*.

The other limbs, viz., *Pratyāhara*, *Dhāraṇa*, *Dhyāna* and *Samādhi* are identical to both Patanjali and Nāth-Yogi systems. Attainment of Mukti (enlightenment or salvation) while living (Jivanmukta), is strongly encouraged by the *Nāth sāmpradāya*. When a Yogi perfectly realizes Śiva within himself, he is supposed to become inwardly identical with Śiva, though outwardly he may live and move in the world as a normal individual among others. This system also professes that yogic concentration may be practiced even upon finite and non-eternal beings, and that such practice leads to the attainment of various *siddhis* (supernormal occult powers). Such concentration, however efficient, cannot generally lead to the final spiritual goal of human life and may even cause the downfall of the aspirant. When the mind, instead of concentrating upon any relative ideal or object, is concentrated upon the Supreme Ideal and the whole energy is directed towards the realization of the identity of the self with the Absolute Spirit, then the process becomes Yoga in the truest sense of the term, and is called Raja-Yoga (the kingly union). All true followers of this sect agree that the practice of Raja-Yoga should be the end and aim of every Yogi and that Hatha-Yoga (yoga of physical body) should be practiced as

subsidiary to the practice of Raja-Yoga. They assert that without Raja-Yoga, Hatha-Yoga is useless for a spiritual aspirant, and that without Hatha-Yoga, Raja-Yoga is ordinarily impracticable since psycho-physical obstacles in the path are not easy to overcome.

Mantra-Yoga is also held in high esteem, wherein it is believed that repetition of and concentration upon particular mystic mantras in accordance with prescribed methods and procedures produces wonderful results and is greatly helpful in spiritual *Sadhāna* (practice). *Praṇava* or OM is regarded as the highest mantra and intensive search for and concentration upon *Nāda*, the subtlest and purest sound that is held to emanate unbroken and continuous from the *Anāhata Chakra* of *Hridaya* (Heart chakra, hence the name *Anāhata-nāda*), is believed to be a potent means for the illumination of consciousness and the vision of *Brahman* or the all-pervading consciousness. This practice is known as *Nādānusandhāna* (merger with the primordial sound).

### **Ajapa-Gayatri and Its Significance**

Another unique feature of *Nāth-yogi sāmpradāya* lies in its according of a spectacular nature to ordinary breathing process. As noted previously, a normal person breaths 21,600 times during a day. The air that is carried into the body while inhaling (*pūraka*) produces a sound similar to “So” (meaning He or the Universal Spirit in Sanskrit), while the air that moves out (*rechaka*) makes the sound of “Hum” (meaning *Aham* or I or Ego). This natural process of out-breathing and in-breathing is contemplated as the process of the *Jiva*’s going out into the universe and unifying itself with the Universal Self or the Absolute Spirit and then drawing-in the universe or the Universal Self into itself so that the whole being is filled with the Absolute Spirit. Thus it is deemed that a natural attempt is continuously being made through every involuntary act of respiration to unify the individual self with the

Universal Self, the inner with the Outer, the part with the Whole. A spiritual truth-seeker is instructed to pay attention to each breath, as it naturally goes on, with a devoted heart, and to deeply contemplate on its spiritual significance. He is expected to maintain vigil over his own breathing so that no breath, at least in the waking state, passes unnoticed. This is known as *Ajapa-Gayatri*, which is rhythmically recited by every creature in every state. As such, it is a beautiful and sublime conception of our normal breathing function as taught by *Guru GorakhNāth*.

### **Cosmology and Metaphysics**

None of the works attributed to *GorakhNāth* or his school dwell elaborately on the philosophical aspects and stay away from the polemical argumentations with other schools of thought. The emphasis has always been on the practical realization rather than on verbose speculation and logical reasoning. However, occasionally, the works seem to deal with the cosmological sequencing of various *Tattvas* and *Bhutas* and even discusses the sequel of manifestation of the human organism in both the psycho-physical and spiritual planes.

According to the *Nāth* school, *Śiva* is synonymous with *Brahman* or *Paramatma* and is frequently referred as *Para-Sambit*. He is no different from the Absolute spirit and is above and beyond all names and forms, above time and space and causality and relativity, and above all possible objects of intellectual conception and mental imagination. He is self-luminous, self-revealing and self-enjoying, and is realizable directly without any mental process by a *Yogi* in his highest state of *Samadhi*.

The dynamic nature of the Absolute Spirit is splendidly manifested in the beginningless and endless order of the phenomenal universe with its countless orders of *Jivas*. He eternally reveals Himself in innumerable orders of plurality in the magnificent spatiotemporal system, which is called *Jagat*, the ever-changing, ever-

renewing world process. In this ceaseless act of His self-revelation in diverse relative forms, He requires no special will and effort, no change in His blissful and tranquil transcendent self-

consciousness, since His nature is perfectly and eternally dynamic and there is no resisting force of any kind to fight against or overcome. His transcendent character is in no way affected by the spontaneous self-expressions of His eternal and infinite Śakti. The Absolute Spirit is thus eternally Śiva and at the same time eternally Śakti, eternally *Nirguna* (without quality and attribute) and *Niskriya* (activity-less) and eternally *Saguna* (manifest in form)

and *Sakriya* (active and procreating), eternally *Advaita* (non-dual) and eternally *Dvaita* (diverse and divergent).<sup>23</sup> Thus the metaphysical view of GorakhNāth and his school is described as *dwaita-advaita-vivarjita* (devoid of dualism and non-dualism) and *pakshapata-vinirmukta* (free from partisanship and not advocating any special doctrine or refuting others).

Therefore, the Nāth Yogic realization of Ultimate Reality is in perfect tandem with most other major philosophical doctrines of the Eastern religions. However, not surprisingly, since each philosophy attempts to describe in the best possible way the same basic truth, various formulations may give more emphasis to certain aspects of the truth. These attempts appear to differ with one another only superficially owing to the different standpoints taken by various teachers to vociferously put forth a certain understanding of the Absolute Reality which they consider necessary to assert. Nevertheless, the core of their philosophies is the

same, since no true and great philosopher ever dared to bring into the world a new approach or a new school of thought without first attaining its realization.

**Like the Yoga of Patanjali, the Yoga system followed by Nāth Yogis is a system of physical, psychical, moral and spiritual discipline for the establishment of perfect mastery over the body and the mind and ultimately for the realization of truth and the attainment of absolute liberation from all kinds of bondage and sorrow..... Through the practice of Yoga, these powers are awakened and manifested, and the person then realizes the glories of his or her own inner nature.**

Conceptions of the Ultimate Truth as described by different systems can seem to be contradictory. But such inconsistencies are only owing to the limitations of the language and the conceptual capabilities of the human mind. While traveling to a given destination a traveler may not attach much attention to all the stations that fall along the way and his travelogue may not contain a description of them, whereas other passengers may give importance to stations which the former de-

ecided to overlook. Similarly, one's instincts and predispositions greatly influence the language one chooses and so the attributes of the destination he describes would *appear* differently from the description of the same destination by the other travelers. That does not mean that these travelers failed to reach the identical destination. Nor would it mean that the destination of the former was different from the other traveler's destination. In an effort to steer away from such futile argumentation and focus all their energies on realizing the Highest Truth, Nāth Yogis produced no extensive philosophical texts. What philosophical thoughts that were conveyed in their treatises were only meant to convince and discipline the minds dwelling in the lower levels.

From the cosmological and metaphysical points of view, Yogis are *parināmavadins*, akin to Śakti, and as revealed in the temporal order in what is called *parināma* or self-modification, involving the theory of transformation, causation, change, creation, continuity and destruction. Yogis envision the universe as

ceaselessly undergoing alternating phases of *Vikāsa* (expansion or evolution) and *Sankócha* (contraction or involution) resulting in diversification and unification—a point of view which closely matches with the Big-Bang Theory of the modern Astro-Physics.<sup>24</sup> In between the two phases of *sankocha* and *vikasa* in the visible universe, the Nāth-Yogis say, only the Supreme Being or Śiva remains, and in whom time (kal) and space (dik) merge together. From His bosom, the world with all its temporal and spatial limitations spurts out in the form of vibrating universe once the *vikasa* state is resumed. This vibrating universe is the eternal dance of the *Mahā Kāli* on the bosom of *Sadā Śiva* (eternally tranquil transcendental Reality) and is in fact, the inseparable feature of Him. *Sadā Śiva* is incomprehensible to the human mind, and this manifested universe is the quality through which His presence can be inferred. The whole world is composed of the same substance, but it appears as different objects owing to the different frequencies at which it vibrates. Thus *Ākāsha*, *Vāyu*, *Apo*, *Agni* and *Pridhvi* (the five primordial elements) and all their derivatives are essentially constituted by the same substance, but just as water is in a liquid state at one temperature and becomes solid at lesser temperature and vapor at higher temperatures, similarly different vibrating frequencies bring about different qualities to the same substance. The turning of non-physical state of Supreme Being into a vibrating substance which becomes the perceptible universe is regarded as inexplicable mystery which only the Yogis can realize in their *Samādhi* state.

### The Significance of Maha Kali and Śiva

The ultimate reality or the Supreme Soul is worshiped as Śiva by the Nāth-Yogis, while existence and the visible universe is represented by *Mahā Kāli*. *Kāli* is symbolized as dancing eternally on the boundless bosom of Lord Śiva. Students of physics would know that the universe can be mapped using three co-ordinate axes (Length, Breadth, and Height) which stand perpendicular to each other (as though standing on each other's bosom!). Time is a fourth dimension necessary to map an event. But unless the observer is present and

identified, no observable event can be taken as occurring. Events occurring in the absence of an observer fall in the category of uncertainty and are classified as both equally occurring and non-occurring. (Remember Schrödinger's cat?). Hence, it is necessary that we have a fifth dimension that can be assumed to lie perpendicular to other co-ordinate axes (which represent the three-dimensional world with time as its fourth dimension), to indicate the observer or human soul in case of personal events, or the Supreme Soul to map the universal events. This fifth dimension is conceived as Lord Śiva, the Supreme Soul of the universe.

### Nāth-Sect and its Literature

Nāth-cult, which draws its roots from Yogi Gorakhnāth branched out in the course of time into twelve sub sects or *paās*, yet the bond of unity among them in terms of their revered literature and philosophy is intact. The *Yogi sāmpradāya* associated with the name of Gorakhnāth has a vast literature in Sanskrit and other vernacular languages of India. The authorship of a good many works of this sect are attributed to Gorakhnāth himself. Old records in Hindi, Rajasthani and Bengali contain some very instructive and inspiring short poems whose authorship is again attributed to Yogi Maharaj Gorakhnāth. Several Sanskrit treatises such as *Goraksha Samhita*, *Goraksha Śataka*, *Siddha Siddhanta Paddhati*, *Yoga Siddhanta Paddhati*, and many others are considered to have been written by this great Yogi, though whether all these works are originally authored by Gorakhnāth is debated by scholars. What is certain is that all of these treatises contain a great deal of information and instructions which have served as invaluable and proven guides for Yogic practitioners. Matsyendranāth, who is regarded as the Guru of Gorakhnāth, is also held to have authored a number of valuable works, such as: *Matsyendra Samhita*, *Kaula Jnana Nirnaya*, *Kulananda Tantra*, *Jnana Karika*, *Akula Vira Tantra*, etc. Additionally, mention must be made of some of the later Upanishads that are held in high esteem by Yogi practitioners. Some of which are: *Nada-Bindu Upanishad*, *Dhyana-Bindu Upanishad*, *Tejo-Bindu Upanishad*, *Yoga-Chudamani Upanishad*, *Yoga-Sikha Upani-*

shad, Jabala Upanishad, etc. One Upanishad—which is known as *Goraksha Upanishad* is also in vogue among Yogic circles. Mention shall also be made to certain treatises which specialize in yogic practices and concepts and which seem to have been written by later-day disciples of this sect. These include *Nātha Sutra*, *Śiva Gita*, *Avadhuta Gita*, *Śiva Samhita*, *Suta Samhita*, *Dattatreya Samhita*, *Savara Tantra*, *Gheranda Samhita*, *Hatha-yoga Pradipika*, *Jivanmukti Viveka* and *Seetha Ramanjaneya Samvadamu*. *Siddha Siddhanta Samgraha*, *Goraksha Siddhanta Sangraha*, *Goraksha Kaumudi*, *Goraksha Sahasranama* and *Yoga Manjari*.

### The Special Status of a Yogi Over a Philosopher

*An ounce of practice is better than a ton of theorizing.*<sup>25</sup>

The main argument of practitioners of the Yogic school is that just as imagining and rationalizing on a lamp with all its illumination does not cast off darkness and just as subjugation of hunger requires eating of food rather than mere rhetoric on the nature and means to subdue hunger, similarly, mere rationalizing and indulgence in intricate logical arguments about ignorance, its causes and the means to dispel it do not grant anyone with the actual experience of true knowledge. Theorizing and rationalizing is only a first step in convincing and disciplining the mind about the existence of higher states of consciousness and existence. Essentially, the highest truth cannot be inferred nor attained theoretically and only practical experience through systematic discipline of body and mind would eventually lead a person to the highest knowledge. Thus a Yogi is a person in an advanced stage as compared to a philosopher in their mutual quest for realizing, experiencing and attaining True Knowledge.

### Why the Nāth-cult and other Sects Went into Comparative Oblivion

The revival of the *Vedāntic* school by Śankara and others after 8th century CE drew the masses back to traditional religious means and methods. There was general aversion toward some of the ghastly and dastardly practices of

certain Tantrics. Charlatans in the guise of Tantrics with an eye on sexual pleasures and worldly possessions had also contributed to the stigmatization of tantric forms of yoga. Attainment of occult powers and their misuse by unscrupulous elements was also one of the causes of decline. Moral decay and mere insistence on physical postures and outward practices invited strong attacks by learned men, which made the conversion back to Gnana or Jnana Yoga<sup>26</sup> quite easy. Another significant factor that brought about the comparative decline of these cults was the flourishing of the *Bhakti* cult in the later medieval period, particularly the Vaishnava<sup>27</sup> Sāmpradāya. A large number of illustrious saints and reformers such as Sri Chaitanya, Guru Nanak, Tulsidas, Ramananda, Tukaram, etc., who professed the simpler and easier method of Nama-japa and Nama-sankirtana (recitation of the Sacred Name), bore tremendous influence on the religious emotions and sentiments of the classes and masses alike and drove the ascetic Saiva cult and the arduous yogic methods of Nāth-yogi Sāmpradāya into the background.

### Conclusion

With such a deep insight into the psychophysical aspects of human existence and a clear philosophy of life's Ultimate Object, Nāth Yoga occupies an important place in the Indian philosophical system. Though not radically different from what Patanjali's Eight-Limbed Yoga teaches, Nāth Yoga continues to maintain its uniqueness with its greater elaboration of *yama*, *niyama* and its *Shadanga Yoga*. There are still millions of practitioners of this yoga in India and Nepal, but they prefer to stay away from the sight of ordinary humans and are mostly confined to their monasteries located in the secluded regions of the lower Himalayan ranges. With their distinctive appearance and rather striking features, Nāth yogis are easy to identify. However, with the fast-changing times people's interest in a life requiring serious yogic practice and seclusion is dwindling. Nevertheless, the Guru-sishya tradition<sup>28</sup> of the Nāth sect still holds a strong hold among its practitioners, making it one of the stronger schools of yoga in India surviving to this day.

- <sup>1</sup> Painting of Gorakhnāth, in the public domain at: [wiki-yoga-vidya.de](#).
- <sup>2</sup> *Kaya Siddhi*: Literally Kaya is the physical body and Siddhi is attainment. A set of dietary regimens, coupled with ingestion of certain (alchemical) compounds and rigorous Yogic exercises that are presumed to make the human body immortal.
- <sup>3</sup> *Sāmpradāya*: Any Hindu religious system based upon a succession of Masters, with a discreet set of customs and practices that are exclusive and unique to that group.
- <sup>4</sup> George Weston Briggs, *GorakhNāth and the Kanphata Yogi* (Calcutta: London : YCMA Publishing House & Motilal Banarsidass, 1938), 181.
- <sup>5</sup> Kamalaśīla was an Indian Buddhist and one of the systematic writers on Buddhist logic.
- <sup>6</sup> Ādi Śankara was one of most revered Hindu philosophers and theologians from India who consolidated the doctrine of Advaita Vedanta.
- <sup>7</sup> Mohan Singh, *Gorakhnāth and Medieval Hindu Mysticism*, ed; Mohan Singh Uberoi, Francis Edward Younghusband and Betty Heimann (Lahore, Pakistan: Oriental College, 1937).
- <sup>8</sup> Author Unknown. *An Introduction to Nātha Yoga*, Gorakhnāth Mandir, Gorakhpur, India.
- <sup>9</sup> Akshaya Kumar Benerjea, *Philosophy of Gorakhnāth* (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass: 2014), 316.
- <sup>10</sup> Stephen Knapp, *Visiting the Grave of Jesus in Srinagar, Kashmir*. Online at: [http://www.stephen-knapp.com/visiting\\_the\\_grave\\_of\\_jesus\\_in\\_srinagar.htm](http://www.stephen-knapp.com/visiting_the_grave_of_jesus_in_srinagar.htm) (accessed February, 2, 2015).
- <sup>11</sup> George Weston Briggs, *GorakhNāth and the Kanphata Yogis*, 221.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> Malcolm McLean, *Devoted to the Goddess: The Life and Work of Ramprasad* (New York, NY: SUNY Press, 1998), 14.
- <sup>14</sup> Ādi Śankara: The age of Ādi Śankara is generally held to be the 8<sup>th</sup> Century AD by most scholars. However, traditional accounts of lineage as depicted in two of the four monasteries established by him at the four corners of India, place him much further back into antiquity. Some Indian researchers such as Kota Venkatachalam ([http://true\\_indian\\_history\\_kvchelam.blogspot.in/2009/04/age-of-sri-adi-sankaracharya.html](http://true_indian_history_kvchelam.blogspot.in/2009/04/age-of-sri-adi-sankaracharya.html)) also disagree with this date and place him much further back in time. Some scholars such as David Reigle point out

that the 8<sup>th</sup> Century Śankara was indeed not the Ādi Śankara but was another one known as Abhinava Śankara who authored a great number of works including the much famed *Brahmasutra Bhashya*. It is suggested that his works are mistakenly attributed to the original Ādi Śankara and this led to mistaken inference of his time. For further details in this regard refer to: <http://www.easterntradition.org/original%20sankaracarya.pdf>.

- <sup>15</sup> *Vāmāchāra*: The left hand or unorthodox Tantric practice that involves use of prohibited substances. The traditional and conservative schools despise them and sometimes look upon them as inferior schools. The *Vāmāchāra* is practice oriented and requires rigor and steadfastness on the part of the practitioner and can be learned only through discipleship.
- <sup>16</sup> For additional information on the inner or esoteric aspects and symbolism of the Vedic “Asvamedha” or horse sacrifice, see “Vedic Ritual and its Symbolism, by Usha Choudhuri at: [http://www.infinityfoundation.com/mandala/i\\_es/i\\_es\\_choud\\_ritual\\_frameset.htm](http://www.infinityfoundation.com/mandala/i_es/i_es_choud_ritual_frameset.htm).
- <sup>17</sup> *Uttarāyaṇa* and *Dakshināyaṇa*: From the astronomical perspective of Hindu ephemeris, Uttarāyaṇa refers to the period after the Winter Solstice, when the sun travels between Capricorn and Cancer. However, high religious and spiritual significance is attached in the Hindu culture to the movement of sun transiting various zodiac signs along the ecliptic. Uttarāyaṇa is called *devamārga* (the path of gods) and it is stated that he who travels on this path never returns to the mortal world. Dakshināyaṇa on the other hand refers to the periods when the sun apparently travels toward the south on the celestial sphere or from Cancer to Capricorn. This is called *pitrmārga* or the path of the Manes. This period is also considered as demonic and the slaying of demons by the Goddess is celebrated as the chief festival during this period. Auspicious activities are normally deferred during this period. These two periods may also refer to states of mind: positive, auspicious, a time for flowering and realization (Uttarāyaṇa) and negative, a time for inner striving (Dakshināyaṇa).
- <sup>18</sup> *Sukla Paksha and Krishna Paksha*: Paksha in Sanskrit is fortnight and Sulka means white and bright; whereas Krishna refers to black and dark. Thus the fortnight in which the moon waxes is called Sukla Paksha and the fortnight of waning moon is called Krishna

Paksha. In other words the period between New moon and Full moon is Sukla Paksha and between Full moon and New moon is Krishna Paksha.

<sup>19</sup> *Mudras* and *Bandhas*: The daily yogic practice involves arresting and directing the inner currents through several body postures (*Mudras*) and bodily contractions (*Bandhas*). Some of the Tantric *Mudras* involve sexual postures during coition and are taboo for the orthodox. As regards to *Bandhas*, they are chiefly three in number. They are *Mūla Bandha*, *Jālandhara Bandha*, and *Uddyāna Bandha*, and are highly eulogized in various Yogic treatises.

<sup>20</sup> Parasuramapantula Pantula Lingamurti Gurumurti, *Sri Sita Ramānjanēya Samvādam*, trans: Vijay Srinath Kanchi (Jalgaon, India: ViViDhaTa Research & Training Centre, 2009), 105-112.

<sup>21</sup> See for example: *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, by Yogi Swami Svatmarama, published by George Alien & Unwin, for additional information on eight kinds *Kumbhaka*.

<sup>22</sup> See the section on *Mahāmudra* in *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*.

<sup>23</sup> *Dwaita* or *Dvaita*: A philosophy which states that dichotomy is eternal; that there is fundamental distinction between Ultimate Reality, individual souls and the Nature which are irreducible into one another. *VisisTādvaita* on the other hand describes the subservient character of the individual soul to the Supreme Soul and underscores devotion as the sole means to enlightenment.

<sup>24</sup> *Big Bang*: Mathematical calculations of the mass of the universe vis-à-vis its density, the

amount of gravitational pull each constituent object exerts on the each other and the velocity with which each stellar object is moving outward, reveal that at present the universe is rapidly expanding and is likely to continue for couple of billions years more before the gravitational pull takes the reigns and the universe starts to implode and crumble... ultimately making a big mass of stellar material so dense with infinite amount of gravitational pull that time and space will have no separate existence and combine together to form what is called *singularity* and no event can be ever assumed or recorded in that situation. Some physicists argue that this super mass object of minuscule size would again explode and the process of explosion and implosion continue eternally, just like the in breathing and out breathing of living creatures. Hindu scripture describe creation and dissolution of the phenomenal world as the inhalations and exhalations of *Nārāyana* the Supreme Soul.

<sup>25</sup> This quote has been attributed to Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) and others.

<sup>26</sup> *Gnana* or *Jnana Yoga* is the “Path of Knowledge.” *Gnana Yoga* are followers of nondualistic or *advaita Vedanta*.

<sup>27</sup> *Vaishnava Sāmpradāya* is one of the four theistic schools of ancient India that propagates the theology of duality in unity.

<sup>28</sup> The *Guru-sishya* refers to the Guru - disciple tradition and is based on a succession of teachers and disciples in traditional Indian culture and religions such as Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism.



## Great Esotericists

### Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499)



Bust of Ficino by Andrea Ferrucci in Florence Cathedral.<sup>1</sup>

Marsilio Ficino was born in Florence and is best known as one of the most prominent Italian humanists and philosophers. Ficino led the Florentine Academy, translated many of Plato's writings from Greek into Latin, and promulgated Neoplatonism in the Christian world. In addition to his formal writings, he was a prolific letter writer, almost a kind of spiritual and emotional adviser to a host of important and influential men in his time, not the least of which was Cosimo di Giovanni de' Medici (1389-1464) and his grandson Lorenzo de' Medici (1449-1492), also known as *Lorenzo il Magnifico*. Within these letters, which Ficino allowed to be published in 1495; we find significant Renaissance themes, which reveal him as the having embodied the very essence and ideals of the Renaissance cultural movement. In particular, Vol. 6 of the modern publication of his letters<sup>2</sup> offers suitable evidence to justify Ficino as the principal reviver and reconciler of Platonic philosophy and Christian piety, as well as being a true Renaissance man.

Ficino's father was a practicing physician who was acquainted with Cosimo de' Medici, then

"ruler" of Florence. Young Ficino studied Latin and Aristotle, most likely in Florence, so he was steeped in the burgeoning Renaissance thought. While studying scholastic philosophy, theology and Latin, he was introduced to some of the Latinized works of Plato, what little were extant. Like most of his Renaissance compatriots, e.g. Boccaccio and Petrarch, Ficino loved the Classics, and he learned Greek in order to translate and interpret additional works. He gained the patronage of Cosimo de' Medici, who was himself interested in Neoplatonism, and in 1462 became head of the Florentine Academy, a group of 15<sup>th</sup> century scholars dedicated to the study of Plato texts and other classical literature. In 1473, Ficino was ordained as a priest and was later named a church official of Florence Cathedral. He spent the remainder of his life translating Plato and Plotinus, trying to infuse "hermetic" thought within Christian theology, and writing hundreds of letters to his eclectic acquaintances.<sup>3</sup>

Ficino can be thought of as the man most responsible for reviving Platonism, as well as its sister school Neoplatonism, and endeavoring to link it with Christian theology. This is largely due to his translation of Plato's *Symposium*. However, he also translated *The Enneads*, which are a collection of writings attributed to Plotinus, compiled by his student Porphyry, which Ficino dedicated to Lorenzo il Magnifico. Additionally, Cosimo de' Medici commissioned Ficino to translate a most interesting body of treatises called the *Corpus Hermeticum*, of which early printed editions of eight of the treatises appeared before 1500, the final twenty-two appearing by 1641. The *Corpus Hermeticum* was purported to have been written by Hermes Trismegistus, who was thought by some to be the Egyptian god Thoth, or the Greek god Hermes, or a syncretic combination of the two.<sup>4</sup> This work included Latin translations of the *Asclepius* and *Poimandres*, fascinating and perplexing theological texts that

boggled and amazed the Renaissance humanists.

The idea that classical thought and literature could have any bearing on the new Christian world, as it had developed and become since Christ, was entirely a Renaissance phenomenon. Prior to the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Christian theology alone ruled the intellectual world, and the world proper, which had come under the control of the Church. However, all this eventually resulted in the Dark Ages, and certain groups of elite men, especially scholars, artists, and thinkers, hungered for something to remedy the prevailing situation. Classical antiquity, at one time condemned entirely for its paganism, began to appear fresh, mysterious, and valuable. But, at the same time, these men were deeply Christian, and they had no desire to break from their faith, nor to leave the Church (at least initially; later, Renaissance thought and the revival of the Classics may have contributed to the Protestant Reformation). Thus, these men, constantly embattled and having to justify themselves to Rome and Church officials, looked for ways in which these two streams—pagan philosophical thought and Christian piety—might be brought together, and Ficino (with his Florentine Academy) was on the frontline of this fight. One of the best examples of his work is found in his letters, particularly Vol. 6. Ficino also wrote two seminal works, *Platonic Theology* and *The Christian Religion*, both of which try to show that the Christian religion and Platonic philosophy come from the same source—i.e., God.

In most of these letters, Ficino is responding to some respectable friend who asked him for

guidance, or else responding to a letter he has received attacking his work as a scholar and as a theologian. Correspondents include Frederico of Urbino, Lorenzo and Cosimo de' Medici, various Papal officials, cardinals, and bishops,

**The idea that classical thought and literature could have any bearing on the new Christian world, as it had developed and become since Christ, was entirely a Renaissance phenomenon. Prior to the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Christian theology alone ruled the intellectual world, and the world proper, which had come under the control of the Church. However, all this eventually resulted in the Dark Ages, and certain groups of elite men, especially scholars, artists, and thinkers, hungered for something to remedy the prevailing situation.**

poets like Giovanni Cavalcanti, Pietro Bembo, Antonio Zilioli, Pietro Molin, and others. What makes all these letters so decidedly Renaissance is their constant and relentless references to Classical Greek and Roman mythology. In Letters 11-16, Ficino, writing what he calls *fables*, but which are really just myths, describes didactic accounts of Roman mythological characters, in order to illustrate some practical or theological point to his recipients. These *fables* involve both Cosimo

and Lorenzo. This was a Renaissance method—that of utilizing classical components to fortify what, for these men, would have been their modern era.

For example, Letter 11 (pg. 18), entitled *A fable: A philosopher must avoid three things in particular: lust, greed, ambition*, tells of the goddess Minerva, known as Sophia to the Greeks (hence philo-Sophia or “love of wisdom”). Ficino describes how Minerva gave birth to a daughter, Philosophia, from her own head, as Jupiter had given birth to Minerva previously. Minerva tells her daughter to stay clear of not only Venus but also Hades and his attendants, lest Philosophia be deprived of ambrosia and nectar (food of the gods) and lose sight of the true nature of divinity. There are also Ficino fables involving Orpheus, Cupid, and the Pythian Oracle and priestess. Here we see how Ficino embodies the ideals of the

Classical World; how he utilizes its teachings for his own priestly duties of easing the soul-sicknesses of his flock, and demonstrates the complete harmony and accord of the two perspectives.

In another letter—Letter 21 (pg. 35), to Giovanni Niccolini, the Archbishop of Amalfi at Rome—Ficino both defends and makes a compelling case for the harmony and common source of Platonic philosophy and Christian thought: “Wishing the Platonic teaching to shine out ... since it is related to the divine law of both Moses and Christ as the moon is to the sun, I translated all the books of Plato from Greek into Latin. In addition ... I wrote a book by way of exposition.... Here the Platonic mysteries are set forth as clearly as possible, so that, removing the poetic veils, we may reveal the Platonic teaching, which is in complete accord with divine law. I believe, and with good reason, that this has been decreed by divine providence....”

Thus we see Ficino defending his translations of Plato, not merely for their idle curiosity, but because they harmonize with Christianity completely. Furthermore, he believes the revival of these translations, and of Neoplatonism in general, has been “decreed by divine providence”; that is to say, it is the will of God that Plato not only be translated and his teachings be disseminated and properly understood, but that they should be fused together with Christian theology, for the betterment of Christianity. Never before in the history of the West had a mixing of these two streams been attempted. It only occurred during the Renaissance cultural movement, and it could have only been led by men like Ficino.

One final example occurs in Letter 18 (pg. 32). In this letter, entitled *Philosophy and Religion are true sisters*, which is depicted in the image on the last page of this paper, Ficino states: “To sum it up, it seems that the ... golden teaching of the ancients should be called love of God rather than love of wisdom; and every utterance of these men is an oracle rather than

human speech.” Again, Ficino is attempting to show that philosophy in classical antiquity is synonymous with the present-day love of God in Christendom. Such an attempt echoes the Philosophy of Christ set forth by Erasmus. Furthermore, according to Ficino, ancient philosophers predicted and prophesied the coming of Christ Jesus, the Messiah, as did Moses and other prophets of the Old Testament. Thus, these ancient writings were not to be stamped out and eliminated, but instead should be studied and held in the highest regard, as are the books of the Bible, and hence also the Renaissance revival and reintegration of classical antiquity and Western thought.

The syncretism of Neoplatonism and Christianity is permanent, although hidden in plain sight, and we have the Renaissance cultural movement of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, as well as men like Ficino, to thank for it. To posit a few of the many examples of the Neoplatonic inheritance, one need only point to the Vatican Obelisk of Saint Peter’s Square or Michelangelo’s Greek-inspired art in the Sistine Chapel or consider the concept of Christ as the *Logos* or the later theological/academic groups like the Cambridge Platonists who were convinced of the compatibility of faith and reason. Due to the synthesizing efforts of Ficino and the other Renaissance humanists, Christian Neoplatonic beliefs exercised an immense influence on philosophy, theology and the arts in Europe and the Western world.

Contributed by Aaron J. French

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- <sup>1</sup> Image in the Public Domain.
  - <sup>2</sup> Marsilio Ficino, *The Letters of Marsilio Ficino: Volume 6* (London: Shephard-Walwyn, 1999).
  - <sup>3</sup> “Marsilio Ficino” *Encyclopaedia Britannica. Encyclopaedia Britannica Online Academic Edition*. Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2014. (accessed April, 30, 2014).
  - <sup>44</sup> See the image by Charles Hardaker on final page of this paper.

## Book Review

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*Sensa: The Lost Language of the Ancient Mysteries*, by Dorje Jinpa. Ashland, OR: Pentabarba Publications, 2012. Hardcover, 204 pages. List price US\$35.

According to Helena Blavatsky, the world's most ancient scriptures were derived from "a very old book" written in the language of *Sensa* (*Sensar* or *Senzar*). The Stanzas of Dzyan, which underlay much of *The Secret Doctrine*, were also written in *Sensa*—or what she termed "ancient Sanskrit." Blavatsky identified it as

the secret sacerdotal tongue, from the words of the Divine Beings, who dictated it to the sons of Light, in Central Asia, at the very beginning of the 5th (our) race; for there was a time when its language . . . was known to the Initiates of every nation, when the forefathers of the Toltec understood it as easily as the inhabitants of the lost Atlantis, who inherited it, in their turn, from the sages of the 3rd Race, the Manushis, who learnt it direct from the Devas of the 2nd and 1st Races.<sup>1</sup>

Alice Bailey, writing for the Tibetan Master Djwhal Khul, explained *Sensa* as the "name for the secret sacerdotal language, or the "mystery speech" of the initiated adepts all over the world. It is a universal language, and largely a hieroglyphic cypher."<sup>2</sup> It is an "ideographic language."<sup>3</sup> The Great Invocation, we understand, originally consisted of seven "very ancient word-forms,"<sup>4</sup> presumably *Sensa* ideograms. Unfortunately, there is no historical record of *Sensa*'s alphabet, grammar or pronunciation, and academic philologists do not acknowledge its existence.

Dorje Jinpa's *Sensa: The Lost Language of the Ancient Mysteries* takes up the story from there. The book does not provide a tabulation of the *Sensa* alphabet; nor does it include a *Sensa*-English dictionary. Indeed, any attempt to do so would automatically undermine its

credibility. *Sensa* is known only to high initiates and is carefully protected from broader dissemination. Rather, this is a book *about* *Sensa*.

Jinpa is not content to treat *Sensa* simply as an archaic, "lost," language—and in that sense the title fails to do the book justice. He takes a much larger view. The book summarizes what is known about *Sensa* from the literature but then goes on to offer profound insights into the role of language and symbolism, not only as media of communication, but also as instruments of divine will.

*Sensa: The Lost Language of the Ancient Mysteries* draws upon a vast esoteric literature, and the author moves easily from the trans-Himalayan teachings and the works of Rudolf Steiner and Manly Palmer Hall to Vedic, Hindu and Buddhist texts; Greek philosophers from Pythagoras to Proclus; the Hermetic literature; and the lore of the Druids. Jinpa has done his homework; the book provides evidence of years of research.

Chapter 1: "Archetypal Symbolism," and Chapter 2: "The Lost Language of the Sun," provide a general introduction to the topic. The latter suggests that *Sensa* may have been the universal language of infant humanity—or at least of the priesthood. Evidently, it had great power and, in ancient Atlantis, it was abused. The forces of darkness used *Sensa* to control the devas of the physical, emotional, and lower mental planes for selfish purposes. Citing the *Zohar*, the primary text of the Kabbalah, Jinpa argues that the biblical story of the Tower of Babel describes the Planetary Hierarchy's response to those abuses. To prevent further damage, the "tower"—the polluted Atlantean civilization—was destroyed, the people scattered, and their languages confused (pp. 40-41).<sup>5</sup>

Chapter 3: "The WORD," is pivotal to the author's entire thesis. Jinpa explains:

The WORD basically has two levels of meaning. To the public the WORD represents the Word of Power that God used to create the world, “And God spoke the WORD and the worlds came into being.” To initiates it expresses the archetypal keynote, the divine impulse behind the spiritual evolution of the world. It is this creative Vibration . . . imprinted upon the Soul of the World that is the seed of its ultimate perfection. (p. 77)

Jinpa cites a work on Vedic symbolism<sup>6</sup> to present a descriptive schema in which the power or keynote is expressed on four levels. Their Sanskrit names and meanings are as follows (*vac* simply means “word”):

1. Para-*vac*—The supreme WORD, the Sound, the Silence, and the Sound of Silence.
2. Pasyanti-*vac*—The WORD manifesting as archetypal Images.
3. Madhyama-*vac*—The WORD manifesting in thought-forms.
4. Vaikhari-*vac*—The WORD manifesting as the physical universe, but particularly as audible speech and physical gestures. (p. 81, capitalization in original)

A rough equivalency may exist between the *Para-*vac** level and the Logoic or monadic plane. The *Pasyanti-*vac** level would seem to correspond to the atmic and/or buddhic plane, and the *Madhyama-*vac** level to the mental plane. The *Vaikhari-*vac** level evidently corresponds to the physical planes, perhaps with astral associations.

Through this discussion of the WORD, Jinpa introduces us to a “vertical” dimension of *Sensa*, in which the Logos communicates—if that term can still be used—with its forms. The Logos uses *Sensa* as the medium to create, sustain and destroy forms on the planes of reality within its domain—and presumably to urge forward the indwelling lives on their evolutionary paths. Importantly, at the lowest level, the WORD manifests “*as the physical universe*” (*italics added*).

The WORD originates at a transcendent level, utterly beyond our comprehension. It enters our realm of potential understanding first as archetypes and then as thoughtforms. When it finally reaches the physical level, it manifests as speech and gestures. We see the familiar process of multiplication as the Formless descends into forms. A divine idea may begin in the simplicity of silence, but it manifests in increasing numbers of archetypes, thoughtforms, linguistic characters, symbols and gestures as it descends through the planes. Obviously, no conventional type of alphabet could capture the richness of *Sensa*.

Contrasting with the vertical, Logoic use of *Sensa*, the horizontal use presumably takes place at the *Pasyanti-*vac** and *Madhyama-*vac** levels, with occasional use of the speech and gestures of the *Vaikhari-*vac** level, depending on the initiates’ status within the Hierarchy. This horizontal dimension of *Sensa*, equivalent to our own person-to-person communications, places *Sensa* within the familiar category of language. Yet the overshadowing “supreme WORD” ensures that the inter-initiate communication remains within the framework of divine intent.

The reference to gestures at the *Vaikhari-*vac** level is important; *Sensa* is not only language, in the ordinarily sense of the term, it is also *ritual*. Jinpa mentions traditional Indian *mudras* and also the ritual said to be enacted each year at the Wesak Festival, when the Buddha visits his assembled disciples. We can equally see how *Sensa* may manifest through other kinds of religious ceremony—and even secular rituals. At each level the use of *Sensa* by the Logos, and perhaps also by initiates, no doubt involves the Deva Evolution, whose members are known to respond to sound and ritual.

From our limited perspective, we can do little more than glimpse the enormous scope and power of *Sensa*. Perhaps we can gain a general understanding of what sounds, words, and symbols—static and dynamic—might capture or express that power. Much of the book is directed to helping us gain that understanding.

Chapter 4: “Mind and the Geometry of Sound,” explores the esoteric significance of spatial patterns, ranging from the shape of Buddhist *stupas*, to the organic structures of Buckminster Fuller, to the ice crystals studied by the late Japanese scientist Masaru Emoto. The alphabets of sacred languages have important esoteric properties. Jinpa cites Blavatsky and traditional Indian sources to speak of Sanskrit—which could be expected to lie particularly close to its *Sensa* ancestor:

[E]ach letter of the Sanskrit alphabet has an individual and fundamental esoteric meaning. It also has a secret geometrical form. In India these visual forms are called *Yantras*, which are vibrational signatures of great spiritual beings. . . . *Yantra*, like the *Sensa* alphabet to which it is related, is a science depicting through simplified diagrams the higher pictorial archetypes of those seed-vibrations (*bijas*) that are expressed by a *mantra*. (p. 141, italics in original)

In Chapter 5: “*Sensa* Script,” Jinpa draws upon eastern and western wisdom to explore the significance and meaning of symbols, including letters and numbers. Among much else he reminds us of Pythagoras’ *quadrivium*, the four classical disciplines of mathematics:

1. Arithmetic—numbers at rest in space.
2. Geometry—the relationship between numbers at rest in space.
3. Music (harmony)—the harmonious relationships of numbers in motion through time.
4. Spherics (celestial harmonics)—the harmonious relationship of numbers through time and space (p. 169).

The final, short Chapter 6: “Signatures of Living Organisms,” reminds us that the divine language manifests through living as well as inert forms. Jinpa comments:

It seems that every living organism has its own signature, which manifests as a set of symbols that accurately define it and in a pictorial sense represents its true nature. For those initiates who can read and understand the intricate language of symbols this

name reveals the organism’s fundamental characteristics, its rank on the evolutionary ladder of life, its primary and secondary purposes, and the keynote of its essential nature. (p. 189)

Chapter 6 concludes with prophecies of a new science which will make possible the diagnosis of “physical, psychological, and spiritual difficulties” and determination of “one’s station on the Path, and even provide a visual representation of the student’s archetypal potential.” The author adds, optimistically: “Due to the great hastening of evolution that is now taking place new applications of psychic energy for the common good become a real possibility.” (p. 193)

An excerpt from H. A. Curtiss’ *The Voice of Isis*<sup>7</sup> is included as an appendix. Providing a fascinating discussion of sound, number, color and form, it is worthy of study in its own right.

*Sensa: The Lost Language of the Ancient Mysteries* is a must-read for all serious esoteric students interested in language, symbolism, or Hierarchical communication—even the mechanism of Hierarchical Purpose. It explores aspects of “language” far beyond what we ordinarily associate with the term. We may come away with no greater knowledge of *Sensa*, as it is actually “spoken” by the Logos and high initiates, but we gain tremendous insight into its essence, the role it plays in the divine economy, and the myriad of ways in which *Sensa* manifests at our level of being.

The book is well-written, and the topic material suitably arranged and explained, but the book’s production leaves something to be desired. References are often incomplete, hindering access to original sources. Most serious, the illustrations are woefully small—in many cases impossible to read and comprehend. The author would do us a great service if enlargeable copies of the graphics were provided in an accompanying online medium.

Readers may be interested in an article Dorje Jinpa published in *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Winter 2011: “*Sensa*: Part One, Archetypal Symbolism.” The author prefaced the article thus: “The following two-part series of articles is adapted from my forthcoming book *Sensa*:

*The Lost Language of the Sun*, to be published by Pentarba Publications 2011. Part Two of the article, promised for the Spring 2011 issue, never appeared. Part One's title gave its name to Chapter 1 of the present book, and the "forthcoming" book's title to Chapter 2. But considerable editing and rearrangement of topics has taken place between the published article and *Sensa: The Lost Language of the Ancient Mysteries*. The article contained no graphics, which might have alleviated the problem of the book's tiny illustrations, but it does contain a useful bibliography.

John F. Nash  
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- <sup>1</sup> Helena P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine I* (Pasadena, CA: Theosophical University Press, 1888), xliii. Parenthesis in original. See also *Isis Unveiled I* (Pasadena, CA: Theosophical University Press, 1877), 1, 440.
- <sup>2</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1922), 224.
- <sup>3</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1934), 379.

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- <sup>4</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1955), 149.
- <sup>5</sup> The *Zohar* does not mention Atlantis or the Planetary Hierarchy, but Chapters 77-78 describe in remarkable detail the power of the primeval language, its abuse, the need to destroy the Tower of Babel, and the subsequent restriction of the language to a chosen few, like Noah and Moses. See for example: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/zdm/index.htm>. (Last accessed Jan. 23, 2015). Readers should heed the warning on the website that the translation—used by the author and accessed by this reviewer—is the only complete one currently available in the public sector, but "This is not a critical edition; written by a pseudonymous Theosophist, probably British."
- <sup>6</sup> James Powell, *Mandalas: The Dynamics of Vedic Symbolism*, (location unknown): Wisdom Garden Books, 1980.
- <sup>7</sup> H. A. Curtiss' *The Voice of Isis* (San Francisco: Curtiss Philosophic Book Co., 1920).