

Shiva: Slayer of the Three Cities and the Story of Consciousness

Vijay Srinath Kanchi

The entire gamut of India's scriptural teachings revolves round one central theme: the glory of consciousness as it unfolds and becomes fully blown. Several techniques were devised by the ancient seers that enable human consciousness to attain its pristine, unchanging form. "Wake up!" is the clarion call of the *Upanishads*. Our human consciousness fluctuates in the waking, dreaming and deep sleep states, losing the awareness of the Self and being swayed away by the experiences produced by karmic currents. A master yogi is one who is able to keep his consciousness constant throughout these three states. In fact the *Man-dukya Upanishad*¹ exclusively focuses on the three conscious states and implores us to realize the underlying consciousness. The nature of the prakriti² is change. Change is death — the death of the previous state and beginning of a new state. All the three states of consciousness—waking, dreaming and deep sleep being part of the prakriti, undergo continuous change. Eternal sleep, eternal dream or eternal waking state is not possible. Only the consciousness that underlies these changing states is immutable. Only that is eternal.

Change is another term for unreality. We view our dream experiences as unreal because they do not last long. But as we slip from the waking world into the dream world this world also vanishes. We discard the waking world to cling on to the dream world. From there we slip into deep sleep and leave behind the waking and dream states. At any point in time, we are firmly rooted in any of these three states and the other two are "destroyed" as we continue in a particular state. But even those "temporarily annihilated" states lay merely dormant and come to full life as the consciousness revisits that particular state.

When we ponder over these three states, we realize their ultimate unreality and transitory

nature. But mere intellectual understanding of the unreality of these states does not ground us firmly in the eternal consciousness. The unbroken realization of immutability is to be experienced in all the three states of consciousness—only then the play of maya is completely surmounted.

A yogi realizes his true Self to be the unchanging eternal consciousness that is the bedrock of all other states of experience. Any partial realization of any of these three states as unreal would only lead the practitioner to cling or shift to the other conscious states. When this clinging or shifting continues, maya ensnares the human consciousness in karmic currents of one state or the other. Only an unbroken conscious awareness permeating the three states can liberate us from the clutches of maya. This significant yogic idea is beautifully explained in the allegorical story of Shiva in the tale of "Tripurāsurasamhara" found in the *Matsya Purana*³ and *Shivapurāna*.⁴

At one point in the story, three demons or Asuras, Vidyumali, Tārakaksha and Viryavana, who were the sons of Tarakasura (that which bursts with illumination for a while and vanishes, the characteristic of the three states) worshipped Brahma for a boon to attain immortality. Since eternal waking, dreaming or deep sleep could not be granted, they wanted to ensure their immortality through a clever boon in which they asked to be given three impregnable forts (Tripura) made of gold, silver and iron (deep sleep, dreaming and waking states). These forts could not be

About the Author

Vijay Srinath Kanchi is the Librarian & Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, Moolji Jaitha College, Jalgaon, 425002 Maharashtra, India. vskanchi@gmail.com.

destroyed unless all three of them were aligned on an axis and were pierced through by a single arrow. An alignment of the three forts is such a rarity that the destruction of all three of them at once would be next to impossible. Brahma granted them the boon, and Davana, or Daitya, called Maya, built the Asuras the forts.

The demons populated the three forts and began to flourish. The three forts were agile and moved in such a way that they would never be in a single line, save for a few moments in a thousand years. When the oppression of the Asuras (delusion) became unbearable, the gods went to Shiva, the Adi yogi⁵ for help. Shiva agreed to destroy Tripura. Viṣvakarma, the architect of the gods, made a suitable chariot, bow and arrow. The chariot was made entirely out of gold. Brahma himself became the charioteer as the gods accompanied Shiva with diverse weapons assisted by Nandi, the bull. The Earth or Prithvi became the chariot with the Sun and Moon its wheels. Mount Meru became the bow and the serpent Vasuki was the bowstring. Vishnu was the arrow, and Agni was the tip of the arrow. Vayu⁶ was inside the feathers on rear of the arrow. All the other Devas had their places and forms in the chariot. Nandi managed to destroy one fort but as he went on for the other, the “dead fort” revived.

Shiva, the master yogi, waited for the opportune moment when the three forts aligned on a single axis. Then he smiled. His very smile destroyed the three forts immediately. In another narrative, Shiva released his Pashupatastra (his most destructive weapon) burning to ashes the three forts of the Asuras. Shiva thus earned Himself the epithet Tripurāntaka—the one who ended Tripura. In Tamil, Lord Shiva has the epithet, “*SirithuPuramerithaP-*

eruman” which means, *He who burnt the cities with a mere smile.*

It is apparent that the three cities of iron, silver and gold are the three worlds of our experience: the material world, the dream world and the dreamless world of deep sleep. They are created by maya or illusion. Nandi, both in Hindu and Buddhist texts, is the subjective ego substance. It can realize the unreality of one state or the other through rational argu-

mentation, but such realization is short lived. Maya with all its glory spurts up again; the subjective ego cannot survive without taking recourse to the inevitable conscious states. Unless the illusoriness in all the three states is destroyed all at once, maya cannot be completely annihilated. The unrefined subjective ego can temporarily detach itself from the physical reality, but it is incapable of destroying the mental conceptual world (dream

world included), and the core unconscious because the subjective ego’s existence is based on its identification with those two. The three cities existed as three disconnected entities just as the three mental states of the untrained and uninitiated. Viewed independently, the states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep are just as real, and we never realize their illusoriness unless we compare them with one another. And as long as we are convinced of their reality, since reality is equal to existence, their existence cannot be effaced. At a very rare moment that might take eons to occur, a sudden “Aha” moment is experienced where we are connected with the unitary identity that runs through these three seemingly disconnected states; but such a moment of epiphany quickly vanishes. The destruction of these three transient states of consciousness and the establishment of the pristine nature is possible only when the yogi decides to take a serious

The nature of the prakriti is change. Change is death—the death of the previous state and beginning of a new state. All three states of consciousness—waking, dreaming and deep sleep being part of the prakriti, undergo continuous change. Eternal sleep, eternal waking state is not possible. Only the consciousness that underlies these changing states is immutable.

approach to align his three states of existence with a unitary awareness by employing:

- Wakeful awareness as the base (Prithvi as the chariot).
- Aminergic/cholinergic systems or perceptual/sensory and conceptual/mental experiences as the wheels (Sun and Moon).
- With the core creative energy that creates our conceptual and perceptual realities controlling the effort (Brahma holding the reins).
- The spinal cord and the brain stem, which secretes the neurotransmitters that regulate moods and most bodily functions, used as the bow (Meru).
- The mysterious but highly extolled kundalini energy as the thrusting force (bow string).
- With firm resilience (Vishnu).
- Focused attention (Agni).
- With controlled vital energies (Vāyu).

Once all this is achieved and the yogi manages to identify himself as the core essence in all the three states being aligned, the illusoriness that is at the foundation of the three realities gets destroyed. The yogi at the peak of his conscious awareness then truly experiences the unreality of the three states, a smile naturally manifests at how he had been befuddled all the while by the delusions of maya

and this very smile of realization destroys the three worlds created by maya! The complete steps and stages during this process of connecting the three states of experience through an unbroken awareness is elaborately described in another work titled “*Tripurā Rahasya*” that is considered to be deeply esoteric by Advaitins.

The ancient Indian seers were master narrators—a seemingly naïve story holds a treasure trove of wisdom.

¹ The *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* is the shortest of all the Upanishads, and is assigned to Atharveda. It is listed as number 6 in the Mutika canon of 108 Upanishads.

² Prakriti is the source; material nature in its germinal state, eternal and beyond comprehension.

³ The *Matsya Purana* is one of the eighteen major *Puranas* (Mahapurana), and among the oldest and better preserved in the Puranic genre of Sanskrit literature in [Hinduism](#).

⁴ The *Shiva Purana* is one of the eighteen *Purana* genre of Sanskrit language in [Hinduism](#), and part of the [Shaivism](#) literature corpus. It primarily centers around the Hindu god Shiva and goddess [Parvati](#), but references and reveres all gods.

⁵ The Adi Yogi is the originator of Yoga, or the “first” yogi.

⁶ Vāyu is a primary lord of the winds, the father of Bhima and the spiritual father of Hanuman.

Invoking and Evoking New Beginnings

Ángela Barrera

Again, we are gathered subjectively as a group at the Higher Interlude, the three-month period in the spiritual year known as the Three Linked Festivals, beginning with the Festival of Easter. This is the Festival of Resurrection that follows the winter season when, during the Winter solstice, the seeds of life are vivified in the heart of humanity.

The Jewish Easter, mentioned in chapters XII and XIII of the Book of Exodus, describes the departure of Israelites from Egypt and the forty-year-long march through the Sinai desert toward the Promised Land. For Philo of Alexandria, and for all of the Jews, Easter commemorates the act of leaving slavery in Egypt, but it also represents “the *passage* of the Soul from the world of the senses to the world of reason.”¹

The Christian Easter has been celebrated since the second century and represents the *passage* from sin and death to grace and life through Baptism and the Eucharist. For Clement of Alexandria, Christ himself was Easter, the *passage* or the Way. Ever since, the festival of Easter focuses on Resurrection and signifies crossing or moving beyond to access a new world. If a festival is a cultural event associated with the idea of creation, as some sociologists suggest,² Christian Easter is the symbol of the re-creation of the universe par excellence.

Esoterically, the Festival of Easter is positioned at the first of the cardinal points in the annual cycle of equinoxes and solstices where we find ourselves now, ready to participate consciously in the cyclic spiral-like movement toward the center, the perennial movement of Life flowing forth, through its dawns and dusks. Life manifested is the dance between the pairs of opposites moving cyclically – the dance of Shiva; It is perfection, balance and harmony; It is the Will-to-Good taking up all

possible forms, for there is no smell, color, sound or anything that is not a part of It. Silence and sounds, ends and beginnings, conjugate in the unflagging search for the forms that can express ever more perfectly Beauty and Life; systole and diastole of the cosmic heart of the One in Whom we live, move and have our being. As H. P. Blavatsky reminds us:

Thus, there is a regular circulation of the vital fluid throughout our system, of which the Sun is the heart – the same as the circulation of the blood in the human body — during the manvantaric solar period, or life; the Sun contracting as rhythmically at every return of it, as the human heart does. Only, instead of performing the round in a second or so, it takes the solar blood ten of its years, and a whole year to pass through its *auricles* and *ventricles* before it washes the *lungs* and passes thence to the great veins and arteries of the system.³

This circulation of the vital fluid takes place within the spatial plasma, the coarsest counterpart of a more radiant electric substance usually referred to as *ether* in esoteric literature. It is the active aspect of this ether that brings about the true divine circulatory flow or bloodstream of the unknown cosmic entity. Quantum physics demonstrates that the empty space is actually a thriving “living space” that vibrates following very definite creative and destructive rhythms. This great vibrant energy “emptiness” is known as *ether* in the Tibetan’s teaching: “This word ‘ether’ is a generic term covering the ocean of energies which are all inter-related and which constitute that one synthetic energy body of our planet.”⁴ “Occultly speaking, this is the modern way of expressing ‘the waters of space’, which are the waters of desire, in which we are immersed.”⁵

Terms such as “the waters of space” and “the waters of desire” are ancient, but effec-

tive ways of describing the ether as a creative medium that becomes an active, electric fluid when impregnated by cosmic will and desire. Indeed, we read in Genesis that “the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters”, and so began the story of Creation.... Desire, cosmic or mundane, is an animating force and its presence in the universal ether generates motion and results in creativity of some kind. When the will and desire of a cosmic life impregnates the ether, the downward pressure of these cosmic waves fuses specks of ether into electric charges. The cosmic idea is thus propelled into a volatile plasmic state after which it later settles down to further clothe and conceal itself in a garment of gaseous, liquid and physical matter.⁶

Truly, we live in this higher and spiritual ether; we are immersed in its fiery layers.

Cyclic Movement, Desire and the Will

We know that the endless swirling movement generated by desire results in the destruction of outdated forms and the creation of new ones, more apt to respond to the Purpose. Such an idea has been represented in many traditions with the symbol of the wheel, an image that can convey the idea of movement and multiplicity as well as the primordial motionlessness and final synthesis. It also is a symbol of expansion and concentration, of diastole and systole, of aspiration and expiration in the human being and in the universe, the microcosm and the macrocosm, because in the One Life, of which we are a part, circles, spheres, wheels and cycles coexist simultaneously, interrelating and distributing the energy within the divine circulatory flow.

Additionally, we have the symbols of verticality and horizontality. Among the symbols that represent verticality we find the tree (associat-

ed with Life and cyclical generation), the mountain and the human being. We have extracted all our knowledge and culture from a revealed symbolic pattern, the projection of vertical energy as it creates a horizontal plane (a group, a society, a civilization). In its cyclic movement this energy is reintegrated to its original being. The central, vertical axis links a chain of worlds or horizontal planes of manifestation (one of which is our own world or life) to the indefinite arrangement of worlds and lives, of cycles within cycles, thus implying the idea of movement. And it is in this vertical axis where the process of invocative appeal and response happens, the search

and the revelation, penetration and participation. All the forces get gathered in one point of tension that is so invocative that it reaches forward toward the very roots of the axis or tree, the essence. With every step forward we penetrate in a new vertical plane, a new world of being, guided by the Will to be what we already are: *I am that I am*.

“Under cyclic law there are periods of outgoing and of withdrawing, of progressing in service towards the periphery of activity and also of a conscious abstraction of the consciousness from the outer circle and its centering again at the very heart of life.”⁷ There are two powers in that cyclic pulse “that alone can effect in their conjunction the great and difficult thing which is the aim of our endeavor: a fixed and unfailing aspiration that calls from below and a supreme Grace from above that answers.”⁸

Our next step in our endless moving forward is to approach the fifth kingdom, the Kingdom of Souls, “the incandescent surface of matter plunged in God,”⁹ to receive their influence in order to participate more fully in the creative festival so that Life pours forth and nurtures all beings. At the same time, under the Law of Balance or harmony, the outlines of our hori-

... the festival of Easter focuses on Resurrection and signifies crossing or moving beyond to access a new world. If a festival is a cultural event associated with the idea of creation, as some sociologist suggest, Christian Easter is a symbol of the re-creation of the universe par excellence.

zontal plane of manifestation will blur progressively, revealing that it is contained within a larger and more inclusive whole, thus gradually letting us realize that our human lives are part of the great organism of humanity. Humanity, acting as intermediate between the higher and the lower kingdoms, “is today an amazing receiver of impressions, owing to the myriad types of susceptible mechanisms.... Such a group can be in the position of being able to invoke the Spiritual Hierarchy with power if it so chooses.”¹⁰

We can see, therefore, that in addition to desire as the generative factor of movement and creation (for all is created by meditation and by desire¹¹), on a higher turn of the spiral, there is the Will, the fixed and conscious intention to invoke: “focused intention, concentrated meditation, visualization, directed invocation (producing evocation) and leading to responsive results, are the major processes of creation upon all levels and by all beings.”¹²

With our meditation we approach the energies of the higher worlds or planes that originate from our unknown but sensed essence. “The entire Science of Invocation and Evocation is contained in the word ‘meditation.’”¹³ Thanks to meditation, that which cries aloud for lifting awakens the fecundity of that which desires to lift; the energies of the higher worlds or planes in our ancestral and unknown source pour forth, plenty of bliss and beatitude, shedding light on ideas and relationships, bringing to life ever more beautiful forms.

The Spring equinox opens the door to other realities, more effective and less distorted by glamor and illusion. In the lower cycle of each day, as we ascend through the ladder provided by meditation, we can work with the higher powers and recreate with them a new reality if we stand in the center where the vertical merges with the horizontal in synthesis. Meditation produces the inflow of spiritual energy in the etheric centers; this is then circulated through the aura and distributed with wisdom in our environment, like a fragrance. Thus we participate in the divine circulatory flow, echoing the beating of the divine Heart, invoking and evoking. “The planetary wheel of life turns on

its lesser scale the wheel of life of the little pilgrim we call humanity; as it turns, it sweeps the life of the evolving Planetary Logos into ever new forms and experiences until the fire of Spirit burns up all lesser fires.”¹⁴

At the time of the Easter Full Moon, in this beginning of a new cycle, the group, united with massive intention, unfolding the petals of the rose of the heart to love and give, and using the Great Invocation as “a potent solar instrument designed to bring about changes and needed readjustments,”¹⁵ can invoke the energy of the Forces of Restoration that, under the direction of the Masters of Wisdom and the supervision of the Christ, will produce the necessary impetus for the spirit of humanity to resurrect from materialism and fear, and make our way toward Life more abundant. Life expresses itself in movement; It flows incessantly; It is always new. The cycles of Life are woven within a radiant tapestry in space and time. We vibrate with the cosmic heart in an invoking and evocative pulse.

Let us be ready to work as a group to welcome the Spirit of Resurrection and the Forces of Restoration as we transition the *passage* of Easter and enter into a new cycle of opportunity and service.

Notice: This paper has been reprinted with permission from “The School for Esoteric Studies,” which holds the copyright.
www.esotericstudies.net/festival-talks.html.

¹ Orígenes et. al, *Sobre la Pascua. Revista Cielo y Tierra, Vol. 11* (Barcelona: Arbor Mundi), 99.

² See for example, Waldemar Cudny, *Festivalisation of Urban Spaces* (Switzerland: Springer, 2016).

³ Helena P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine, Vol. 1* (Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 2014), 541.

⁴ Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1950), 2.

⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1934), 275.

⁶ *The Electric Bridge* (https://www.lucistrust.org/the_electric_bridge)

e/the_cosmic_bloodstream/the_cosmic_bloodstream_part_3).
7 Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age, Vol. 2* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1955), 115.
8 Sri Aurobindo, *La Mère* (Paris: Adyar, 1950), 7.
9 Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Divine Milieu* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 2008), 125.
10 Bailey, *Telepathy*, 86.

11 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age, Vol. 2*, 213.
12 *Ibid.*, 224.
13 *Ibid.*, 197.
14 Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1951), 682.
15 Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1957), 142.

The Festival of Wesak 2018

Our Responsibilities During the Festival of Wesak

Dorothy I. Riddle

The Festival of Wesak represents a unique time each year when spiritual energies are most abundantly available for the use of humanity. Together the Buddha and the Christ generate a point of tension through which those energies can flow to us if we invoke them. We are then tasked with the responsibility to distribute that energy to those who evoke it from us. Indeed, this accumulation and distribution of spiritual energies is so important that we are asked to devote five days to this Festival: “The two days of preparation are to be known as ‘days of renunciation and detachment.’ The day of the Festival is to be known as the ‘day of safe guarding’ whilst the two succeeding days are called the ‘days of distribution.’”¹

We often talk as though we as disciples are the main actors, controlling the process from beginning to end and relying on statements such as the following: “[Disciples] act primarily as agents for the transmission, for the stepping down and for the consequent safe distribution of energy to the masses.”² Our role in invoking the Wesak energies through meditation is clear; however, our active role is limited to that of invocation: “The lesser ever invokes the higher, and higher factors are then evoked and respond according to the measure of understanding and the dynamic tension displayed by the invoking element. This many fail to realize. You do not work at the evocative process. That word simply connotes the response of that which has been reached. The task of the lesser aspect or group is invocative, and the success of the invocative rite is called evocation.”³ We thus need to cultivate and stimulate a desire on the part of others to invoke or receive that energy from us. Obviously such stimulation cannot take place magically at the time of the Festival; instead it must be cultivated yearlong.

Preparing to Invoke the Wesak Energies

The political dynamics currently operating in the United States, as well as elsewhere in the world, present us with the challenge of preparing to be distortion-free vessels for the reception of spiritual energies. The accusations of “fake news” to discredit any perspective contrary to self-interest represent, in esoteric terms, the functioning of glamour and illusion. Hopefully by recognizing and naming this dynamic accurately we can then take appropriate Guénon action free from the distortions of anger, frustration, and a sense of helplessness. We are told that “alignment, contact with the Soul, and then steadfastness, are the keynotes to success.”⁴

How are we to remain steadfast in the face of the pressures to assert self-interest and focus on differences rather than commonalities? It is vital to remember that we are ourselves energetic beings operating in a vast sea of energies. We always have choices about how we relate to those energies in order to stimulate distortions or to participate in the flow of energies in a manner that minimizes distortion. “The focused thinker is always aware emotionally of the descent of the higher impression... This must, however, be recorded by a perfectly quiescent astral vehicle, and therefore you will see one of the main objectives of true meditation.”⁵

How are we to remove distortion and dissipate glamour? Always the objective of the Plan is the generation of right relations, fueled by goodwill.

Increasingly must the normal and powerful life of the emotional, astral, desire and glamorous nature be controlled and rendered quiescent by the life of the Soul, functioning through the mind. The emotions that are normally self-centered and

personal must be transmuted into the realizations of universality and impersonality; the astral body must become the organ through which the love of the Soul can pour; desire must give place to aspiration and that, in its turn, must be merged in the group life and the group good; glamour must give place to reality, and the pure light of the mind must pour into all the dark places of the lower nature. These are the results of mental polarization and are brought about by definite meditation and the cultivation of the meditative attitude.⁶

Right relations must be rooted in an active awareness that we are all interconnected, all part of the same cosmic energetic field, all part of the One Life. Our invocative focus must be crafted from that sense of relationship rather than separative self-interest.

It is therefore literally and eternally true that the same energetic Life pours through the planetary centers, into and through the three periodical vehicles of the incarnated Monad, and finally into and through the three centers in the human etheric body that correspond to the three major centers of the Planetary Logos. There is, therefore, nowhere to be found any basis for separation or any possible point of separation or of essential division.... The essential synthesis exists and the end is sure and inevitable; unity is attainable because unity exists and the sense of separateness is simply the Great Illusion.⁷

Cultivating a Receptivity to the Wesak Energies

This is a critical time in which we can help activate those individuals and groups already committed to action. We can engage them to act in line with the common good, with a commitment to treating others with respect and

dignity regardless of their gender or ethnicity or socio-economic class or age or any other attribute that we have allowed in the past to divide us. Recognizing the power of glamour, we are charged with a vital and timely service of

ridding of the world of the individual and the world of humanity as a whole of the all-enveloping glamour that holds humanity in thrall.... The proposition, therefore, which I am laying before you (who are the aspirants and the disciples of the world) is the possibility of a definite world service. Groups will eventually be formed of those who are working at the dissipation of glamour in their individual lives and who are

doing so not so much in order to achieve their own liberation but with the special objective of ridding the astral plane of its significant glammers. They will work unitedly on some major phase of world glamour by the power of their individual illumined minds.⁸

We have before us the model of the Women's Marches, which began in January 2017 to protest the election of Donald Trump as a president focused on self-interest and dismissive of the rights of women and their families. With international attention focused on shining a light on the pervasiveness of sexual harassment, the #MeToo movement began to gain momentum. By January 2018, the Women's Marches had evolved to focus on building coalitions across issue groups, registering voters (#PowerToThePolls), and urging women of all ages and backgrounds to run for political office, coupled with training events for over 26,000 new political candidates. The result has already been a wave of first-time candidates (including Latinas, Asian-Americans, and transgender persons) being elected in record numbers. This is precisely the type of focus on

Right relations must be rooted in an active awareness that we are all interconnected, all part of the same cosmic energetic field, all part of the One Life. Our invocative focus must be crafted from that sense of relationship rather than separative self-interest.

the common good that we would want to convert into an invocation of the spiritual energies that we can channel during the Festival of Wesak.

Managing the Role of the Evoked Channel

The energies available to and through us at Wesak can empower whoever evokes them, regardless of intention. This places a responsibility on us to attract the attention of the appropriate people and groups – those who are committed to right relations.

We cannot force the Wesak spiritual energies on others. They must choose to evoke those energies from us through the magnetic energy of goodwill. Goodwill, the loving determination to establish right relations, is a latent characteristic of humanity that we can ourselves evoke in others. But how do we create the point of tension that will call forth goodwill? It is through our own modelling of an attitude and atmosphere of cooperation and constructive problem-solving, the non-partisan middle path, that we create an environment in which discussion and compromise become possible. We thus become the evoked channel of spiritual energies to those longing for meaning and connection. We “become a tiny or minute correspondence of the Spiritual Hierarchy – invocative as it is to Shamballa and easily evoked by human demand. These are points warranting careful consideration. They involve a primary recognition of points of tension and their consequent expansion into magnetic auras or areas, capable of invocation and evocation.”⁹

Conclusion

The forces of divisiveness and separatism are at an all-time high in our world, and these can drown out the call for right relations. As disciples we have a crucial role to play in preparing our communities to seek out the positive and healing energies available through us at the time of Wesak. We do this not by lecturing or demanding that others behave in a certain way or by repudiating the person based on their divisive actions. Rather, we do this through demonstrating the power of inclusion, of compassion, and of hope for humanity.

Notice: This paper has been reprinted with permission from “The School for Esoteric Studies,” which holds the copyright.

www.esotericstudies.net/festival-talks.html.

-
- ¹ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology, Vol. 2* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1942), 686-687.
 - ² Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1960), 689.
 - ³ *Ibid.*, 35.
 - ⁴ Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1950), 38.
 - ⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1950), 105.
 - ⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age, Vol. I* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1944), 50-51.
 - ⁷ Bailey, *Telepathy*, 137-138.
 - ⁸ Bailey, *Glamour*, 197-198.
 - ⁹ Bailey, *Telepathy*, 96.

Festival of Goodwill 2018

Group Service: Invocation and Evocation

Miguel Malagreca

The last of the Three Linked Festivals is the Festival of Goodwill. It is also known by other names,¹ including *World Invocation Day*. During this Festival many spiritual groups around the world unite in sounding the Great Invocation, invoking the forces of Light, Love and Purpose to illumine humanity's choices and undergird right human relations on Earth. Our group activity using the Great Invocation during this Festival draws on the Science of Invocation and Evocation and must be accompanied by right action so that the energies invoked can be anchored on Earth.

Why is the group invocative activity so important at this time? Of the three Linked Festivals, one characteristic that makes this one special is that it has only recently been brought to the attention of public consciousness. In fact, while the Festival of Goodwill has been celebrated for two thousand years on the inner or subjective planes, it has become widely known in the external world only since the second half of the twentieth century, in conjunction with the instigation of the New Group of World Servers (NGWS). During the Festival of Goodwill the esoteric community employs the Great Invocation as a powerful invocative mantra, with efforts being made to spread its use in the world. Anticipating this development, the Tibetan wrote: "When the work of the Invocation reaches a high stage of development ... it will then be wise to bring to the attention of the general public, and on a worldwide scale, the factual nature of the New Group of World Servers."²

As we consider the activity of the New Group of World Servers, one of the tasks we are charged with is the expansion of the group *idea* and the anchoring of this *idea* in human consciousness: "The *growth of the group idea* with a consequent general emphasis upon group good, group understanding, group interrelation, and group goodwill. These four are

the ideals of that subjective group, working on the physical plane, which we call the New Group of World Servers."³ The Festival of Goodwill provides an excellent context to reflect on these four ideals for group work, and apply them. Interestingly, the Tibetan tells us that the result of this work will vary "according to the measure of understanding and the dynamic tension displayed by the invoking element"⁴ which can be read as a reminder that it is our role to make the adjustments and provide the conditions for right relationships in the world.

If the attention of the higher is to be evoked by the point of tension of the lower,⁵ the focus that we achieve through our working consciously as a group is crucial. Our conscious invocative work is a heightened vibration, lifting the unconscious needs of humanity to the Spiritual Hierarchy. This, in turn, and through the Christ and the Buddha, will invoke the force of Shamballa. This force is "available for right usage but the power to express it lies in its understanding (as far as may be possible at this midway point in human evolution) and its *group use*."⁶ The spiritual energy is in fact available, but the change in world conditions will only take place as we, as members of the NGWS, step it down with a clear focus and into action, initiating or supporting active initiatives generating goodwill in our communities and immediate circles. This in turn will model the use of goodwill in humanity, similarly to what has been described in physics as the "butterfly effect." Thus the invocative process of this Festival links humanity, the New Group of World Servers and the Spiritual Hierarchy within a reciprocal invocative/evocative process. The more aware we are of the process and of the subjective reality of the invocative group, the more effective our group work shall be: "Unconscious invocation proceeds all the

time; when it becomes conscious, it becomes exceedingly powerful.”⁷

Aspects of the Invocative Process

The four ideals for the *growth of the group idea* in the world – group understanding, group interrelation, group goodwill and group good – can be related to the invocative demands in the stanzas of the Great Invocation, each of which will help dissolve different aspects of the illusion of separateness:

1. *Understanding* – We invoke Light in the first stanza of the Great Invocation. Light brings about comprehension; it is the primordial power that cleanses away the distortions and confusion on our mental plane. Without Light it would be impossible to see and difficult to comprehend the next evolutionary steps and get ready to act. “When aspirants pray in the [Great] Invocation: ‘Let Light descend on Earth’ they are invoking something that humanity will have to learn to handle; this is one of the things for which the disciples of the world must begin to prepare [humanity].”⁸ As issues that had been in the shadow emerge into the Light of consciousness, there is a chance for them to be recognized and worked on. This is never an easy process, but hopefully we can use our past experience to make new sound decisions and support any ongoing constructive work being done on behalf of humanity.

2. *Interrelation* – We invoke that *Love streams forth into human hearts*, that Love displaces the illusion of separateness that so often veils the real and distorts it with the glamor of fear (the basic astral evil) and self-centeredness. The energy of Love relates and is thus invoked to establish right and inclusive relationships. Let us be reminded that the group (and not the self) is the emanating point of right human relations.⁹ In origin, the energy of Love is not

subject to the glamor and distortions on our astral plane: “The cosmic astral plane is a reservoir of love energy, pouring into two of our planes which constitute part of the cosmic etheric body – the monadic plane and the buddhic plane.”¹⁰

3. *Goodwill* – In the third stanza we say: “From the center where the Will of God is known, Let purpose guide all little human wills.” The energy of goodwill is the lower reflection, on the physical plane, of the divine Will. This energy of goodwill focuses our little wills on the working out of constructive purposes, encourages people everywhere to overcome the obstacles encountered in the successive stages of any act

of will. It is the energy of goodwill in practice in our immediate fields of service, and is based on the free will to participate consciously in world change: “There are many people today who find an alibi for themselves in the present world situation, and a consequent release from definite action and responsibility by saying that what is today happening is simply karma or the working out of cause and effect, and that there is nothing, therefore, that they can do about it... In so doing they overlook the third aspect of this same law, to which we have given the name of *free will*... In some way they must learn participation, because the present situation has in it the seeds of release for humanity.”¹¹

4. *The Common Good* – “Let the Plan of Love and Light work out” is a call to humanity to work for the common good, to restore the Plan on our planet, as far as we can understand and participate in its unfolding today. We collaborate in the task of closing the door to evil, support humanity’s struggle to choose to move toward the future instead of yielding to the retrogressive forces.

The Great Invocation expresses the quest for freedom from the unreal that keeps humanity captive physically, emotionally or mentally. It has been the quest of all times, and the Path from the unreal to the real has been taught by all the great Souls.

The Great Invocation expresses the quest for freedom from the unreal that keeps humanity captive physically, emotionally or mentally. It has been the quest of all times, and the Path from the unreal to the real has been taught by all the great Souls. The Tibetan indicates the continuity of the teaching that extends from the Buddha's four noble truths to the teaching of the Christ. Isn't it our task to continue that work?

When the Buddha was on Earth and achieved illumination, He 'let in' a flood of light upon the world problem through His enunciation of the Four Noble Truths. His body of disciples ... – by the power of collective thought – has greatly helped in the attack upon the world illusion. Today the Christ is carrying forward the same great task... Only the intuition can dispel illusion and hence the need of training intuitives. Hence the service you can render to this general cause by offering yourselves for this training. If you can overcome glamour in your own lives and if you can, therefore, comprehend the nature of illusion you will help in:

- a. The destruction of the dweller on the threshold,
- b. The devitalizing of the general maya,
- c. The dissipation of glamour,
- d. The dispelling of illusion.

This you have to do in your own lives and in the group relation. Then your more general contribution will help in the wider human issues.¹²

The Tibetan mentions that the four aspects of the unreal must be confronted individually and in our group work, and that such work will in turn influence the world of human affairs. This reflects the reciprocal process established through the Science of Invocation and Evocation:

- Destruction of the Dweller on the Threshold – Spiritual Will
- Devitalizing of maya – Goodwill
- Dissipation of glamour – Love
- Dispelling of illusion – Light

Conclusion

During this Festival of Goodwill, the Festival of Humanity, extensive use of this solar mantra will be central to our esoteric group work. Humanity is facing the four aspects of the Dweller on the Threshold, the unreal. The invocative process calls forth great divine potencies that can help evoke in humanity the will to move forward on the Path, to conform to the divine Will and to express right relations in everyday life. But this can only happen if we get involved.

[The Festival of Goodwill] will be a day whereon the spiritual and divine nature of humanity will be recognized. On this festival, for two thousand years, the Christ has represented humanity and has stood before the Spiritual Hierarchy and in the sight of Shamballa... Each year at that time He has preached the last sermon of the Buddha before the assembled Spiritual Hierarchy. This will therefore be a festival of deep invocation and appeal, of a basic aspiration towards fellowship, of human and spiritual unity, and will represent the effect in the human consciousness of the work of the Buddha and of the Christ.¹³

Notice: This paper has been reprinted with permission from "The School for Esoteric Studies," which holds the copyright.
www.esotericstudies.net/festival-talks.html.

-
- ¹ Other names given to this Festival are: The Festival of Humanity, and The Festival of the Christ.
 - ² Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age, Vol. 2* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1955), 203-204.
 - ³ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology, Vol. 2* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1942), 654.
 - ⁴ Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1960), 35.
 - ⁵ *Ibid.*, 494.
 - ⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1951), 581.
 - ⁷ Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1950), 81.
 - ⁸ Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age, Vol. 2*, 327.

⁹ Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age, Vol. 1* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1944), 377.

¹⁰ Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 377.

¹¹ Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1957), 252-253.

¹² Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1950), 23-24.

¹³ Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 421.