

THE LIGHT OF LUXOR

VOLUME IV



INDEPENDENT THEOSOPHICAL MAGAZINE

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Independent Theosophical Magazine



Theosophy

We often speak of Theosophy as not in itself a religion, but the truth, which lies behind all religions alike. That is so; yet, from another point of view, we may surely say that it is at once a philosophy, a religion and a science.

C.W. Leadbeater

The Society

"The Theosophical Society was organized for the purpose of promulgating the Theosophical doctrines, and for the promotion of the Theosophic life. The present Theosophical Society is not the first of its kind."

H.P. Blavatsky

Its Objects

1. To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.
2. To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.
3. To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

"Freemasonry comes from both Mysteries and the Operatives. Take the penalty. In the middle ages they may have enforced it; I do not know; but the secrets of building were very carefully guarded. When the candidate could no longer function in his subtle body - and - go through closed doors - the great truths were acted in the form of a drama. Plato was initiated in this manner. Finally, at the time when persecution became rife, when it became dangerous to believe in the mysteries, the great truths were thrown into symbols in order that the knowledge might never be lost. All those Lodges called the Rosary kept some of the knowledge, and the facts were given out in language only understood by initiates. The Teaching of Christian Rosenkreutz contained much of the knowledge.

With the rise of the Operatives a new explanation was given to the Masonic oath, and then we see the two lines of masonry working side by side, and in the world at the same time we see a double line of Masonry. Later we come to one peculiar line of the higher degrees, with which the Comte St. Germain was so closely associated.

If you would read some of George Sain's novels, you would find much in the way of story form of the powers of these initiates. From that continental line we derive much."
Annie Besant 33°

Editors Note

In this volume of *The Light of Luxor*, the first article *The Heat Sutra* was written by Dianne Kynaston (1947-2020). Dianne was former General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in Australia, she was a high-ranking Freemason, The Order of the Round Table, speaker and world traveller.

From the Theosophical society in Australia Facebook page:

“Towards the end of her active Theosophical life Dianne conducted an intense and relevant research on the influence of Theosophy on Australian culture and society, and on world personalities who were touched by the message of Theosophy. She left all her research papers to the Campbell Theosophical Research Library in Sydney where they will be catalogued.”

The articles written by Krista Umbjarv, Stephanie Vargas and Miriam Martinez and reprinted in this volume had been initially published in the *Theosophist Magazine*. The paper by Sara Ortega Van Vloten was a presentation at an ITC conference in 2022. All articles in this volume except for Dianne Kynaston paper have been written by members of the World Federation of Young Theosophists.

For more information on the World Federation of Young Theosophists please see this link to the Theosophy Forward website:

<https://www.theosophyforward.com/articles/theosophical-encyclopedia/3145-glimpses-of-the-history-of-young-theosophists>

The Editor : Julian Ochoa:.

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The Heart Sutra

By Dianne K. Kynaston

WITHIN Buddhist Teachings there are many Sutras (statements about certain Truths, usually short in length), and the three most well known are the Diamond, Lotus, and Heart Sutras.

The Heart Sutra is a teaching given by the great Being, Avalokiteovara, to a disciple, Shariputra, at a gathering of the Sangha of both monks and Bodhisattvas, and is about the Nature of Being, in the sense that there is neither being nor non-being. It presents a paradox for the mind to try and unravel.

Who is Avalokiteovara? This is a Sanskrit word which roughly translated means 'the Onlooking Lord', or 'The Lord who looks down'. In Tibet he is called Chenrezig and in China Guanshiyin Pusa — Kwan Yin. Mainly shown as male, but sometimes female, he is often portrayed with many arms and heads. He is greatly revered in Mahayana Buddhism, and to a certain extent in Theravada Buddhism, and is probably the greatest of the Bodhisattvas.

The Dalai Lama is considered to be an incarnation of an aspect of Avalokiteovara.

In the Theosophical Glossary H. P. Blavatsky provides the following description:

'The On-Looking Lord'. In the exoteric interpretation, he is Padmapani (the lotus bearer and the lotus-born) in Tibet, the first divine ancestor of the Tibetans, the complete incarnation or Avatar of Avalokiteovara; but in esoteric philosophy Avaloki, 'the on-looker', is the Higher Self, while Padmapani is the Higher Ego or Manas. The mystic formula 'Om Mani Padme Hum' is specially used to invoke their joint help. While popular fancy claims for Avalokiteovara many incarnations on earth, and sees in him, not very wrongly, the spiritual guide of every believer, the esoteric interpretation sees in him the Logos, both celestial and human. Therefore, when the Yogacharya School has declared Avalokiteovara as Padmapani 'to be the Dhyani Bodhisattva of Amitabha Buddha', it is indeed, because the former

is the 'spiritual reflex in the world of forms' of the latter, both being one — one in heaven, the other on earth.

In essence, Avalokiteovara is not a person, but a very high state of consciousness. Therefore to have a conversation between him and a pupil is not really possible, but the Heart Sutra is not about an event, but about a profound piece of teaching.

No one knows where the Heart Sutra originally came from, but it finds its historical context in the life of the Chinese Buddhist monk, Xiang Zang, who lived in the 8th century. He used the Heart Sutra, and in fact gave it this name, and it is a central core of his teachings.

Xiang Zang, as a young monk, set off on a great journey of approx 10,000 miles, taking, 16-17 years to travel from China to India and back to obtain better teachings of the Buddhist tradition. His journey was well recorded, and he had a great influence on the various countries and cultures through which he passed. His great legacy is not only in the world of Chinese Buddhism, but in the Buddhist world in general, right down to the present day.

He recorded his journey in a diary (which is still available today in a number of translations) with the journey being full of many difficulties and dangers, and he records that whenever he was in a perilous situation he would recite the Heart Sutra to himself, and thus transcend the situation. Many of these events are recorded in local legends in the many countries

and regions he travelled through. His story also became the foundation for a major Chinese legend, written in the 16th century, called The Journey West, but better known throughout the world as Monkey due to the 1970s television series made in Japan. In this series the monk is given the name Tripitaka, and whenever he had to bring the Monkey under control he would recite the Heart Sutra.

The Heart Sutra

This is a Sutra about a Mantra. The word 'mantra' is said to come from a root meaning 'that which protects the mind'. The mantra is:

Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha

The words here do have a literal meaning:

Gone, Gone, Gone Beyond, Gone Utterly Beyond, Enlightenment Hail!

Prajñâpârâmita

This mantra represents a class of Mahayana scriptures known as the Prajñâpârâmita (Perfection of Wisdom) sutras. These include such famous teachings as the Heart Sutra and the Diamond Sutra. These texts were the subject of worship in Mahayana Buddhism, in much the same way that devotional figures were. Prajñâpârâmâtâ eventually became personified as a goddess, but this is not her mantra. This one is associated with the texts themselves.

Prajna translates as wisdom, and paramita as perfection. Prajñâpârâmita is a central concept in Mahayana Buddhism and its practice and understanding are taken to be indispensable elements of the Bodhisattva Path. The practice of Prajñâ- pârâmita is elucidated and described in the genre of the Prajñâpârâmita Sûtras, which vary widely in length and exhaustiveness. The Prajñâpârâmita sūtras suggest that all things, including one- self, appear as thought forms (conceptual constructs).

Now let us look at the text of the Heart Sutra:

When Bodhisattva Avalokitevara practised the deep Prajñâpârâmita, he saw that the five skanda-s were empty; thus he overcame all ills and suffering.

‘Sariputra! Form does not differ from the void, and the void does not differ from form. Form is the void, and the void is form. The same is true for feelings, conceptions, impulses, and consciousness.

O Sariputra, the characteristics of the void is not created, not annihilated, not impure, not pure, not increasing, not decreasing.

Therefore, in the void there are no forms and no feelings, conceptions, impulses, and no consciousness: there is no eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, or mind; there is no form, sound, smell, taste, touch, or idea; no eye elements, until we come to no elements of consciousness; no ignorance and also no ending of ignorance, until we come to no old age and death; and no

ending of old age and death.

Also, there is no truth of suffering, of the cause of suffering, of the cessation of suffering, or of the path. There is no wisdom, and there is no attainment whatsoever. Because there is nothing to be attained, a Bodhisattva relying on Prajñâpârâmita has no obstruction in his heart. Because there is no obstruction he has no fear, and he passes far beyond all confused imagination and reaches Ultimate Nirvana.

All Buddhas in the past, present, and future have attained Supreme Enlightenment by relying on the Prajñâpârâmita. Therefore we know that the Prajñâpârâmita is the great magic Mantra, the great Mantra of illumination, it is the supreme Mantra, the unequalled Mantra which can truly wipe out all suffering without fail.’

Therefore, he uttered the Prajñâpârâmita mantra, by saying:

‘Gate, Gate, Paragate, Parasemgate Bodhi-Svaha!’

The first passage states that ‘the skanda-s were empty’. In her Theosophical Glossary H. P. Blavatsky defines the skanda-s:

(Glossary) Skandha or Skhanda (Sk). Lit., ‘bundles’, or groups of attributes; everything finite, inapplicable to the eternal and the absolute. There are five — esoterically seven — attributes in every human living being, which are known as the Panch skandha-s. These are (1) form, rupa; (2) perception, vidana; (3) consciousness,

sanjna;(4) action, sanskara; (5) knowledge, vidyana. These unite at the birth of man and constitute his personality. After the maturity of these skandha-s, they begin to separate and weaken, and this is followed by jaramarana, or decrepitude and death.

So this first passage alludes to the fact that no description can be given as there is nothing to describe — all is empty.

The second passage states that the 'void is not created, nor annihilated' — once again there are no qualities or attributes.

The third passage states that all is 'neither form nor formless'. This concept may possibly be grasped in the words of Fritjof Capra in his book, *The Tao of Physics*:

Virtual particles, finally, are not only an essential part of all particle interactions and of most of the particles' properties, but are also created and destroyed by the

vacuum. Thus, not only matter, but also the void, participates in the cosmic dance, creating and destroying energy patterns without end.

The fourth passage tells us that 'the Four Noble Truths No Longer Apply! Why? Because all suffering, its causes, and methods of escape are all located here in the constantly changing material world. Once one has let go of attachments and concerns, there can be no suffering. The fifth passage tells us that this state is attainable in the past, present, and future, for once this state is attained Illumination is the 'knowing' that there is no past, present, and future; there is no suffering, for there are no attachments. All is empty, and yet at the same time, completely full.

So now one can declare:

GONE, GONE, GONE BEYOND, GONE
UTTERLY BEYOND, ENLIGHTENMENT HAIL!

Poem by Gerald Massey | Note by H.P.B.

The Lady of the Light

(Written for Lucifer)

Star of the Day and the Night!

Star of the Dark that is dying;

Star of the Dawn that is nighing,

Lucifer, Lady of Light!1

* *

Still with the purest in white,

Still art thou Queen of the Seven;

Thou hast not fallen from Heaven

Lucifer, Lady of Light!

* *

How large in thy lustre, how bright

The beauty of promise thou wearest!

The message of Morning thou bearest,

Lucifer, Lady of Light!

* *

Aid us in putting to flight

The Shadows that darken about us,

Illumine within, as without, us,

Lucifer, Lady of Light!

* *

Shine through the thick of our fight;

Open the eyes of the sleeping;

Dry up the tears of the weeping,

Lucifer, Lady of Light!

* *

Purge with thy pureness our sight,

Thou light of the lost ones who love us,

Thou lamp of the Leader above us,

Lucifer, Lady of Light!

* *

Shine with transfiguring might,

Till earth shall reflect back as human

Thy Likeness, Celestial Woman,

Lucifer, Lady of Light!

* *

With the flame of thy radiance smite

The clouds that are veiling the vision

Of Woman's millennia! mission,

Lucifer, Lady of Light!

* *

Shine in the Depth and the Height,

And show us the treasures olden

Of wisdom, the hidden, the golden,

Lucifer, Lady of Light!

1. The reader well versed in symbology and theogony is, of course, aware that every god and goddess of the ancient pantheons is androgynous in his or her genealogy. Thus our Lucifer, the "Morning Star," being identical with Venus, is, therefore, the same as the Chaldean Istar, or the Jewish Astoreth, to whom the Hebrews offered cakes and buns, addressing her as the Lady of Light and the Queen of Heaven. She is the "great star," Wormwood, whom the misanthropical St. John sees falling down to the earth in Revelation (Chapter 8), as her great rival is Aima, the fruitful mother, or the third Sephiroth Binah (ihvh alhim, or the female Jah-hovah), the "woman with child," in Chapter 12 of the same.

[All Gods and Goddesses Androgynous]

Notes by H. P. Blavatsky, Lucifer Magazine, October, 1887

Light and Love in Us

Stephanie Vargas

J. KRISHNAMURTI's little book *At the Feet of the Master* is considered one of the three gems of Theosophy. It tells us about the four qualities that we must have not only to enter the spiritual path, but at every stage, every day, and until the end. These qualities are Discernment, Desirelessness, Good conduct, and Love. I would like to discuss the last two.

We will start with good conduct. Krishnamurti tells us that we should calm and quiet our mind, not let the mind wander, concentrate on the things we are doing at the moment, and do them as well as possible, having positive thoughts and avoiding the negative ones, letting our thoughts have good motives. If we have good thoughts and intentions, they will become right action. And to fulfill our own duties, we need to always offer help to others, being kind, gentle, and tolerant with them.

Krishnamurti also said we need to learn to bear cheerfully the bad things that happen to us, understanding the law of karma, accepting and being able to see in those situations the lessons they have for us. He quotes an instructor who told him: "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." When we do things from the heart, things go better, and this we should do at every moment of our lives, and finally have confidence in ourselves and in our inner Master, trust in the things we do, belief in ourselves, and have the will to continue on this path.

Madame H. P. Blavatsky (HPB) wrote in one of her letters to her friends: "With each morning's awakening try to live the day in harmony with the Higher Self. 'Try' is the battle cry taught by the Teachers to each pupil. Nothing else is expected of you. One who does his best, does all that

can be asked.”

The other quality I want to mention is love. Krishnamurti tells us that love is the most important quality, and as he explains, love is will, and it stimulates us to fill ourselves with the other qualities that are needed to tread the path. Love is that unity from which we all emanate, that deep love that, as students of Theosophy, leads us to believe and aspire to brotherhood; that powerful feeling that can do anything, and can change things, and how we see them.

As mentioned earlier, we need to have good thoughts at every moment, and about the things that we do, and to do them with love. We need to create a habit of taking out the bad thoughts, and replacing them with love. Any inconvenience that we have, for example, with another person, we are not to judge, because we do not know what he or she feels or the problems that person has. So, if we add love, that is, thinking about the other person with affection, love, without judging, our perception of that person and the situation itself will change, our reaction will be different, and everything will surely turn out better than it would have if our reaction had been anger. Then it would no longer be a reaction that we would have, but a response. And the difference between reaction and response is quite significant. It is also important for us not to judge ourselves, not to be too hard on ourselves, to treat ourselves with love.

Albert Einstein said: “There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle.” As students of Theosophy, we know that miracles, as religion puts it, do not exist, even HPB said so. Everything in the cosmos, including us, follows universal laws of Nature. But I would like to see the “miracle” in this phrase as an extraordinary and wonderful event. So, everything that happens every day around us is extraordinary, wonderful, and can be seen as the wisdom of Nature, and how interconnected everything is around us.

For example, let us think about how a forest is kept alive: we could not do it without considering the interactions that occur between plants, animals, and other organisms that inhabit it. We know many examples such as the work of bees, birds, or when an animal dies in the forest, the interconnection between plants and trees underground, helping each other when one of them needs nutrients. Without forests there would be no oxygen that we need to live. So all life of which we are a part is interconnected, and it is wonderful.

I heard once about a Chilean psychologist who said in a conference that she had a blind patient and he was very depressed. She asked him as an exercise to write down in a notebook, of course with someone’s help, all the good things in his life. The patient arrived the following week with four full notebooks. Here are some of the things he wrote: the temperature of the shower in the morning, the wonder of

drying myself with a towel, being able to lie down on a bed with clean sheets, the smell of a toast, the texture of tomato sauce, the sun hitting my face when I walk, the smell of flowers, the kindness of a cashier at the supermarket.

This blind patient wrote about everyday things that we take for granted and do not value. The psychologist then said: "I am more blind than my patient." It is true that sometimes we are blind to what surrounds us, maybe because of our daily life, work, studies, problems, and so on. We forget, in most cases, to stop, to appreciate, to

value, and to be grateful for these things.

If we are able to perceive everything that is part of this world, all that surrounds us, even ourselves, as something extraordinary and wonderful, we cannot help but be grateful, appreciate the details of our lives, and be thankful for everything. I believe that if we always keep this in mind, and are conscious of it, we will see things in a different way, closer to unity, to fraternity, that everyone and everything is interconnected and interdependent, as the Masters of the Wisdom have taught for millennia.



Living from the Heart

by Catalina Isaza Cantor

Let's share some thoughts and reflections on what I call living from the heart. There is an expression that is part of traditional wisdom according to which, often before we make a decision, we are urged to follow the call of our heart. While the great sages always remind us of the primacy of the heart, our daily existence is more inclined to follow the limits of the intellect represented by the brain and rational thinking.

Since we are in a world where reason is given precedence, it is believed that a good decision is one that is made by rational analysis and that following the heart implies giving primacy to emotions and impulses that can lead us astray. However, this fear that deciding based on the call of our heart can lead us to mistake, is based, on the one hand, on the fact that we have reduced things to the simplistic mind-heart dichotomy as

if they were two opposites and, on the other hand, on a lack of knowledge of the constitution of the human being and the fact that emotion and heart are not the same thing, and that when we transcend the sphere of ordinary, rational thought, we are appealing to an immense power that is the power of the centre of the heart. Living and thinking from the heart lead us to build a bridge that goes far beyond the mental or emotional realm and has to do with the development of buddhi, the intuition.

Light on the Path (II: 10-11) advises: "Learn to see intelligently into the hearts of men. Look even deeper into your own heart". But, what does looking into the heart imply? It involves turning inwards, it involves embarking on the journey of self-knowledge and self-transformation.

Let us begin by remembering who we

really are: as we may know, there are seven planes of manifestation (physical, emotional, mental, intuitional, volitive, monadic and divine) and each of them has a subtler or denser type of matter. In addition, there are invisible energy centres that are usually associated with some of the physical organs. We are much more than a physical body, emotions or a rational mind. In addition, there are invisible energy centers that are usually associated with some of the physical organs: in Eastern occultism, the heart chakra is the fourth of the seven main centers, which is the bridge between the physical body and the subtle fields.

So we are not our body, not our emotions, not even our mind. We are divine beings, as *The Voice of the Silence* reminds us:

Your shadows live and fade; that which in you will always live, that which in you knows because it is knowledge, is not of transitory life: it is the man who has been, is and will be, for whom the hour never sounds (27-29).

Therefore, our goal is to reach the highest development and to pass from the concrete to the higher mind, to develop our intuition and reach the plane of buddhi.

In her Collected Writings HPB mentions that there are three centres in the body: the navel, or centre of the desire nature; the brain, the centre of the psychic, or "psycho-intellectual nature"; and the heart, the centre of spiritual consciousness.

HPB reminds us that Âtmâ-Buddhi-Manas, is settled in the heart. Divine Intelligence and love permeate the human heart so nothing can satisfy us except to bring it to life: living from the heart. And this does not imply a break with the mind but an integration.

HPB points out that while we live primarily through thoughts coloured by desire, and with intuition and volition latent in most cases, the heart and the brain are energetically linked. To unite the brain and the heart involves transcending the merely rational, and therefore living from the intuition. However, HPB warns that spiritual consciousness can prevail when our heart is pure (CW, XII, 695-6). A pure heart, as mentioned in the third step of the Golden Stairs, is the key to integration; it is the bridge that leads us to connect with the higher that resides in each of us.

In *The Voice of the Silence*, when the disciple asks the Master to reveal what leads to the Path of liberation, this is the answer:

Be pure in heart before you set out on your journey. Learn (before you take the first step) to discern the real from the false, the transitory from the enduring; above all to distinguish between the Knowledge of the Head and the Wisdom of the Soul, the Doctrine of the Eye and the Doctrine of the Heart. Rise beyond illusions. Turn your eyes away from the illusory world, do not trust your senses, look within, you are Buddha.

Our goal is to develop our buddhic nature. We are buddhas in potential. We must go beyond the Doctrine of the Eye, that one of rational study, which fixes its aim on the external, strengthens the mind, matter, desire and leads to wrong action.

He who is pure in heart is free from the prejudices and conditionings that allow us to unveil the real nature of things and to live from the essence: "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God", says a passage in the Bible. So, if we listen to the wise postulate of "following the dictates of our heart", we are acting in the sense of following our intuition, so that each day we are closer to attaining our Buddhic nature.

We are also told that it is necessary to "discern the real from the false, the transitory from the enduring". This quality is called viveka, discernment. As we unfold our intuition, we develop viveka. This is why the Doctrine of the Heart is said to be the "Great Sifter", for as we see intelligently into the hearts of men and look deeper into our own hearts, we begin to experience a change of attitude, we begin to experience the real self-transformation.

The Voice of the Silence is a book "dedicated to the few", it says that the Doctrine of the Eye is more for the crowd, because we are more mental and rational, while the Doctrine of the Heart is for the few. But what does he mean by "for the few"? It means those who are interested in self-realisation in the

practice of the teachings, in living from the heart. We must be lamps to ourselves and to the world around us. Starting with those closest to us, starting by example, inspiring: as the Oracle of Delfos pointed: "man, know thyself and you will know the world", we can also say: "change yourself and you will change the world",

Living from the heart implies, then, a spiritual perception without veils that allows us to "see with the eyes of the soul", to act guided by and based on love, to put aside selfishness, to connect with all beings through what makes us one and, in doing so, to make the first objective of the TS vivid. And we have to start as soon as possible, from where we are. The Voice of the Silence points out: "If the Doctrine of the Heart is too high for you (you of timid heart), connect with that of the Law and hope and strive that no effort disappears from the world of causes". Let us recall the theosophical tripod of study-meditation-service.

In reference to study, which we might say is related in the first instance to the Doctrine of the Eye, the thing to do is to study with discernment and with a clear purpose in one's being, with sincerity. Study becomes necessary in order to transcend the intellectual and to develop our inner nature. Annie Besant suggested that for each small fragment that we read, we should meditate on it for a long time, in order not only to understand it but to live it: to live for the benefit of humanity.

Studying in depth, with an open mind and

with sincerity reveals to us, little by little, the interior of things. For example, with regard to the second objective of the TS, the comparative study of science, religion and philosophy (art): only through careful study we will succeed in revealing their common basis. This revelation undoubtedly helps us to develop our intuition, that ability to go and see beyond appearances. Then, from the superficial, we move to the profound, from the Doctrine of the Eye to the Doctrine of the Heart, and from the non essential to the essential.

Since we are talking about the second object of TS, let us see this applied, for example, to the study of religion. All religions have a part that corresponds to the Doctrine of the Eye and a part that corresponds to the Doctrine of the Heart, the exoteric and the esoteric. We know that their texts and stories are full of symbols and analogies which, once understood through the use of our intuition, show us the deeper meaning. Through study we can remove the veil and understand that these symbols, characters and contents of the sacred texts are but a way of showing us the direction of our own journey towards self-transformation. Arjuna, Jesus and so many others become the symbol of the alchemy that transcends the lower nature to make way for the realization of the higher in one's self.

That is why it is said that a study from a theosophical perspective leads us to become better practitioners of the religion we profess. For if we study our

own religion in depth, we will realize that there are deeper and higher precepts than the merely external. Thus, by fixing our mind deeply, our life becomes one lived from the heart. Supersticious religious ideas alone can distort the potentiality of human development. But an esoteric vision allows us a deeper approach that leads to a direct experience and personal awareness. Religion, seen and practiced from the point of view of the Doctrine of the Heart, consists of a set of personal experiments that we conduct in the laboratory of our own consciousness and also leads us to put into practice the real meaning of religare: the union with the source and with our brothers through love.

Here we can recall the practice of the virtues or paramitas.

- 1 Dāna: generosity
- 2 Sīla: virtue, proper conduct
- 3 Kshanti : patience, forbearance
- 4 Viriá: energy, effort
- 5 Dhyana: concentration, contemplation
- 6 Prajñā: wisdom

The purification that comes from its practice will allow the divine intuitions of our higher mind to manifest in a calm and harmonious mind. This is deeply related to meditation. HPB proposes a concrete practice which is much easier for those who are familiar with Theosophy. She writes:

Regarding concentration, the blessed Master Koot Hoomi says: "The best method is to concentrate on the Master as if He

were a living being within us, as a living presence within us; to form His image in the heart as a focus of concentration” (CW).

And as we fix our minds on that ideal, we gradually realise that service is the highest expression of a life lived from the heart. This is a fundamental element in the Path. To follow the example of the great beings who gave up eternal bliss in order to continue to help human beings: the Path of Renunciation, the one of the bodhisattva. Selflessness is the Doctrine of the Heart. And that service is done in our daily life, we do not have to isolate ourselves for it. To attain liberation it is not by giving up worldly duties. It is not through inaction that the soul will attain its liberation; to attain Nirvana one must attain the knowledge of the SELF. The human being who does not do his due work in life has lived in vain”.

Living from the heart implies the fulfilment of our dharma and, therefore, that we become an instrument of service, active agents in the fulfilment of the Divine Plan which is evolution: “The dharma of the eye is the embodiment of the external and the non-existent. The dharma of the heart is the embodiment of buddhi, the permanent, the enduring” (*Voice of the Silence*).

Through refined emotions (kindness, compassion, aspiration) we can strengthen the intelligence of the heart, according to recent scientific findings. Feelings of kindness, compassion, and gratitude

generate serenity, a synchronized heart rhythm that researchers call “coherence,” while anger, fear, and frustration generate a rough and capricious, “incoherent” image (Kamp, 25). The heart’s field of action, of unlimited potential, can influence people who are close to it. The Electromagnetic (EM) field of the heart is 5000 times more powerful than that of the brain. Its EM field can be detected about three meters from the body and extends indefinitely in space. Because the heart connects directly to the intellectual centers of the brain, its perceptions help us make sense of sensation, store emotional memory, solve problems, reason and learn (Buhner, 40-1).

Let us, then, keep in our minds the ideal of living a life from the heart. The Doctrine of the Heart or wisdom of the soul teaches us self-realization, which implies awareness of one’s oneness with all life and nature and with our own divine immortality.

Let us remember, as HPB tells us:

The heart is the abode of the spiritual man, while the psycho-intellectual man resides in the head.... In the heart there is a point, which is the last to die; a point marked by a tiny violet light... The heart is the centre of the spiritual consciousness, as the brain is of the intellectual consciousness, but the spiritual consciousness cannot be guided by the person, nor can its energy, until it is unified with his buddhi manas (higher self). The effort to centre the consciousness in the heart must be continuous, and also to listen to the promptings of the Spiritual

Consciousness.

So we have to free ourselves from the simplistic mind-heart dichotomy and understand that it is from the integration and development of intuition, through a life from the heart, that we can exhaust our karma and fulfill our dharma to be of use in the unfolding of the Divine Plan. When the heart enters the mind, the mind has a completely different quality; then it

is really unlimited, not only in its capacity to think, to act efficiently, but also in its sense of living in an immense space where one is part of everything.

And let us not forget: we are not our desires, we are the Divine Will. We are not our knowledge and thoughts, we are Divine Wisdom. We are not our emotions and feelings, we are Divine Love.

"No exoteric religious system has ever adopted a female Creator, and thus woman was regarded and treated, from the first dawn of popular religions, as inferior to man. It is only in China and Egypt that Kwan-Yin and Isis were placed on a par with the male gods."

Blavatsky, H.P. The Secret Doctrine.

Ethics in the Third Object of the TS: Spiritual Alchemy

By Miriam Martinez

ON one occasion, Oscar Wilde, author of the fictional novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, said: “When the gods wish to punish us, they answer our prayers”, and he may well have been right. Sometimes illusions, desires, and fantasies overcome us, always rushing to fulfilment no matter the cost. This is entirely natural in the hedonistic world we live in; it is the continuous vicious cycle: desire, obtaining the object of desire, desire again. The problem can arise when we are unconscious of the following:

1. Why do we desire these things?
2. What will happen when we have obtained the object of our desires?
3. Will it help human beings to conduct a harmonious life, free from suffering and the burdens of life?
4. Will it contribute to the alleviation or elimination of world problems?

If the answer to these questions relies upon human pride and selfishness, in-

deed, the object of our desire may be a punishment that we have unconsciously imposed on ourselves.

Answering the previous questions requires deep investigation and slow meditation, and it is of particular importance when we decide to comprehend the Third Object of the Theosophical Society (TS): To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in humankind.

The search for these answers takes profound honesty with oneself, without prejudice, because to know the hidden spiritual realities of the world is the right and duty of the student of Divine Wisdom. Not for the sake of knowledge, which being empty decays over time, but for the potentiality that this knowledge, guided by the Light of Buddhi — the ray of Love, Wisdom, Compassion, Service — can bring to the world.

The word “latent powers” can be the

perfect breeding ground for synonyms such as superpowers, psychism, or altered states of consciousness, and for all kinds of practices that lead to experiencing these realities. However, the meaning of the Third Object of the TS goes far beyond experiencing these phenomena.

The latent powers in the human being are nothing more and nothing else than natural capacities inherent in “the unexplained laws of Nature”. Therein, we are all called upon to develop them when the time is proper to do so. Nevertheless, there are very delicate aspects that must arise from the Soul’s Truth, and, in these, the ordinary temporal consciousness of the human being is not to intervene simply because it cannot comprehend what is beyond its scope.

“There is no religion higher than Truth”, says the motto of the TS. Truth is born from the Freedom of the Higher Self to express his capabilities, challenges, and characteristics. We all have these potentialities within us.

Although we may not know, our Higher Self does know why, what for, and when. It is therefore essential to know these hidden laws and internal processes so that when that moment arrives, we live it naturally. It is like the flower blooming; the flower does not think of it, it simply blooms.

We are all called upon to bloom if we accept the rays of the spiritual Sun, the Universal Law. No one lacks the knowledge and the necessary guidelines to face

the trials before their very eyes. The task is to discover where those guidelines lie and, in this process, the latent capacities may appear.

This process should develop naturally, with the required psychological and mental maturity. Unfortunately, it is well known that people who naturally show these capacities and sensitivities often must deal with incomprehension, leading them frequently to numbness or subversion, which can cause painful disorders and mental illnesses with possible terrible endings.

For this reason, clear purpose and guidance are implicit in The Third Object, and this is service. It is through service to our fellows and to the Universal Law that the true and most crucial capacity arises; the one which allows us to enter into a higher level of consciousness, into a broader capacity to understand the Universal Laws enabling us to function as their faithful vehicle of expression, or in other words, a vehicle of Love.

Nevertheless, the path of the occultist, of the seeker of Divine Wisdom and its laws, is fraught with dangers of all kinds and conditions. So H. P. Blavatsky points out to us in *The Voice of the Silence*:¹

Three Halls, O weary pilgrim, lead to the end of toils. Three Halls, O conqueror of Mâra, will bring thee through three states into the fourth, and thence into the seven worlds, the worlds of Rest Eternal.

If thou wouldst learn their names, then hearken, and remember.

The name of the first Hall is Ignorance — avidyâ.

It is the Hall in which thou saw'st the light, in which thou livest and shalt die.

The name of Hall the second is the Hall of Learning. In it thy Soul will find the blossoms of life, but under every flower a serpent coiled.

The name of the third Hall is Wisdom, beyond which stretch the shoreless waters of akshara, the indestructible Fount of Omniscience.

H. P. Blavatsky also tells us¹ that one must watch ceaselessly, night and day, because Mâra, Illusion, is the great deceiver, the temptation personified by the vices of men, or "that which kills the soul".

The Law of Karma is a Universal Law, and it is the decisions we make and the actions we take that will lead us to one side or the other of the road. At the intersection, one can go to the right, the path of the Buddhas or sages, but one can also go to the left, the path of the dugpas, or black magicians. When the path has been so long, it can be easier than one might think to get confused about the way to go. Mâra, the Illusion, is after all, the great deceiver.

Clara M. Codd points out in Theosophy as the Masters See It:²

Chelaship is no child's play. It is tremendous and stern reality, not to be lightly invoked or entered upon, even in the region only as yet of intense desire for

it. The disciple as he grows in capacity and power becomes increasingly, the object of insidious attack; but, at the same time, he has the power of his Master behind him, [who continually protects and observes him]. . .

Sigh not for chelaship; pursue not that, the dangers and hardships of which are unknown to you. Chelaship unveils the inner man and draws forth the dormant virtue as well as the dormant vice. Latent vice begets active sins and is often followed by insanity. . . . Be pure, virtuous, and lead a holy life and you will be protected. But remember, he who is not as pure as a young child better leave chelaship alone.

The questions to be asked, quoting from the preamble of At the Feet of the Master by J. Krishnamurti,³ are: How to distinguish the unreal from the Real, how to move from darkness to Light, how to conduct ourselves from death to Immortality? Both Krishnamurti in this small work, and Blavatsky in excerpts of the beautiful poem "There is a Road"⁴ indicate this to us:

There is no danger that dauntless courage cannot conquer.

There is no trial that spotless purity cannot pass through.

There is no difficulty that strong intellect cannot surmount.

For those who win onwards, there is reward past all telling — the power to bless and save humanity.

For those who fail, there are other lives in which success may come.

Even if the aspirants fail and get trapped in the quicksand of passions and fears, if goodness is to be found in the heart, the aspirants may return to the father's side, having repaired the consequences of their actions. The Law is loving, the Law is fair, the Law gives each one what is needed to learn.

Annie Besant explains in *The Path of Discipleship*:⁵

Let us now see how it was proposed by the great Teachers that man by experience should learn to choose of his own free will the ideal which was placed before him, and from which he turned aside; how the great Teachers endeavoured to build up from the imperfect humanity towards the perfected ideal manifested in the beginning for the guidance of the race, and unrealized in evolution, by the weakness and the childishness of men.

In order that, in the course of ages, this might be achieved, what is called Karma-Yoga was taught to the people — Yoga, or union, by action. That is the form of Yoga, which is fitted for the men of the world, beset with life's activities; it is by these very activities, by the training afforded by them, that the first steps towards union must be taken. And so, you find laid down for the training of men this Karma-Yoga.

The human being is always given the ability to choose whom he will serve at each moment: the Immortal Self that dwells beyond eternities, or the fading

personality that will eventually wither away. An exemplification of this can be found in the Temptations of Jesus:⁶

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said: "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

Jesus answered: "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God", he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. "All this I will give you", he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

Jesus said to him: "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

God represents the Universal Law. When spiritual hunger lurks and we are confused,

and the way is not so clearly distinguished, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." The food is the Truth that springs from our Soul. It represents the First Vestibule, trans- cending ignorance.

When we feel ourselves falling before the precipice: "Do not put the Lord your God to the test", for it is before the path of probation, The Second Vestibule, when the qualities of the Seven Rays are manifested in the Soul of Man.

Moreover, when we are promised a world full of beautiful illusions — beautiful, yes, but illusions after all — "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'" It represents the transcendence of faults and sins: the Third Vestibule, akshara.

It is then when the words described in Archive XIII of the Masters' Record⁷ make sense:

What part, O Pilgrim on the Way, play you within this scheme? How will you enter

into peace? How stand before your Lord?

I play my part with stern resolve, with earnest aspiration; I look above, I help below; I dream not, nor I rest; I toil; I serve; I reap; I pray; I am the Cross; I am the Way; I tread upon the work I do; I mount upon my slain self; I kill desire, and I strive, forgetting all reward. I fore- go peace; I forfeit rest, and in the stress of pain I lose myself and find Myself and enter into peace.

These, in short, are the foundations upon which the Ethics of the Theo- sophical Society's Third Object rests: humility, commitment, service, and spiritual transformation. It is through karma- yoga (union through action), also called spiritual alchemy, that we can be worthy seekers of Truth, for, in truth, what could be more wonderful, more enriching, more liberating than to be able to develop the Love that drives us every day to become better people and better citizens? It is the power of Love and not the love for power.

In this subtle nuance resides the key for all of it.

Endnotes

1. H. P. Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, Pasadena, California: Theosophical University Press, Verbat. Ed., 2015.
2. Clara M. Codd, *Theosophy as the Masters See It: As Outlined in the "Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom"*, Theosophical Publishing House, 1953.
3. J. Krishnamurti, *At the Feet of the Master*, Chicago: The Rajput Press, 1911.
4. H. P. Blavatsky, *Collected Writings*, vol. 13, "There is a road . . .", p. 219.
5. Annie Besant, *The Path of Discipleship*, The Theosophical Publishing Society, 1899.
6. Matthew 4:1–11.
7. Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, Lucifer Publishing Co., 1922.



Theosophy: A Path of Self-Discovery

By Krista Umbjarv

WHILE trying to understand how people outside of the Theosophical Society (TS) perceive Theosophy or theosophists, I have often come across a view which considers Theosophy to be rather theoretical, not having much to do with daily life, and theosophists are thought to study and read much. Maybe you have had a similar or a different kind of experience, but it seems to be true that in the TS, knowledge is often considered as something that is to be sought and acquired. Usually, those who know more and especially those who know and are experts in The Secret Doctrine are respected for their knowledge.

H. P. Blavatsky (HPB) had said that the path of Theosophy is one of *jñâna-yoga*, or the yoga of knowledge and wisdom. In another place she has also said that Theosophy is not for mental sluggards. Hence, it seems to be all natural that people who are in the TS have an inclination to study and acquire knowledge. We try to progress by studying, learning and

asking questions. The concepts we form on the way will shape the basis of our understanding of what Theosophy and the spiritual path mean. Although on one hand we are encouraged to study and learn, on the other the Masters have said that one of the most difficult tasks on the path is to unlearn. Unlearn what? Does it mean that we should unlearn or forget all our acquired knowledge and information? Or does it mean unlearning the affirmations, convictions, and beliefs that we have formed based on this knowledge and the general culture that we have begun to take as a norm?

Because of the way we believe the ego or self to exist — it is constantly seeking psychological security — knowledge and studies are no exception as possible means to provide it. In fact, the ego can use anything to reinforce its existence provided it is allowed to do so. Knowledge and studies can serve like bricks that we add to the walls of our castle of security so that they could be higher and higher and

make us safer. Often I have met people who have told me that they feel that they do not know enough. Although from a certain standpoint it may be true, from another angle it seems to imply that in the background of the mind there is an idea that a day would come when they will feel they know enough, that a certain level of security has been achieved. I wonder whether such a day will come, although more knowledge may be accumulated.

Michael Ramscar, a psycholinguist, has shown that with increased knowledge the human brain works slower. His research also showed that highly educated people (with a PhD degree), or the ones who have supposedly more knowledge, were worse in creating or learning associations between things that are not usually related. In other words, according to the research, people with greater education and knowledge had more difficulties in actually learning than those who were less educated. At first sight, these findings are unexpected because, according to common logic, one would tend to think that more knowledgeable people have greater learning skills.

Yet this is explained by what science has discovered in the past hundred years about learning; namely, that learning is not only sensitive to things that are associated, but also that learning is sensitive to things that dissociate from one another. What does it mean practically? More simply, it would imply for instance that the more we have read such theosophical literature, where Theosophy has been described as

something unchanging and permanent, the more difficult it would be for us to create the association that Theosophy is constantly changing and should be expressed in the form that responds best to current conditions.

Another neurological study, this time with highly trained sportsmen, showed that their skill was related to the fact that years of training had created a shortcut of neural pathways in a certain region of their brain. This strenuous training had not only created a shortcut, but the years of practising had also made a vast number of alternative neural pathways to disappear.

So what does it mean to be expert or specialist in something? Based on the research, it seems to imply that when a certain kind of knowledge or skill has been acquired, and the more it is anchored, the more difficult it would be to acquire something different of the same sort. This again implies that a kind of crystallization is very probable. In our context, expertise in theosophical literature might lead to crystallization of its ideas and concepts. This might create a circle of habit, where a thing or an idea is thought to be true because there has been repeated exposition to it and at one point we just stop asking questions about it. So instead of dealing with real life as it is, we might, in certain cases, be juggling only with concepts and ideas.

In the letters from the Masters we can find many personal instructions given specifically to their recipients. There are

not too many instructions given to all members, but one of them was given in a letter to Francesca Arundale. Since it is an instruction, it does not say "would you please do this, or try"; instead, it says clearly what should be done:

You should, even as a simple member — much more as an officer — learn that you may teach, acquire spiritual knowledge and strength, that the weak may lean upon you, and the sorrowing victims of ignorance learn from you the cause and remedy of their pain.

"Simple member" means every single member of the TS. Does it not imply that we, as TS members, should then really know the cause and remedy of the pain to be able to give relief, and not as book knowledge, or some nice and round theory or concept, but as a reality?

There are people who sometimes say that they do not really suffer, that sometimes there are problems in life, but fundamentally everything is fine. Yet we can observe that wherever there is belief in a separate self, there is suffering. Whether one is aware of it or not, is a different matter. It is as if we were born with a splinter in our finger and, having always lived with it, we think that it is a normal part of life. It is only when the splinter has been pulled out, that the suffering it caused can truly be understood.

To recognize human suffering and to see its cause and also remedy, we have to inevitably look at ourselves, because

we cannot help others unless we can recognize it in ourselves, looking truly at what is, and not imagining what we think is there or would wish to be there.

A while ago, when I was discussing with some people about observing one- self, a person told me that when one really looks at oneself, it hurts; that it is so difficult to truly do it, because it hurts. But it is normal that it hurts, because it means we deal with something that is real, because we touch a sensitive point of our being. It does not mean that hurting or suffering is the only way of learning, because it is not, but that, when it occurs, it shows that we are dealing with the facts. If looking at ourselves, our tendencies, and so on, we always feel secure and comfortable, we should really ask ourselves whether we are not playing with some pebbles in the periphery of our being, never touching the heart of the matter, or what is real in that present state.

When we truly look inside and see things in ourselves that hurt, it is often considered as a sign, or point of weakness, partly because it does not correspond to the idea of what the ego has made us think of ourselves in its incessant building-up work. Yet when we look at it more closely, we can see that in our present state this so-called point of weakness can become a point of deep strength. This is because we may learn that every single human being who still has some ignorance left, whose ego is constantly trying to reconstruct itself because its nature has not yet been completely understood, goes through the

same experience, the same process, the same pain though with some variations, some nuances. We will then see that what we consider as our experience is not something personal, but universal.

Every time we see in ourselves a disturbing emotion, fear, insecurity, and so forth, we can at the same time recognize that this is what humanity is going through. We can see and recognize the causes of humanity's pain in ourselves. In the measure that we have recognized pain and its causes in ourselves, we can see it truly in others when we meet them. We do not have to be a seer to know; it is enough to look into their eyes, behind appearances, to see sadness, fear, insecurity, desire, anger, and so on. This does not mean that we label a person for being this or that, but that we recognize suffering and its causes in others as we have recognized it in ourselves. Having been able to see the process in ourselves will naturally bring about compassion, because we know what it all means. Eventually, we reach a point where it is no longer personal suffering, but the suffering of humanity that is seen in this particular way. Thus by observing what we are and how we function, we discover the world at the same time. This looking will be an unceasing and ever-deepening process.

In the TS, when we try to do our part, do we share something that is safe and sure for us and give what we wish to give, or do we look deeply with care and sensitivity, and try to give what is actually needed? Do we share theories and concepts, as nice as they may be, or do we try to provide a solution? Sometimes it is asked, how to present Theosophy in a way relevant to the current world. What seems to be needed is a medicine to heal the pain and suffering, because they still exist. Similarly, they existed when the Master's instruction was given, and in the same way they will continue to exist in the future, because human conditioning does not change as quickly as one would like.

All human beings seek happiness and try to avoid suffering. The question is how we define it, be it consciously or unconsciously. HPB expressed the same idea in an explicit way:

No spiritual progress at all is possible except by and through the bulk of Humanity. It is only when the whole of Humanity has attained happiness that the individual can hope to become permanently happy — for the individual is an inseparable part of the Whole.

"Theosophy is, then, the archaic Wisdom the esoteric doctrine once known in every ancient country having claims to civilization. This "Wisdom" all the old writings show us as an emanation of the divine Principle; and the clear comprehension of it is typified in such names as the Indian Budh, the Babylonian Nebo, the Thoth of Memphis, the Hermes of Greece; in the appellations, also, of some goddesses -- Metis, Neitha, Athena, the Gnostic Sophia finally the Vedas, from the word "to know"

Blavatsky, H.P.

Living the Truth: Universal Unity

by Sara Ortega Van Vloten

I will share with you some ideas regarding the keywords of this theme which are "Living" and "Universal Unity".

- First, I will start with a few excerpts I've selected on "Universal Unity", so we can set up a context of its role and its importance.

- Then I would like to focus on "What it means to lead a life embracing Universal Unity" from a theosophical perspective and from the practical point of view, meaning questions such as how we can try to incorporate it in our daily lives, what would be the natural consequences of living it, and what are some of the obstacles we may face in the process.

To start with, I think we can agree that Universal Unity is probably the grandest ideal presented within theosophical teachings, as well as the fundamental essence in various ancient traditions.

When considering the words "Universal

Unity", even from the human intellect, I think we can all grasp an idea of the cosmic dimension that it evokes, far beyond our ordinary perception of life.

Here I have selected a few references which emphasize the utmost importance of Universal Unity from theosophical perspectives:

The first one is the first object of the Theosophical Society [1]: "To form a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color", which urges for every member to lie in sympathy with making a conscious effort to create a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, which is very much related with Universal Unity. I think this is so important to remember that this should be an active object, rather than a passive one. I'm sure we all agree with this statement, but we should also strive for finding ways and creating opportunities at every opportunity to make it active, to make of ourselves such a nucleus in our

communities and in daily life.

The next one is the beginning of HBP's diagram of meditation [2]: "First conceive UNITY by Expansion in space and infinite in Time"

This practice of conceiving Universal Unity in the Higher Mind, and its reflection and contemplation may be helpful to gradually develop an avenue towards perceiving perhaps a glimpse of such Unity.

Next, a quote from Robert Bowen's notes [3] regarding the necessary approach to study the Secret Doctrine: "No matter what one may study in the S.D. let the mind hold fast, as the basis of its ideation, to the following ideas: a) The fundamental unity of all existence...". Here again, emphasis is made upon the importance of letting the mind hold to the idea of Unity of all Beings. Finally, The Voice of the Silence [4] also refers to the union with the "Silent Speaker" that is necessary before the soul can comprehend and remember, meaning to know what is Real.

"Before the soul can comprehend and may remember, she must unto the Silent Speaker be united just as the form to which the clay is modelled, is first united with the potter's mind.

For then the soul will hear, and will remember..."

Overall from these examples, and many others that can be found, it stands out how Universal Unity is so emphasized upon,

and pervades as the ultimate essence of philosophical teachings and doctrines. Therefore, it is worthwhile to dwell on it on a regular basis.

And that brings us to the question of 'What it means to lead a life embracing Universal Unity'. Here are a few aspects of what I'm going to talk regarding some ideas:

- The constitution of man and the spiritual path
- Requirements to advance on nivritti-marga
- Living and practicing
- Sense of responsibility

First, it is useful to have a proper understanding of what are the obstacles that prevent us in the first place from experiencing Universal Unity, as the ultimate goal in the spiritual path of perfection. For that, to consider the principles that govern the constitution of man can help to understand its dual nature, both in theory, and most importantly in practice.

Here I will use a graphical and simple analogy to represent the relationship between the Individuality and the personality (although we are all familiar with the 7 principles). If we consider the process of taming a horse, then:

The horseman represents the Individuality, the observer, who knows; (upwards triangle) while the horse represents the personality and body, the doer; (downwards triangle) and the ultimate unity of both horseman and horse is the

Perfect Man. (double triangle intertwined).

The horseman takes the horse for training when he sees some traits that qualify him and when the horse (or personality) shows a willingness to acknowledge and yield to his master; but before those conditions are there it's very difficult to tame the horse since it is still subjected to Avidya. But when training begins, little by little the horse learns to perceive his master's will and directions. And gradually, little by little, he learns to be more ready to respond even to subtler movements, until eventually it reaches a stage where he is completely aware and united with his master's will (which would be the Higher Self or the Divine Will). At that point they are One, meaning there is complete trust and renunciation by the horse because he acknowledges that his master Knows, and consequently takes care of what is needed. So there is no place for worrying, or self-centeredness, or having conflict, personal suffering, and so on, so the horse is free of all that and these things cease completely when the horse is One with the horseman.

This process of taming can represent the opening of antakharana, the bridge between the lower self and the higher self. As we know, the personality or lower quaternary carries with it skandhas or strong tendencies from past causes, which may tend to be in disharmony with the Divine Self, so the task we have before us is to cultivate a connection with the nature of the Higher Self, despite the obstacles that represent past tendencies.

The next question would be, how to develop or to accelerate the process towards such state of union? How to set the adequate conditions to nurture it to tread the path of return -nivriddhi marga? It seems to me that one basic requirement to create fertile conditions would be watchfulness of the whole microcosm that we are. A constant, vigilant watch is necessary once one has decided to pursue the path that leads to Truth, since this is a process of changing one's nature from denser to subtler vibrations, and for that we need first to realize all the intricacies of our own characters, not just an intellectual understanding, but more an experiential awareness that comes into play with relationship, and when the personality reacts to whatever surrounds it.

Therefore, we must grow in awareness of the inconsistencies and conflicts that there are between that ideal of Universal Unity, Love and Wisdom, and on the other hand our daily behavior. We can ask, how well do they match? How far are we from that ideal on our daily behavior? Actually, the more we tend to observe, subtler disharmonious reactions may emerge to the surface of our consciousness, and that is the first step, to be aware of all these impurities of our character, so that we may choose to take charge if we commit to it for example by nurturing the opposite virtues. This is a long-term endeavor, of course, and there is no reason to be overwhelmed by the realization of the enormous gap, how far we are from being perfect, from the perfect man, as long as we put in the effort, and we TRY, just

as the Masters say [5], to harmonize the multi-layered tendencies that pull us the opposite way.

There is a quote by HPB [6], that gives us some hope and she says: *"Conquered passions, like slain tigers, can no longer turn and rend you. Be hopeful, then, not despairing. With each morning's awakening try to live through the day in harmony with the Higher Self. "Try". One who does his best does all that can be asked."*

A powerful consequence of this conscious watchfulness is to realize that if our past history of bad causes makes our way today very challenging at some point, then we are also in the position to reverse our present choices to the kind that will add up to an inner strength of the Higher Self tomorrow and from now onwards. Therefore, a keen watchfulness and awareness are probably the cornerstones, from which may follow a natural process of self-transformation and the growing development of inner capacities, such as the following versus their opposites: abstract thought (concrete thought), generosity (selfishness), love (unkindness), compassion (self-centeredness), intuition (personal reaction), brotherhood (separation), discernment (personal will), responsibility (procrastination), among others. In the Mahatma Letters, it can be read *"[Adepts] are not made, they become..."* [7], which is a hint of the necessary active work involved in the process of becoming.

The next aspect that I want to talk about deals with how to practice Universal Unity, how to incorporate that essence into our daily lives, and make it a living reality. This question has already been put forward since ancient times and different traditions have described sets of good conduct in order to purify the character, while persevering towards Human Perfection.

A good example of such precepts is the Golden Stairs given by Madame Blavatsky in 1888 [8]:

*A clean life
An open mind
A pure heart
An eager intellect
An unveiled spiritual perception
A brotherliness for one's co-disciple
A readiness to give and receive advice and instruction
A loyal sense of duty to the Teacher
A willing obedience to the behests of TRUTH
Once we have placed our confidence in, and believe that Teacher to be in possession of it
A courageous endurance of personal injustice
A brave declaration of principles
A valiant defense of those who are unjustly attacked
And a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection which the Secret Science depicts -these are the golden stairs up the steps of which the learner may climb to the Temple of Divine Wisdom*

In a very little few verses there is a considerable amount of valuable instructions that we can consider, test, investigate, and examine, in order to discover their meaning not only in a superficial way but in ever deepening layers of inner realization, in all spheres of action during daily life (may it be at work, with family, friends, "strangers"... in daily life). This calls for continuous practice and is quite a task, but also a fascinating journey of discovery towards "*slaying the Destructor of the Real*" as referred to by HPB in *The Voice of the Silence* [9], meaning those causes in the Lower Mind which generate ignorance, separation, differentiation, resistance, and so on.

By meditating for instance on each day one verse, and by turning our attention regularly to the highest realities, by elevating our thoughts, as well as our noblest emotions, is a key exercise and practice, so that it may become a way of life. So it is as necessary as we have to eat and rest through the day, we should reach to a point that it's necessary, it's vital for us to nurture living in the elevated, the Higher Mind, by elevating our thoughts, and emotions too. Also, the Law of Action-Reaction can be observed in different planes of existence, because whatever we put in motion, there is a reaction always. So, when we direct our attention and power of thought to a specific question with due intensity and will, chances are that circumstances may result in unveiling some answers for what we are seeking if we have a keen eye for that. This is a beautiful aspect of the Universal Unity, because it

is a living thing, we move and Life moves with it and the possibility of taking part by collaborating actively is a precious thing to imagine really.

Here I would like to share a fragment from Madame Blavatsky [10] regarding the sense of responsibility: "*The feeling of responsibility is inspired by the presence of the Light of the Higher Ego. As the Ego in its cycle of rebirths becomes more and more individualized it learns more and more by suffering to recognize its own responsibility, by which it finally regains self-consciousness, the consciousness of all the Egos of the whole Universe. Absolute Being, to have the idea of sensation of all this, must pass through all experiences individually, not universally, so that when it returns it should have the same omniscience as the Universal Mind plus the memory of all that it has passed through.*"

We should therefore always endeavor to accentuate our responsibility. The feeling of responsibility is the beginning of wisdom, a proof that Ahamkara [the sense of I] is beginning to fade out, the beginning of losing the feeling of separateness."

The sense of responsibility probably makes things easier for us as it develops, because if you perceive your place in the whole scheme of evolution, you become more aware of the interrelationships between all stages and kingdoms of Life, so naturally one may feel more and more driven to become a coworker with the One Life –just as the horse ultimately surrenders with

voluntary obedience to the horseman, in the analogy that was presented before. This renunciation of the I-ness probably is the most challenging, as it would be mean a revolution on how we perceive Life, but Unity knows no center, and therefore the sense of I must go eventually at some point.

In the meantime, since we are not yet there, I believe it's important to acknowledge the role of the heart, being the organ through which the Higher Ego acts, as said also by HPB in one of her quotes [11]: *"Occultism teaches that the heart is the organ par excellence through which the 'Higher' Ego acts – through the Lower Self"*. So, the motive of our actions should originate at the highest of our awaken principles, then if we persevere to embrace Universal Unity, it may become a beneficent underlying force in all that we do, in all the planes of existence in which we act.

To conclude, I would like to share this very familiar quote [12], I'm sure all of you know this, but it is one of the jewels I think that Madame Blavastky left us, for those who are treading the path or want to go in this direction:

There is a road, steep and thorny, beset with perils of every kind, but yet a road, and it leads to the very heart of the Universe: There is no danger that dauntless courage cannot conquer; there is no trial that spotless purity cannot pass through;

there is no difficulty that strong intellect cannot surmount.

For those who win onwards there is a reward past all telling - the power to bless and save humanity; for those who fail, there are other lives in which success may come.

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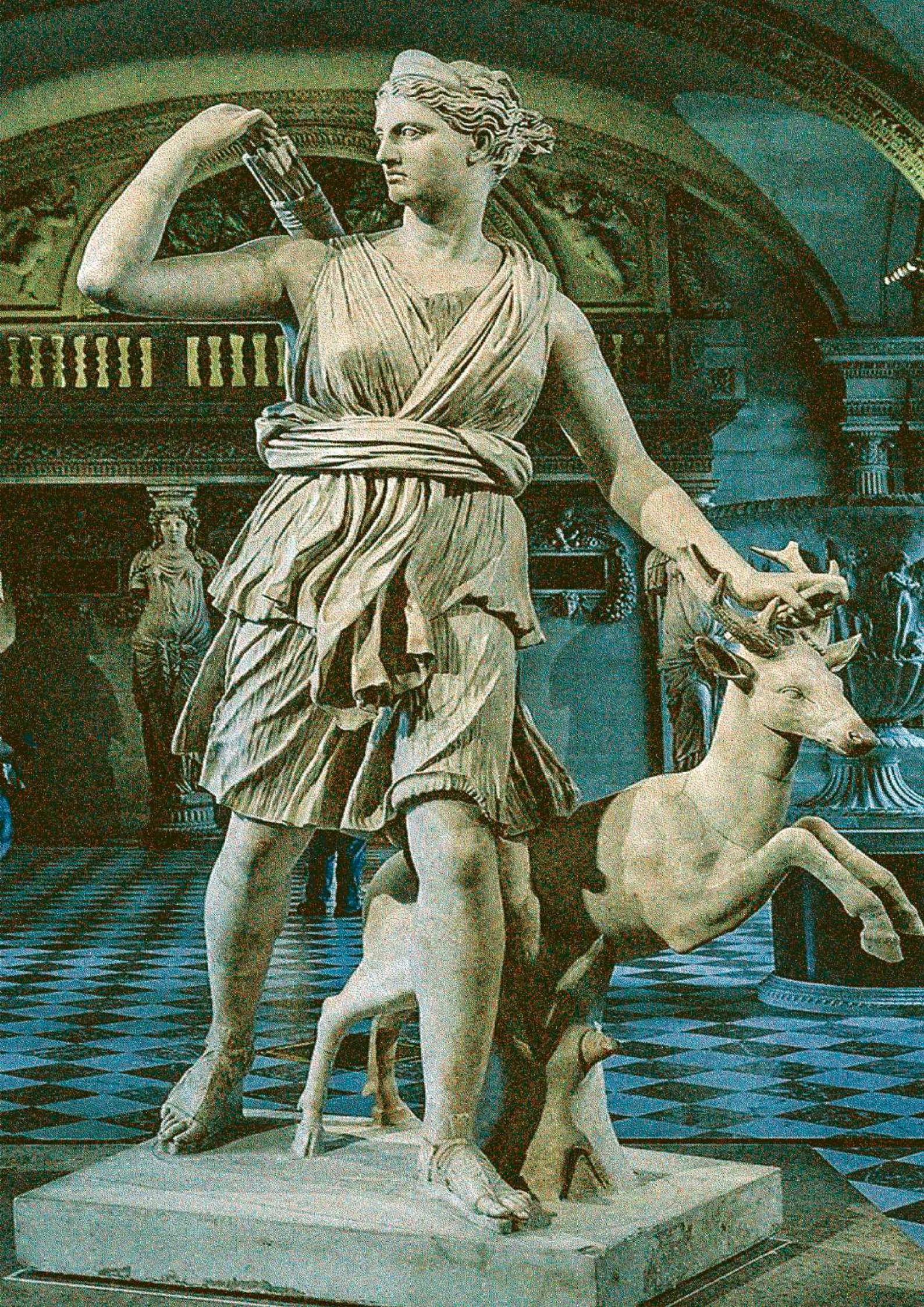
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The Seven Portals

By Elena Bessie Camplone

The integration of head and heart is the central and fundamental teaching of The Voice of Silence. Moral principles must not only be recognized but also applied, the general rule is that of brotherhood, not only perceived but fully lived. It is easy to understand that if a thought, a feeling or an action damages another soul then it is wrong.

A fundamental issue to keep in mind is that consciousness never changes, it is the forms that carry it and allow it to manifest itself, to change.

For this we can say that yes, the absolute truth is one, but then everyone has his own truth, his own point of view, given by the set of experiences that have characterized his life, but also by the skhanda inherited from the quaternary of the previous incarnation, that "dust on the mirror" that alters the reflection of the monad, for each one in a different way.

All those who aspire to walk the "high

ways" are called to examine themselves in the light of their inner Ego, first of all eliminating any residual dust from the mirror, with the help of the divine virtues which are represented by seven keys which are none other than PARAMITA (a term that means perfections) that is 'virtuous', 'positive' behaviors

So we have:

DAANA - SHILA - KSHANTI

Which constitutes the first triad

And then we have the second triad, consisting of:

VIRYA - DHYANA - PRAGHNA

In the central position we have VAIRAGGHYA that is indifference to pleasures and pains, in fact it literally means VAY = without RAGGHYA = passion, the correlation with the KAMA principle goes without saying, a principle that dominates our 4th round. It should be noted that the number of Paramitas varies greatly, both according to the doctrines and also within the

Blavatskyan system itself, on the basis of the teaching to be given. - awakening of consciousness

The first six are considered for apprentices, those who start. The seventh is for those who are more advanced. There are three more for the adepts.

ADVANCED PARAMITAS

Relating to the principles that will have to be awakened in the rounds that will follow our IV

And they are:

- courage
- discrimination - relative to the sixth sense, foresight, of which we will have the first signs during the sixth race of our chain

I wanna take a minute to analyse the septenary system which is a constant in Blavatsky, but not only. This number has a very important part in all cultures, philosophies, sciences and religions. The septenary subdivision is more important and frequent than the tertiary one.

Seven are the Wonders of the World, Seven the Virtues, four Cardinals and three Theological, Seven the Metals, Seven the Books of Hermes Trismegistus, Seven the days of Creation, Seven Colors, of which white contains them all and rejects them all. There are also seven principles, tattvas, planes, notes, planets, chakras and alchemical operations.

PARAMITAS	DANA	SILA	KSANTI	VAIRAGYA	VIRYA	DHYANA	PRAJNA
PRINCIPLES	STHULA MANAS	SHARIRA - LINGA MANAS	MANAS	KAMA	PRANA	BUDDHI	ATMA
TATVA	PRITHVI	APAS	TEJAS	VAYU	ALAYA	ANUPADAKA	ADI
PIANI	KAMA	MANAS INFERIORE	MANAS SUPERIORE	BUDDHI	ATMA	ANUPADAKA	ADI
DAYS OF CREATION	EARTH - LIFE	WATER SEPARATION	ASTRI SEASONS	ANIMALS HUMANS	FISH - BIRDS	LIGHT	REST
PLANETS	EARTH	MOON	SATURN	VENUS	MERCURY	URANUS	NEPTUNE
METALS	IRON	SILVER	LEAD	COPPER	MERCURY	TIN	GOLD
CHAKRAS	MULAHADARA	SVADHISTANA	MANIPURA	ANHATA	VISHUDDA	AJNA	SAHASRARA
PITAGORIC NOTES	MI	LA	RE	SOL	DO	FA	SI
LIBERAL ARTS	ARITHMETIC	GRAMMAR	MUSIC	DIALECTIC	GEOMETRY	RETORIC	ASTRONOMY
ALCHEMY	CALCINAZIONE	SCIOTGLIMENTO	SEPARAZIONE	CONGIUNZIONE	FERMENTAZIONE	DISTILLAZIONE	COAGULAZIONE

Now let's analyze the seven keys individually, starting from: a meaning - everything is perfect - "è tutto perfetto".

DAANA which means material abundance but which in a higher sense indicates charity and immortal love, unconditional, without attachments, characterized by the absence of discriminating judgment on the events of life, for which everything has

It includes spiritual generosity, that is, the teaching and transmission of concepts that we have made our own and material generosity, such as offering material objects without expecting a reward, Here emerges the humility on the part of the

researcher and his total abandonment to the flow of life that derives from the full understanding of the fact that Love is the great force that animates the universe.

A pleasant and easy sensation to acquire as HPB intends in the verses The pilgrim who has passed the first portal will soon find himself in front of:

“SHILA The harmonic action between thought, word and action that starts from a deep understanding of the causes in order to act for collective harmony and not for one’s personal well-being.”

It is implicit to avoid doing bad things, avoiding poisons for the body, speech and mind. It includes practicing good and doing good for sentient beings without selfish thoughts.

As you proceed on the second path, doubts and fears may arise, but as Blavatsky points out: “fear kills the will and paralyzes all action” So, pay attention to fear. Harmonized thoughts with actions consequently we arrive at sweet patience that nothing can disturb KSHANTI It includes putting up with ingratitude, then practicing patience without responding to insults, threats or violence.

Here takes place the great struggle between the higher Manas and the lower Manas and the warning is always present: fear seems to be very dangerous!

We can connect this paramita to the MANAS principle, therefore to the planet

Saturn.

Khanti with Shila and Daana form the first triad: so love creates harmony and without patience harmony cannot be created The VAIRAGGHYA key is subsequently reported, indifference to pleasure and pain, which derives from a deep understanding of the illusory aspects of the ego that generate attachment to life and suffering. Without it, the illusion of maya cannot be overcome and the truth of Sat cannot be perceived.

Here we are called to endure trials, abandoning the attachments of this life and this life. Thus eliminated the earthly attachments, one attaches oneself to the higher. The perception of desire leads to the action of desire.

This is the door of the temptations that undermine man. You have to learn to master your thoughts before you can proceed, in fact the slightest breeze of passions can make you waver and fall.

In one of his studies, Wadia states: “for the man of flesh the world of the spirit is a void, but when you make the most sublime choice and make the decision, you see the void of the world of the senses”.

As we have already mentioned several times, it is linked to the KAMA principle, therefore to the planet Venus.

It is interesting to note that in the Menorah candelabra the central candle is called “SHAMASH”, which means “keeper”. It is located in the center of the

candlestick and is used to light the other candles. During Chanukah each evening the shamash is lighted first, the others are added gradually, one for each evening of the holiday. This similarity could lead to think of the fact that the centrality of Vayragya is not accidental, as being our fourth round bound to the Kama principle, we are constantly led to work on this.

The first element of the second triad is made up of VIRYA, the indomitable energy. That is, that condition of radiant strength of one who has been able to overcome the tests that have been presented so far and which implies the effort to maintain the deepest commitment and perseverance in practice, encouraged by study.

A sense of encouragement emerges in the following verses to prolong efforts. The principle related to this paramita is prana in its highest expression, the planet mercury.

Bearing in mind the fact that the V slogas of the DS are anticipations of what will happen in the next room, I believe that Virya may represent an anticipation of the bodhisattvic state.

We therefore come to the longed-for paramita DHYANA, contemplation. Refuge of yogis, blessed destination of Srotapatti.

In this state there is no longer any separation between subject and object but one lives in a full state of wholeness. This is the best known paramita. The excellent Dhyana of the tathagatas. It

is about understanding reality without discursive thinking. Having reached this path, one has become physically, mentally and morally indifferent and insensitive to pains and pleasures:

To obtain this paramita, the student must have learned to use energy for both offensive and defensive purposes, Wadia states "the state of Dhyana is static in relation to what is lower, but dynamic in relation to what is higher". The attacks of the astral light must be neutralized and repelled, Therefore it is easy to understand that the principle relating to this state is Buddhi, whose manifestation is precisely the astral light in its highest meaning: Akasha. The planet we can associate it with is Uranus.

When the disciple is at this point he defines himself as "entered the stream". It is now possible to make the choice (and we are connected to the double path). We can therefore well see how the order of the fragments is not in succession, but as in a sort of puzzle, everything serves to stimulate the intuition and personal interpretation of the reader also based on what it is necessary to understand at that particular moment .

And it is in this way that with indomitable energy, one continues in contemplation, one arrives at PRAGHNA, full spiritual perception, wisdom acquired through meditation, therefore experimenting with the meditative practice what has been understood.

Crossing his threshold, he becomes a Compassionate Buddha to remain, without selfishness, until the end without end, in the infinite eternal present. Here the Arhant refuses to wear the invisible robes of the Dharmakaya and end up in the Nirvanic state, to become, after his death, a Nirmanakaya in support of all humanity.

The planet connected to Atma is Neptune.

Here I want to reflect on the fact that in any case the Nirmanakaya, by renouncing

Nirvana, remains in a buddhic and not fully atmic condition, as it preserves, within the limits of the possibilities of its Karma, a spiritual body that allows him to help humanity.

The Dharmakaya, the one who lives in a fully Atmic state, is the one who will keep full consciousness even during the Pralaya, as he is able to be without the need for any object, in an unmanifest way, he becomes pure subjectivity.

"The World Virgin is sometimes shown standing between two great pillars--the Jachin and Boaz of Freemasonry--symbolizing the fact that Nature attains productivity by means of polarity. As wisdom personified, Isis stands between the pillars of opposites, demonstrating that understanding is always found at the point of equilibrium and that truth is often crucified between the two thieves of apparent contradiction."

Manly P. Hall, *The Secret Teachings of All Ages*.

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