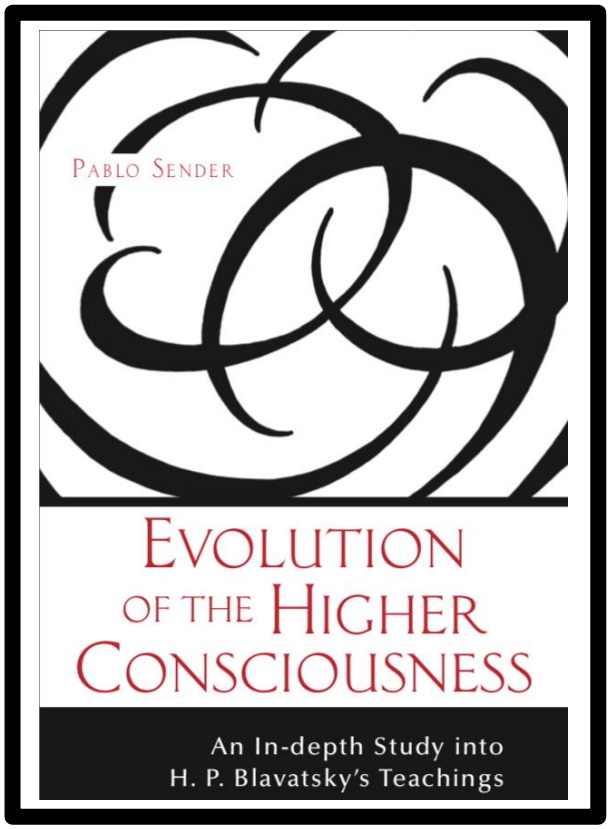
EVOLUTION OF THE HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS

An In-depth Study into H. P. Blavatsky's Teachings



A COMPANION GUIDE

by Michele Sender

© Fohat Productions
P.O. Box 1043, Ojai, California 93024
info@fohatproductions.com

CONTENTS

Preface and Introduction		3
Part I. Theory		
Chapter 1	Theosophical View on Evolution	7
Chapter 2	Ātman—The Higher Self	12
Chapter 3	The Monad	16
Chapter 4	Manas—The Ego	21
Chapter V	Kāma—The Animal Soul	26
Chapter VI	Communication with the Higher	32
Chapter VII	Evolution of the Higher Ego	36
Part II. Practice		
Chapter VIII	The State of Manas Taijasa	42
Chapter IX	States of Consciousness	49
Chapter X	The “Thought-Producer”	55
Chapter XI	The Sense of Space	61
Appendix	Further Readings	69

Preface and Introduction

Words to Know

Wisdom-Religion – one of the aims of Theosophy is to show the existence of an ancient "Wisdom- Religion" from which all spiritual traditions, past and present, began. This idea is not new in human history, it has been proposed at different times by philosophers and mystics. However, it had been forgotten in the Western society of the nineteenth century. This Western influence was also beginning to affect the East, branding their ancient teachings as mere superstition. Today, it is widely recognized that there was wisdom in past cultures and religions. The East revalued its ancient teachings, and the existence of a "perennial philosophy" is accepted by many in the West. Encompasses the Wisdom Religion, Esoteric Philosophy and Occult Science. (*The Secret Doctrine, Past and Future*, Pablo Sender. http://pablosender.com/the-secret-doctrine-past-and-future/)

Ancient Wisdom – is a more general term, used for the knowledge that has been with humanity since the beginning of time. This is the wisdom in the teachings of the Vedas, the Egyptians, Pythagoras, among many others. In the 19th century Western thought tended to regard the past as a just a time of ignorance. Mme. Blavatsky contended that this wisdom has always existed and was expressed in different philosophical, scientific or religious forms.

Higher Triad - the Triad (sometimes called upper triad) is formed by the three higher Principles, *ātma-buddhi-manas*, the fruition of the latter assimilated by the first two after every terrestrial life. This is the perennial individuality that reincarnates in different personalities. (https://theosophy.wiki/en/Triad#Human_triad)

Lower Triad and/or Quaternary

a) *sthūla-śarīra* - physical body - the vehicle of all the other Principles during life.

b) *prāṇa* - life or vital principle - necessary only to a, c, d, and the functions of lower *manas*, which embrace all those limited to the (physical) brain.

c) *liṅga-śarīra* - astral body - the double, the phantom body.

d) *kāma* - seat of animal desires and passions - the center of the animal man, where lies the line of demarcation which separates the mortal man from the immortal entity. (*https://theosophy.wiki/en/Principle*)

Individuality – the higher ego, reflecting the dual monad - *ātma-buddhi* to a more or less extent according to its evolution. The permanent reincarnating Principle in humans. (*Evolution of the Higher Consciousness*, glossary)

Jñana Yoga – (spiritual knowledge or wisdom) a path to attain the state of union of the higher and the lower. On this path, the aspirant studies spiritual teachings in a special way, seeking to raise consciousness so that truths can be realized, instead of merely becoming acquainted

with the conceptual side of the teachings. (*Jñāna Yoga and "The Secret Doctrine,"* Pablo Sender - http://pablosender.com/jnana-yoga-and-the-secret-doctrine-2/)

Questions to Answer

1. Discuss some of the differences between Western esoteric traditions, such as - Alchemy, Kabbalah, Hermeticism, Rosicrucianism, Freemasonry and Eastern philosophies, such as - Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, Yoga. And what aspects from both traditions do you see in Theosophical teachings?

2. Pablo tells us: Modern education stimulates primarily the cultivation of memory and the accumulation of conceptual content, the so-called "facts." From the esoteric point of view, however, memory and concepts, although necessary, are of secondary importance. ... the aim of teachers of this philosophy is to stimulate a "trans-conceptual" grasp of the realities described by the teachings. The way in which Blavatsky wrote encourages the student to make an effort to perceive the patterns and realities that stand beyond words This kind of effort stimulates the faculty of spiritual intuition in the student.

a. Discuss the purpose of Blavatsky's mission.

b. How can you best utilize study to gather more of a "trans-conceptual" grasp of the realities described in this book or any other?

c. Discuss how coming to our own perceptions instead of just memorizing someone else's words is important.

Points to Ponder

Spiritual study involves a twofold dynamic:

1. A conceptual understanding of the information offered, and
2. A careful consideration of this information in a meditative and concentrated manner, seeking to grasp that which words can only indicate.

The perplexing style of Blavatsky's writings, which seem confusing and fragmentary, have the specific purpose of inducing the necessary exertion to reach those insights that will help us gain a more direct experience of what we are studying.

Sit with a notepad, ready to draw diagrams, write down key words, and consult other texts, if needed. As is to be expected, you will rarely get the main point in your first reading.

If study is to be a form of yoga, we must avoid the common tendency to select only those ideas that fit in our preconceived structure. ... The serious consideration of the contradictions will afford the necessary "upset" so that we do not get stuck in fixed views and are prepared to perceive something new.

Exercises to Explore

A. H. P. Blavatsky wrote:

> The attitude of mind to receive the teachings is that which shall tend to develop the faculty of intuition. Practical esoteric science requires all the mental and psychic powers of the student to be used in examining what is given, to the end that the real meaning of the Teacher may be discovered, as far as the student can understand it. (CW, vol. 12, pp. 492-3)

B. Practice study as a form of meditation. Take a text from the book and follow these suggestions:

1. Set up a time when you will not be disturbed, as when you decide to meditate.
2. If needed, prepare a conducive environment for meditative study (burn incense, sit in a special place, turn off your phone, explore what will create this environment for you).
3. Spend a few minutes letting the mind rest. Let go of any thoughts that do not pertain to the study.
4. Start reading the text with complete attention. At this point, it is not important what you think about what the author says. The first step is to make sure you understand accurately the author's idea.
5. Study slowly—briefly pause after passages with a deep or profound meaning. Picture in your mind what the author is saying. Re-read the passage a few times until you feel you have grasped the totality of the meaning.

Diagram

Divisions	Principles (Sanskrit)	Principles (English)	No.
Upper Triad	*ātman*	Spirit	7
	buddhi	Spiritual Soul	6
	manas	Human Soul	5
Quaternary **1, 2, 3, 4** **--------** **Lower Triad** **1, 2, 3**	*kāma*	Animal Soul	4
	prāṇa	Vitality	3
	liṅga-śarīra	Astral Double	2
	sthūla-śarīra	Body	1

Further Reading – see Appendix

Bowen Notes – *HPB How to Study Theosophy* by R. Bowen
The Seven Principles by Annie Besant

The Theory

Chapter I
Theosophical View on Evolution

Words to Know

ātman – universal spirit.

buddhi – spiritual soul.

manas – human soul.

monad – divine spark.

Individuality – in Theosophical teachings, the term is used to refer to the source of our existence as a differentiated center of consciousness within the universal life.

Individualizing principle – is higher *manas* which serves as a vehicle (*upādhi*) for the universal Principles of *ātman* and *buddhi*.

psyche – the totality of mental and emotional activities of a person.

passional nature – animal soul, *kāma*.

intellect – in Theosophical literature it generally means the higher mind.

modern Theosophy – the teachings that came from the leaders and members of the Theosophical Society, as opposed to universal theosophy which came through sages from various times and traditions (notice the distinction in the capitalization of the "t"—capitalized in modern Theosophy and lowercase in universal theosophy).

unity – everything in the cosmos is the expression of a single source or Principle—the whole cosmos is one being.

upādhi – vehicle of consciousness.

Questions for Discussion

1. What is the importance of lower manas in the evolution of higher *manas*? (p. 9)

2. "The final success of the Intellectual stream of evolution depends on the progressive 'death' of the personal ego (*kāma-manas*) as a center of consciousness." (p. 9)

3. Discuss …

4. First, how can this statement be a paradox, since lower manas clearly has an importance in the evolution of the higher.

5. Second, what practical ways are there for us to achieve this "death" or, another way of putting it—dis-identification with the personal ego?

6. The universal monad journeys through the different kingdoms—What happens at the completion of the animal kingdom, before it arrives to the human stage of evolution? (p. 9)

7. Continuing on from the previous question—at this point in evolution the newly individualized monads have a new challenge … what is that challenge? (p. 10)

8. What is the final goal of human evolution? (p. 10)

9. What is the goal of Physical evolution? (p.10)

10. Why did the forms that we call "humans" grow in intelligence so rapidly while other animal forms with good brains did not? (p. 11)

11. What is the aim of the present book? (p. 12)

Points to Ponder

As you ponder over these points, what insights do you come up with that help you to hold the understanding of this chapter?

Below, we are summarizing some of the lists or classifications Pablo has used in gathering HPB's teachings. As you read this section and throughout the book, it is important to remember:

"Any classification is an artificial division of something that is ultimately a unity."(pp. 4-5)

1. Early Christianity postulated that every person consisted of a:

Body – which represents everything related to our physical nature, including the biological needs and instincts associated with it.

Soul – our psychological aspect, the element responsible for our conduct, whose activities are desire, will, memory, and thought.

Spirit – is the eternal and incorruptible spark within; the presence of the divine in each of us, from which spiritual qualities such as love, peace, joy, compassion and wisdom originate. (p. 4)

2. In the model that we examine in this chapter, there are the three higher planes of the cosmos which are regarded as divine. Because they are beyond our comprehension, they are not listed here. The septenary human being inhabits the four lower cosmic realms, of which we can gain a certain understanding.

Spiritual Realm – home of the divine spark, the monad. Consists of the two highest Principles in human beings: the universal spirit (*ātman*) and the spiritual soul (*buddhi*).

Intellectual Realm – plane of our spiritual Individuality (*manas*), frequently referred to as the "higher ego." It is the divine spark when Individualized, also called the human soul.

Psychic Realm – a "ray" from *manas* "descends" to this plane and becomes entangled with the 4th human Principle, the animal soul (*kāma*), which is the passional nature inherited from the

animal kingdom. The "ray" is lower *manas*—our everyday mind that works under the influence of personal emotions and memories. This thought/emotion complex (*kāma-manas*) is the "lower ego."

Physical Realm – home of the densest aspect of human beings—the body, which includes the three lower Principles: the physical matter and form (*sthūla-śarīra*), an ethereal counterpart or double (*liṅga-śarīra*), and the vital Principle that keeps the body alive (*prāṇa*). (pp. 5-6)

3. There are two aspects of the human being, one being permanent and the other transient.

Higher Triad – the permanent Individuality beyond life and death (*ātman*, *buddhi*, and higher *manas*).

Lower Quaternary – mind-body complex, the transient Personality, which changes from incarnation to incarnation (*kāma-manas*, *prāṇa*, *liṅga-śarīra*, *sthūla-śarīra*) (p. 6)

4. According to the Esoteric philosophy, evolution does not only take place on the physical plane known to scientists, but at three different levels. These are the Streams of Evolution.

Spiritual Evolution: concerned with the growth and development into still higher phases of activity of the monad (*ātman* and *buddhi*).

Intellectual Evolution: related to the higher ego (higher *manas*), the source of intelligence and consciousness in humans.

Physical Evolution: involving the body and its vital energy (*sthūla-śarīra*, *liṅga-śarīra*, and *prāṇa*). This body serves as the vehicle for "growth" and the transformations through manas and—owing to the accumulation of experiences—of the finite into the infinite, of the transient into the eternal and absolute. (SD, vol. 1, p. 181) (p.8)

Exercises to Explore

A. Annie Besant wrote:

In the eastern books you do not get a clear presentment of a doctrine as a whole—it is scattered over the books. In the old days men had to work out results; so they grew into great thinkers, because they exercised their minds. This characteristic makes some people reluctant to study this literature because it implies a special kind of effort and, being unaware of the true aim, the student sees no use in doing it. Also, they expect to get a clear picture out of the study and when they do not, they feel their effort was wasted.

B. Spend some time every day reading the last part of this chapter.

The aim of the first part of the Ego's journey is to gradually awaken its dormant consciousness—something that takes place by going through the cycles of reincarnation. By means of this process, the Ego passes "through every experience and feeling that exists in the manifold or differentiated universe" (KT, p. 183) and gradually comes to realize that it (the Ego) is an Individual entity. Since in the first part of its evolutionary journey the Ego is unable to guide the human form, the latter, heavily influenced by the animal soul (*kāma*), uses the

powers of thought and self-consciousness mainly to gratify the lower nature. As the cycle of incarnation progresses, the experiences gained on the lower planes gradually awaken the Ego to full consciousness on its own plane.

The Ego's next goal in the evolutionary journey is twofold: to become the master of the lower Principles and to merge with the spiritual monad. In other words, the Ego has to strive to transcend its identification with the personality (through which it awakened to self-conscious life) and endeavor to realize its true identity—a divine spark (monad) dwelling in the Intellectual realm, and expressing itself on the lower planes. With the attainment of this goal the monad becomes self-conscious on all levels of the cosmos and the goal of human evolution is accomplished. (p. 12)

C. Read in a meditative way—slowly; briefly pausing after each sentence. Picture in your mind what Pablo is saying here. Use diagrams and writing to make your thinking and insights more concentrated.

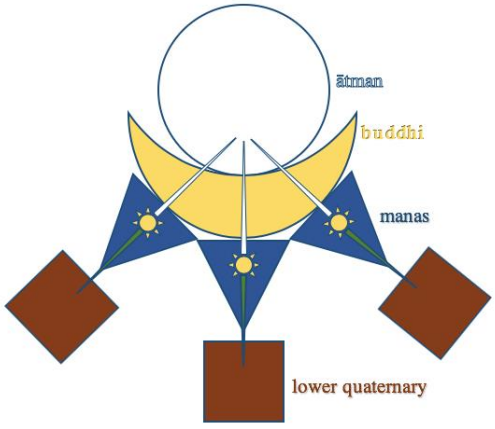
Seeds for Meditation

We divide Man into seven Principles, but this does not mean that he has, as it were, seven skins, or entities, or souls. These Principles are all aspects of one Principle, and even this Principle is but a temporary and periodical ray of the One eternal and infinite Flame or Fire. (CW, vol. 12, p. 525)

The "seven Principles" are, of course, the manifestation of one indivisible spirit. (CW, vol. 10, p. 335)

Diagrams

This diagram is an illustration of how the divine spark (monad: ātma-buddhi) which is essentially universal, is Individualized in different human souls (manas). Then, each individualized manas sends a "ray" (lower manas) to animate their respective lower quaternaries (the separate personalities). (p. 6)



The following diagram shows how a unified element (*ātman*) with 3 unseparated aspects (consciousness – matter – energy) gives rise to a septenary manifestation (7 Principles). (p. 5)

Aspects	Principles
C E M	*ātman* – spirit
C – E – M	*buddhi* – spiritual soul
C – M – E	*manas* – human soul
E – C – M	*kāma* – animal soul, passional nature
E – M – C	*prāṇa* – vitality
M – C – E	*liṅga-śarīra* – ethereal double
M – E – C	*sthūla-śarīra* – physical body

Further Reading – see Appendix

The Roots of Modern Theosophy by Pablo Sender
The Roots of Theosophy - Diagram by Pablo Sender

Chapter II
Atman – The Higher Self

Words to Know

ātman – means "self." In Theosophical literature, the word is used in a more restricted way to refer to the highest Principle in human beings; as well as everywhere in the cosmos, because it is a "universally diffused divine Principle."

Absolute – eternal ultimate reality; neither subject nor object …

puruṣa – the spiritual principle in the cosmos, as opposed to the material (*prakṛti*).

anātman – literally "not-self."

Individuality – The permanent reincarnating Principle in humans—the higher ego. It reflects the dual monad *ātma-buddhi* to a greater or lesser extent according to its evolution.

skandha – in Buddhism, the five components of a human being, namely: material form, sensation, conceptual perception, mental habits, and awareness. In Theosophical literature, this term normally refers to the mental habits and tendencies.

Space – is not only the boundless three-dimensional extent in which objects and events have relative position and direction, but the container of a number of unperceived dimensions or "planes" constituted by different kinds of matter. All these planes have place within the cosmic space, which is a temporal manifestation of the eternal pre-cosmic absolute abstract space. (Theosophy Wiki)

consciousness – the ability to be aware.

> "Consciousness implies limitations and qualifications; something [the object] to be conscious of, and someone [the subject] to be conscious of it. But absolute consciousness contains the cognizer [knower], the thing cognized and the cognition, all three in itself and all three one."(SD, vol. 1, p. 56)

I-ness – the sense of being a particular someone, the sense of "I."

Name Game

Ātman … universal spirit … indivisible all … higher self … divine Principle … very essence of everything … universal self … ray of the absolute … conscious non-consciousness … no-thing … unconscious absolute consciousness … be-ness … eternal non-being …

Space … absolute reality … One-all … absolute abstract space … the one element …

Questions for Discussion

1. Discuss how our mind tends to project our personal and separated self on to spiritual concepts whose essence is always eternal and whole (for example, the idea of God, the enjoyments in heaven, the consciousness of Angels, etc.) If you watch, can you see how your mind does this? (p. 16)

2. Why did Blavatsky say that we do not have an *ātman*? (p. 18)

3. Pablo uses many analogies in this chapter to describe *ātman* as a universal Principle … the sunbeam and sunlight (p. 16), air outside and inside the lungs (p. 19), personal consciousness and the universal self separated as the illusion of the snake and a rope (p. 20), white light – though the parts are contained in the whole, the whole transcends any of the separate parts (p. 21), space within and outside the jar – representing the illusion of separation (p. 23), and gold – which can be created into an infinite array of forms, and yet, itself remains unaffected (p. 24). Discuss how the use of analogies helps us dimly perceive the unperceivable.

4. Can you think of other analogies and metaphors to describe *ātman* and the Absolute?

5. What are the two, "higher eternal Principles present in human beings"? (p.19)

6. What is the aim of our spiritual work? (p. 21)

7. How does this concept of *ātman* as being cosmic space apply at the microcosmic level—that of an individual? (p. 23)

8. What does Blavatsky mean by "absolute consciousness"? And why cannot *ātman* be conscious? (p. 25)

9. What reasons does Pablo give as to why is be-ness a good term to use? (p. 29)

Points to Ponder

As you ponder over these points, what insights do you come up with that help you hold the understanding of this chapter?

"The process of evolution generates many Individualities within the unity." (p. 17)

"*Ātman* is simply that in which we are—though not only we live and breathe and have our being, but so does the whole universe." (p. 18)

"Since *ātman* 'cannot be absent from even the tiniest geometrical or mathematical point of the universe,' it is not really possible for it to be 'outside' of us, any more than inside. … We have to remember that any description is only symbolic, and this is especially true in the case of ultimate principles. If we are not aware of this fact and take things too literally we will be easily misled." (p. 20)

"*Ātman* in its universality is this 'ocean of spirit.' But when talking about it as a particular person's seventh Principle, the Mahatma defines it as the space this person occupies within the universally diffused divine Principle." (p. 23)

"The important point to keep in mind is that consciousness as we know it is not the highest possible state in the universe. The individual consciousness is possible only as the result of a

limitation or fragmentation within the one absolute consciousness. Only something that is a part can be conscious of other parts." (p. 25)

"The Absolute embraces and transcends any relative qualities such as conscious or unconscious, full or empty, material or spiritual, being or non-being, mutable or immutable, etc. Probably the safest attitude is to say that the ultimate reality is neither this nor that." (p. 29) This is similar to the neti-neti of Vedanta and via negativa of Christian Mysticism.

"*Ātman* acts as the 'higher self' of an Individual when the higher ego becomes aware in it. … When our spiritual consciousness is illumined by *ātman*, the sense of I-ness assumes the highest form we can experience in a human body—a conscious feeling of being one with the whole." (p. 30)

Exercises to Explore

A. Mme. Blavatsky recommended to the students of her Inner Group:

> "Try to imagine something which transcends your power of thought; say, the nature of … [*ātman*]. Then make the brain passive and pass beyond."

B. To help in this endeavor, let us look at an excerpt from this chapter on *ātman* and the Absolute—where Pablo discusses some aspects of their nature.

> "In the Theosophical view *ātman* is the universal spirit in which 'we live, move, and have our being.' (Acts, 17:28) Every person and every thing, participates in it. It is the 'radiation' of the absolute reality (which Blavatsky calls 'meta-spirit') and penetrates the whole of the cosmos. In fact, we will find that in the Theosophical literature *ātman* and the Absolute are frequently indistinguishable, because they are inseparable." (p. 16)

C. Spend some time reading the text and reflecting on it. Do it with the specific purpose of grasping something that is beyond thought. Instead of thinking, as we sometimes do, "about the *ātman* of a particular person …"make an effort to perceive that "there is only one universal Principle, which is reflected in each separate being." For this, read slowly, ponder over the words, visualize them and then stay in silence with a subtle effort to "feel" what the text is describing.

Seeds for Meditation

"Space is the most abstract thing, and space containing all is just the unknown deity which is invisible and which we cannot understand, which we can but intellectually sense." (SD, vol. 1, p. 8)

One could say that the actual treading of the spiritual path involves the ability to let go of the conditioned—to die to the known. What does this look like to you? (p. 28)

Further Reading – see Appendix

Space - Theosophy Wiki – https://theosophy.wiki/en/Space

Chapter III
The Monad

Words to Know

ātman – is a non-localized, non-personal, no-dual Presence, which constitutes the unitive basis of everything that exists. Be-ness.

be-ness – the source of all the different types of being and consciousness manifesting in the cosmos.

buddhi – metaphorically seen as the "vehicle" (*upādhi*) of *ātman*. Spiritual intuition.

spiritual intuition – a buddhic faculty by which certain (in the sense of true) knowledge can be obtained. The kind of cognition that is not possible through thinking. A knowledge that is not mediated by intellectual processes.

monad – from the Greek *monas*, meaning One, a unit.

dual monad – *ātma-buddhi* … the divine spark or "unit" that emerges from its condition of pure spirituality and "descends in matter" in order to undergo a process of cosmic evolution. (cML, no. 104, p. 362)

triple monad – *ātma-buddhi-manas*.

consciousness – the ability to respond to the environment.

conscious being – one that is able to perceive the environment and respond to it.

cosmos – an ordered system, generally refers to the universe.

lunar form – *kāma*, the passional nature or animal soul.

Name Game

Ātman … be-ness … divine spirit … perfect … ray of the universal seventh Principle … absolute reality … universal consciousness … One-element … spiritual substance ...

Buddhi … wisdom, enlightenment … impersonal Principle … beyond the realm of the mind … divine soul … vehicle of *ātman* … mold of the garments of *ātman* … first reflection of *ātman* … universal seed of consciousness … ray of the cosmic sixth Principle ...

Kuṇḍalinī-śakti … energy-side of *buddhi* … fire of friction … electric fire … Power … World-Mother … serpentine … spiral force ...

Questions for Discussion

1. Compare and contrast the Hindu meaning of *buddhi* and the Theosophical view. (p. 33) See also "*Buddhi*" at Theosophical Wiki https://theosophy.wiki/en/Buddhi

2. What happens when *ātman* manifests in the conditioned cosmos? (p. 33)

3. Trace the two aspects of the Ultimate Reality (*ātman*) from the diagram on p. 34.

4. *Buddhi* is the first form in which *ātman* appears in the cosmos … what are the subtle differentiations of *buddhi*? And what problem does this view pose? (p. 34)

5. If we limit ourselves to consider human existence, what can we say is the primary aim of the evolution of the monad? And why do we have to limit it to this level? (p. 36)

6. *Ātman* is described as "conscious non-consciousness," *buddhi* is "simply the first differentiation [of the highest reality]" … how is the description of *buddhi* different on the spiritual realm in relation to "this plane of finite consciousness"? (pp. 36-7)

7. What is an important goal during the human stage of evolution? (p. 37)

8. What Principle is needed for the dual monad to generate individual consciousness on the lower plane? (p. 37)

9. Delineate the differences between consciousness and self-consciousness. (p. 38)

10. When does the human stage of evolution begin? (p. 39)

11. What is the difference between spiritual and psychic intuition? (p. 41)

12. According to Blavatsky, which Principle is the source of "all beautiful inspirations of art, poetry, and music, high types of dreams, flashes of genius." (p. 42)

13. What is the warning HPB gives when one attempts at "arousing [*kuṇḍalinī*] into action"? (p. 43)

14. What specifically needs to be "destroyed" before attempting to awaken *kuṇḍalinī*? Why? (p. 44)

15. "Although the activation of *buddhi* results in the awakening of the fiery power, the opposite is not necessarily true." Explain this statement. (p. 44)

Points to Ponder

As you ponder over these points, what insights do you come up with that help you to hold the understanding of this chapter?

"When the ultimate reality is reflected in the realm of time and space, it appears as a basic duality—consciousness and substance [or spirit and matter]. Although seemingly different, they are but two aspects of one Reality." (p. 34)

"The diversity we see in the cosmos is generated gradually, in a progressive movement of differentiation or densification. The first form in which *ātman* appears in the cosmos is called *buddhi*. *Buddhi* can therefore be thought of as a subtle conditioning of the consciousness-aspect

of *ātman*, a subtle transformation of its energy-aspect, and a subtle differentiation of its substance-aspect." (p. 34)

"*Buddhi* is the mold of the "garments of *ātman*, because *ātman* is no body, or shape or anything, and because *buddhi* is its vehicle only figuratively." (SD, v. 1, p. 245 … p. 35)

"While the image of *buddhi* as a transformation of *ātman* retains the idea of unity, that of *buddhi* as its reflection exemplifies better the concept of the immutability of *ātman*." (p. 35)

"*Ātman*, being the ultimate reality, is perfect in itself, beyond any possibility of growth or development. What evolves is its reflection in *buddhi*." (p. 36)

"The highest sees through the eye of the lowest in the manifested world; *puruṣa* (spirit) remains blind without the help of *prakṛti* (matter) in the material spheres; and so does *ātma-buddhi* without *manas*." (SD, v. 2, p. 123, fn. … p. 38)

"What we can call human consciousness has its foundation in *ātman* but, as such, it originates from *buddhi* plus *manas*." (p. 39)

"On one hand, the monad can be expressed on the lower planes by means of the Principle of mind. On the other, *manas* is assimilated by the divine spark, thus acquiring a spiritual sense of individuality." (p. 40)

Spiritual intuition (*buddhi*) is … "the only faculty by means of which men and things are seen in their true colors. It is an instinct of the soul …" (p. 41)

"Another important aspect to keep in mind is that this knowledge is not based on the perception of an object by a subject that is separate from it. Since the 'buddhic [is] the sense of being one with the universe,' (CW, v. 12, p. 253) this higher type of knowledge comes from experiencing a union with the object of knowledge." (p. 42)

Exercises to Explore

A. H. P. Blavatsky wrote:

> As one progresses in Jñāna Yoga one finds conceptions arising, which will form into mental pictures. Refuse to be deluded with the idea that the new found and wonderful picture must represent reality. It does not. As one works on, one finds the once admired picture growing dull and unsatisfying, and finally fading out or being thrown away. This is another danger point, because for the moment one is left in a void and may be tempted to revive the cast-off picture. The true student will, however, work on unconcerned until at last the mind and its pictures are transcended and the learner enters and dwells in the world of no form, but of which all forms are narrowed reflections.

B. Throughout the reading of this book, at some point in each chapter … work at the three steps of spiritual studying: 1) **reading or hearing of the text**, 2) **pondering over**, and 3) **meditating upon**.

a) Take a part of the chapter that inspires you and spend some time just reading it deeply. Have a dictionary close by and look up the terms you may not know. Make sure you understand all the meanings of the words and specifically the meaning used in the text.

b) Once this is done, start reading the text slowly, allowing ample time for reflection. The aim here is understanding the concepts in a deeper way than merely knowing what the words mean.

c) Finally, start meditating on the text chosen, using the concepts as a springboard to sense the reality that they are pointing to.

Seeds for Meditation

"Since *ātman* is the one metaphysical element or spiritual substance from which everything is developed, it is also the material basis of all the planes, even the lowest of them—the physical. Ultimately speaking, everything emanates from (or, rather, within) *ātman*." (p. 34)
Use the diagram on that page to help in the mediation.

"All Principles, are but the one reality in its various aspects." (p. 35)

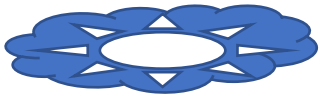
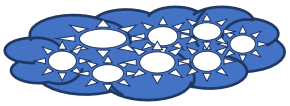
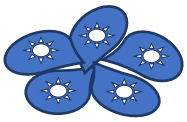
"When this long process of human evolution is finished, the monad becomes "triple." The totality of its Principles (*ātma-buddhi-manas*), which at the beginning of the evolutionary journey were latent, are now awakened. The divine spark becomes self-aware on all the planes of the system and is ready to move on to the next evolutionary start—that of a celestial being." (p. 44)

Diagrams

Expanding from the reading on page 37, in this diagram are the correspondences between the Cosmic and Human Principles.

Cosmic Principles	**Human Principles**
parabrahman - absolute reality	*ātman* – higher self
ālaya – universal soul	*buddhi* – spiritual soul
mahat – universal mind	*manas* – higher mind
kāma-deva – universal love	*kāma* – passional nature

In the diagram below we can see the “light” of the one monad “overshadowing” the different kingdoms of nature. Notice the reflection of the one monad becoming more and more differentiated and separated with each kingdom. From the reading on page 39.

Principle Developed	Kingdom	Differentiation of the Monad	“Overshadowing”	Presence of the Monad
physical etheric vital	Mineral		illumination evenly distributed	whole kingdom
	Plant		pockets of brighter light	whole species
kāma	Animal		almost separate reflections	groups of individual animals
manas	Human		bright and separated reflections	individual human beings

Further Reading – see Appendix

Chapter I – The Monad by Charles Leadbeater

Chapter IV
Manas – The Ego

Words to Know

manas – mind, to think … the mental faculty which makes of Man an intelligent and moral being, and distinguishes him from the mere animal

manu – man, the thinker

Principles – the basic "elements" or "essences" upon which everything is formed

Individuality – higher *manas*, which individualizes the dual monad (*ātma-buddhi*)

egoity – the higher "Individuality"

egotism – the higher sense of I-ness from the Individuality

egoism – the lower sense of I-ness from the "personality"; "selfishness"– the opposite of egoity

causal body – (*kāraṇa-śarīra*) is the vehicle of consciousness of the higher ego

inherent omniscience – the faculty to know or apprehend the essence of whatever consciousness focuses on

intellectual insight – a flash of understanding which comes from the higher mind

Name Game

***Manas* in general** … fifth Principle … the Principle of mind … principle of self-consciousness … a distinct entity, an "I" … human soul ...

Higher *manas* … Ego … higher ego … Individuality … sentient reincarnating Principle in Man … reincarnating ego … the noetic Principle … manifested God within each rational being … "I am I" … spiritual mind … suprasensuous thought … abstract mind ...

Lower *Manas* … ego … lower ego … personal … "I am John Smith" … sense-thought … concrete mind

Dual monad … *ātma-buddhi* ...

Triple monad … *ātma-buddhi-manas* … higher *manas* at one with *buddhi* … human monad … divine Man ...

Questions for Discussion

1. What is the first duality of *manas*? (p. 47)

2. When exploring *manas* as a Principle, *manas* is usually called what? (pp. 47-8)

3. Compare the use of the word "ego"– in modern use according to Freud; in modern spirituality; and in early Theosophical literature. (pp. 48-9)

4. What is the difference in the pronunciation of the higher and lower egos. (fn., p. xiii)

5. Diagram your rendition of the analogy Pablo uses about the sun (*ātman*) and the "magnifying glass" that represents *manas*. (p. 50)

6. During the early period of evolution, primitive humans remained devoid of understanding, why? (p. 51)

7. While *ātman* is _____ _____ and *buddhi* is an _____ and _____ _____, *manas* is the _____ of _____ … the sense of "I am I," which gives us the ability to do what? (p. 52)

8. Animals have consciousness, but lack self-consciousness. What does this mean? Differentiate this with the self-consciousness of humans. (p. 52)

9. What is the result of the ray of *manas* entangling with the personal vehicles of consciousness? (p. 53)

10. What is the natural result of identification of the impersonal consciousness with the personal vehicles of consciousness? (p. 53)

11. What is the second quality of *manas*? (p. 55)

12. Discuss what "unconditionally omniscient on its own plane, and only potentially so in our terrestrial sphere" means. (p. 55)

13. How does inherent omniscience of the Ego differ from the spiritual intuition that comes from *buddhi*? (fn., p. 55)

14. Re-read the two quotes on page 56 – think of examples where the thinking from the lower mind caused a conflict or misunderstanding due to its inability to perceive past what the senses bring to thought.

15. "Our mind, although a powerful tool, is still quite limited" … how can we better discover what is relatively true? (p. 56)

16. If the lower mind is not the source of that truer perception … why is it needed? (p. 57)

17. What is the key characteristic of *manas*? (p. 57)

18. According to the Occult science, what is the real "brain"? (fn., p. 57)

19. Compare and contrast higher *manas* with lower *manas* – keeping in mind that although dual in nature, they are really a single Principle. (pp. 60)

20. What is one of the aims of the evolutionary journey for the higher ego? (p. 61)

21. In an enlightened being, what is the distinction between the lower mind and the lower ego? What is he or she identified and not identified with? (p. 61)

22. Discuss or think about the analogy of the car used on page 62 as an example of the difference between our higher and lower mind. (p. 62)

Points to Ponder

As you ponder over these points, what insights do you come up with that help you hold the understanding of this chapter?

"*Ātman* and *buddhi* are the two universal Principles shared by all living creatures, as well as 'inanimate' objects." (p. 47)

"Let us remember that just as *ātman* is the reflection of the absolute reality (*parabrahman*), and *buddhi* that of the universal soul (*ālaya*), so is *manas* the expression of the universal mind (*mahat*) in human beings." (p. 47)

"*Manas* is … mysterious, protean, beyond any grasp, and almost shadowy in its correlations with the other Principles, that is most difficult to realize, and still more so to explain." (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 183 … p. 47)

Ponder over the differentiations of the use of "ego" according to the Theosophical literature, use the table on page 49, and add the descriptions from the paragraphs above it. (p. 49)

"*Ātman* and *buddhi* are impersonal and universal Principles, interpenetrating everything. But once connected to *manas*, the dual monad becomes focalized into an Individuality." (p. 49)

"The higher ego is far too spiritual to fully "descend" into the lower planes—the material personality being only able to express a very limited "fragment" of it. For this reason, it is said that the fifth Principle emanates just a "ray" of itself to incarnate." (p. 51)

"Eventually, instead of the simple and undefined feeling of "I am I" we have "I am—John Smith." It is through this process that the impersonal and pure being-ness of the higher ego, which is independent of any particular personality, becomes the personal self, frequently called in Theosophy the "lower ego." (p. 53)

"The dual monad (*ātma-buddhi*), which is universal and beyond any sense of Individuality, in descending to the manasic plane develops an impersonal spiritual I-ness (higher ego). Then, the latter, emanating a Ray into denser matter, produces the "mirage" of the personal ego." (p. 54)

"We should not imagine, however, that this higher mind is completely out of touch with our daily life. As we work in a spiritual direction, even our regular thinking starts to be affected by the higher mind." (p. 59)

Exercises to Explore

A. In the article "Some Practical Suggestions for Daily Life" published by H. P. Blavatsky, we read:

Strive, by concentrating the whole force of your soul, to shut the door of your mind to all stray thoughts, allowing none to enter but those calculated to reveal to you the unreality of sense-life, and the Peace of the Inner World. Ponder day and night over the unreality of all your surroundings and of yourself. … Indifferent thoughts, however, serve merely to distract the attention and waste energy. The first great basic delusion you have to get over is the identification of yourself with the physical. (*Some Practical Suggestions for Daily Life*, section VI)

Spiritual culture is attained through concentration. It must be continued daily and every moment to be of use. Meditation has been defined as "the cessation of active external thought." *Concentration is the entire life-tendency to a given end. … Hence the mystic obtains knowledge about any object of which he thinks constantly in fixed contemplation*. (*Some Practical Suggestions for Daily Life*, section V)

B. Throughout our day we should strive for constant vigilance over our thoughts while at the same time realizing how these thoughts condition our response to life.

a) "Thought has a self-reproductive power," an energy and a direction of its own. The first step is to become aware of this pace and motion. Notice the times in your day when your mind is on autopilot or picks up a touchstone from a memory and then continues to go down the rabbit hole. Realize how this then colors your moods, actions and sensations from this one particular pattern of thought.

b) Once you become more aware of the thinking process and patterns of the conditioned mind, you can begin to move your thoughts in a different direction … first by distraction of a benign nature—paying attention to something that moves you away from this lower state of mind and thereby creating the ground for reception of the higher. After this becomes more of a new habit or pattern of thinking, you can then use every moment possible to point your thoughts in the direction of the higher by means of where you focus your mind during the day, and then by the study of spiritual texts.

c) Create something that reminds you throughout your day to reach for higher aspirations. For example, when the chimes of the clock ring in the hour; or an app set on your phone; or sticky notes with inspirational quotes; or a talisman that you see or touch often, etc.—something that catches your attention and reminds you to look towards that which is real, abstract and eternal.

Seeds for Meditation

"*Buddhi* would remain only an impersonal spirit without this element which it borrows from the human soul [*manas*], which conditions and makes of it, in this illusive universe, as if it were something separate from the universal soul for the whole period of the cycle of incarnation." (*Key to Theosophy*, pp. 59-60 … p. 49)

"When the evolutionary process reaches the human stage, the universal monad is connected with *manas*, which "concentrates" the radiation of the former. This "individualized beam" becomes the reincarnating Individuality or Ego, the human soul." (p. 50)

"In its own inherent nature, or essence, [the spiritual mind] is omniscient, for it is part of the divine mind. But once that it has been brought to reincarnate on earth, it takes up all the materiality and all the finite attributes, so to say, and the qualities of the personalities it incarnates in." (*SD Commentaries*, pp. 578-9 … p. 55)

"True intelligence, however, does not come from the accumulation of facts—it is the ability to see deeper and perceive holistic patterns and relationships that are not recognized by the superficial mind. Once the higher mind begins to awaken, it exerts far greater influence on the development of wisdom than any activity born in the womb of thought and memory." (p. 57)

Diagrams

Use the diagram on page 62, read the summary and mediate on both the horizontal and the vertical. Then add your own words and expressions to the diagram. (p. 62)

Further Reading – see Appendix

The Seven Principles by Annie Besant – "**Principle V – Manas, The Thinker, Mind"**

Chapter V
Kama – The Animal Soul

Words to Know

kāma – selfish desire, lust, volition; the cleaving to existence.

kāma-rūpa – "*rūpa*" means body or form; "*kāma-rūpa*" then means desire-body or desire-form. During incarnation it is the vehicle for *manas*.

psyche – the totality of thoughts, emotions, desires, and memory. The lower or personal ego.

ahaṃkāra – the sense of being an "I" separate from the universal self.

kāma-manas – the mind acting under the influence of the passional nature. Sometimes used as a synonym of the lower ego and lower *manas*.

kāma-prāṇa – represents the kāmic Principle when acting blindly, with no manasic influence, but only allied to the vital Principle [*prāṇa*].

universal will – The principle of "will" expressing through *ātma-buddhi* – non-conscious, impersonal.

spiritual will – The principle of "will" expressing through *buddhi-manas* – self-conscious, impersonal.

egoistic will – The principle of "will" expressing through *kāma-manas* (human desire) – self-conscious, personal.

instinctive desire – The principle of "will" expressing through *kāma-prāṇa* (blind desire) – unconscious, personal.

manasic will – includes spiritual will and egoistic will.

manas-antaḥkaraṇa – the origin of subtler feelings (love, inspiration, compassion, sympathy, spiritual aspiration, etc.).

Name Game

Kāma … animal soul … sexual desire … desire … passion … sensory pleasure … animal desire … fourth Principle …

Questions for Discussion

1. When the manasic ray emanates from the higher ego, in its "descent" the Ray becomes entangled with the kāmic Principle, forming what? (p. 65)

2. Lower *manas*, being a ray or emanation of a spiritual Principle (higher *manas*), cannot relate directly to the physical body. How is that gap bridged? (p. 65)

3. What forms the psyche? (p. 65)

4. Patanjali states in his *Yogasūtras* the basic cause of suffering is what? (p. 66)

5. The kāmic Principle does not have a form or body during life, when does it assume one? And what is this form or body called? (p. 66)

6. Materialistic or selfish desires and thoughts are not mere products of our brain and hormonal activity. They are expressions of what? (p. 66)

7. The association of *kāma* and the term "animal" has to do with the evolutionary stage at which this Principle becomes active. In what kingdom is it "germinal"? And its awakening leads to the development of what? (pp. 66-7)

8. What does *kāma* fuel in animals? And it manifests in them as the desire for what? (p. 67)

9. In humans, the situation is different. The active presence of manas confers upon them, what? (p. 67)

10. Human beings share with animals the ability to feel (sentiency, _____) but are distinguished by a well-developed ability for _____ thought (reason, _____) that is only a germ in animals. Because of this, _____ is called the _____ soul. (fn., p. 67)

11. *Kāma* does not constitute the totality of the emotional nature in humans. List both the lower emotions and the higher counterparts. (p. 68)

12. What gives rise to a "battle" in the field of consciousness? (p. 69)

13. Tension between spiritual and animalistic influences within the field of manasic consciousness is an inevitable factor in human life. What happens when the influence of the Ego grows stronger? (p. 70)

14. What directs the Principles 1 and 2? (p. 70)

15. Is *kāma* the source of both desire and will? (p. 71)

16. Is there a difference between desire and will? (p. 71)

17. We can think of personal desire as being a "_____-_____ _____,"and the will of the higher nature as being "_____ _____". (p. 71)

18. The term "manasic will" represents the volition that expresses through the Principle of *manas*, what must it do? And why? (p. 73)

19. How can we identify true will? (p. 73)

20. The majority of people are, for the most part, unaware of the spiritual and impersonal will, so … it lies "dormant" in them. But for those whom this will is awakened, it manifests … what? (p. 74)

21. The spiritual will begins to operate only as desire is purified, which is done by gradually centering it on impersonal aims and objects. How does HPB explain these steps? (p. 74)

22. We experience the presence of a _____ _____ in ourselves. On one hand, there is the spiritual influence that comes from our _____ _____. On the other, there is the materialistic tendency from the _____ _____. (p. 76)

Points to Ponder

As you ponder over these points, what insights do you come up with that help you hold the understanding of this chapter?

"The kāmic Principle is not a passive vehicle of expression. It has its own motion, ever tending towards the objects of the senses, manifesting as passions and desires." (p. 66)

Śloka 24 of the second volume of the SD states that, when higher egos incarnated in the primitive animal-man for the first time, "from their own essence they filled (intensified) the *kāma*." (fn., p. 66)

"Anger, lust, envy, revenge, are all "intellectualized" passions, which require the ability to think and remember. Thus, tendencies that are perfectly fine in the animal kingdom (as they serve to ensure the survival of the body and cannot be abused) become a source of evil in human beings." (p. 67)

"The kāmic Principle is the boundary between the animal evolutionary inheritance and the divine in humans." (p. 68)

"According to Blavatsky, all these subtler feelings have their origin in *manas-antaḥkaraṇa*. Thus, spiritual emotions are a reflection of the higher Principles in the personality, while the selfish ones originate in the animal soul." (p. 69)

"*Kāma* (desire) is ever drawing *manas* down into the sphere of material passions and desires. If the better Man or *manas* tries to escape the fatal attraction and turns its aspirations to *ātman*—spirit—the *buddhi* … conquers, and carries *manas* with it to the realm of eternal spirit." (SD, v.1, pp. 244-5 … p. 70)

"In Metaphysics and Occult philosophy, Will is that which governs the manifested universes in eternity. Will is the one and sole principle of abstract eternal motion, or its ensouling essence." (*Theosophical Glossary*, p. 270 … p. 71)

"Thus Will is the offspring of the divine, the God in Man; desire the motive power of the animal life." (p. 73)

"To get rid of *kāma*, you must crush out all your material instincts—'crush our matter.' But at the same time you must remember that *kāma*, while having as part of it bad passions and emotions, animal instincts, yet helps you to evolve by giving also the desire and impulse necessary for rising. For in *kāma-prāṇa* are the physical elements which impel to growth both physically and psychically, and without these energetic and turbulent elements progress could be made. … Hence the student must learn to dominate and purify *kāma*, until only it energy is left

as a motor power, and that energy directed wholly by the manasic Will." (CW, vol. 12, pp. 708-9 … p. 75)

Exercises to Explore

In his book *Las Siete Dimensiones del Ser*, Pablo writes: "*Focusing on the Eternal is a way of dissolving the root of selfish desire, not just its various manifestations."*

Below are three ways of carrying out this practice:

A. Focusing the mind on things of universal and impersonal importance.

> *The best remedy for evil is not the suppression, but the elimination of desire, and this can best be accomplished by keeping the mind constantly steeped in things divine.*

Part of spiritual training involves learning to consider life from the most elevated and impersonal point of view we can. The ability to perceive something depends on practice. An artist, accustomed to working with colors, develops the ability to distinguish various tones of which the average person is unaware. In the same way, as we make an effort to perceive life from a spiritual point of view, we acquire the necessary sensitivity to capture the most elevated aspect of existence and of the circumstances in which we live, an aspect which normally remains hidden because the consciousness is not trained.

B. Reflecting on the transitory from the higher aspect of the eternal.

In the book *Practical Occultism* it is recommended to: "*Ponder night and day on the unreality of all your surroundings and of yourself*." When Theosophy says that something is unreal, it does so from a metaphysical point of view, not the empirical. Thus, in the phrase quoted, the existence of the personality is not doubted, but rather its temporal nature is recognized.

To live being conscious of the transitory nature of things is an important spiritual practice. Although this idea can cause a sensation of emptiness, fear, or sadness in some persons, the practice proposed here does not imply the adoption of a pessimistic or nihilistic attitude, as may appear at first glance. One must consider that everything is impermanent on this plane, but that our true Self, which is beyond the body, emotions, and thoughts, is one with the Real.

C. Focusing the consciousness higher than thought.

The previous exercises help us to understand our desires and attachments and to purify our nature, preparing us to perceive more subtle realities. But at a certain point, we must transcend even the process of thinking. J. Krishnamurti, a contemporary exponent of what might be called Theosophical mysticism, did much work on this aspect of the spiritual life. On one occasion he said, "*We have used thought to discover Truth. But Truth can only be discovered when the mind is completely quiet.*"

The lower mind functions in the field of the concrete—objective and conditioned. Because of this, in order to grasp that which is Eternal, this mind must remain in silence. According to Krishnamurti, *"A mind which is silent, which is calm and intent, discovers a state which is not limited by time or space."*

The way to open the door to this type of perception is through attention: "*Thought is time, but if you are paying complete attention to something, then thought does not intervene and, therefore, you can have a direct, instantaneous perception.*"

In this manner Krishnamurti explains that when we are completely attentive, thought is silent, and then we can have a spiritual perception. This has a purifying effect on the personality and its desires, because that which acts is not the *self*, but the Eternal, which *"is not limited by time or space."*

Seeds for Meditation

"The union of human mentality with the kāmic tendencies intensifies the latter, creating in him a variety of negative emotions that are unknown to animals." (p. 67)

"*Kāma-rūpa* … is the center of the animal man, where lies the line of demarcation which separates the mortal Man from the immortal entity." (*Key to Theosophy*, p. 91 … p. 68)

"Once [the higher egos are] imprisoned, or incarnate, their essence becomes dual: that is to say … assume a two-fold attribute which is (a) their essential inherent characteristic, heaven-aspiring mind (higher *manas*), and (b) the human quality of thinking, or animal cogitation, rationalized owing to the superiority of the human brain, the *kāma*-tending or lower *manas*. One gravitates toward *buddhi*, the other, tending downward, to the seat of passions and animal desires." (*Key to Theosophy*, p. 184 … p. 69)

"The 'will' of the … [spiritually ignorant] is carrying him from spirit into matter (descending arc of the cycle), while the 'will' of the … [spiritually wise] disentangles him from matter and makes him soar up towards 'spirit' and out of all existence." (CW, vol. 11, p. 473 … p. 74)

Diagrams

Descent into Matter … p. 75

Use the following words and come up with a Diagram or Illustration that helps you better understand what is being written here.

Basis of all … conscious non-consciousness … presence beyond duality … non-localized and non-personal … *ātman* … be-ness … non-being, the One-being

First stage of differentiation … universal consciousness … *buddhi* … unitive, all-pervading … unaware of itself … no contrasts between subject and object … only oneness

Next stage … individual and non-restricted self-awareness … higher *manas* … pure and impersonal sense of being, of existing … beyond any definition or demarcation

Through incarnation … limited and separate vehicles of consciousness … personal self-consciousness … lower *manas* … "I am this"

Existence as a separate center … produces like and dislikes … *kāma* … consequent attractions and aversions

As a result … conscious efforts to maintenance of living body … *sthūla śarīra – liṅga śarīra – prāṇa* … through which desires can be satisfied

Further Reading – see Appendix

The Seven Principles by Annie Besant – "**Principle IV – The Desire Body"**

Chapter VI
Communication with the Higher Consciousness

Words to Know

antaḥkaraṇa – is described "as the path or bridge between the higher and the lower *manas.*" (*Theosophical Glossary*, p. 23 … p. 80)

kāma-manas – the mind acting under the influence of the passional nature. (p. 80)

kāmic ego – the sense of I-ness that is identified with desires and passions. (p.79)

kāma-loka – the astral region where disembodied souls remain until the kamic elements are purified; it has some resemblance to the concept of purgatory in Christianity. (p. 79)

manas-antaḥkaraṇa – the origin of subtler feelings (love, inspiration, compassion, sympathy, spiritual aspiration, etc.). (p. 80)

devachan – a stage in the post-mortem processes where the essence of the experience of the earthly life is assimilated by the higher Principles. Loosely compared to the Christian "heaven." (fn., p. 80)

conscience – "the still small voice," is the awareness of a subtle feeling that a certain course of action or attitude is not the correct one. (p. 81)

reason – what we normally call reason is sense-thought, and is limited; generally conditioned by acquired knowledge, memory, experience. (p. 84)

Reason – in Theosophical literature, sometimes when a "R" … it refers to *buddhi-manas*. (p. 83)

soulless entity – a depraved person that possesses the ability to think but has no spiritual or moral influence to guide its actions due to a break in the connection with the higher ego. (p. 87)

kāma-prāṇa – the vital element – keeps the organism alive; the personality can live without the higher *manas* if *kāma-prāṇa* is still active. (p. 87)

avīci – in Theosophical literature this designates one or more reincarnations of the lower quaternary as a soulless entity, experiencing lives full of suffering. (p. 88)

Dweller on the Threshold – the "ghost" of the previous depraved personality, attracted to the new incarnation of the Ego. (p. 90)

Name Game

Antaḥkaraṇa … connection with the higher … on it impressed all good and noble aspirations … function of the lower mind … active only when lower *manas* aspires towards

its higher half … willingness and ability to respond to the higher influence … when active, the ability to choose will always be available in consciousness … when broken – *kāma-manas* loses its connection with the higher ...

Questions for Discussion

1. How can the higher nature influence the spiritually deaf kāma-manasic? (p. 79)

2. Thinking of *antaḥkaraṇa* as a bridge or path between the higher and lower aspects of *manas* may bring the idea of it being a fixed structure. What can it be better thought of? (p. 80)

3. How can this "function" (of the mind) become more and more active? (p. 81)

4. How does conscience present itself? And how do you develop it? (p. 81)

5. What is the intrinsic limitation in the action of conscience? (p. 82)

6. When figuring out the right action in a previously unexplored situation, something higher than conscience is needed, what is that? (p. 82)

7. In the beginning, this intuition will be weak and confused, but with right effort a surer intuition can be developed. What two answers does HPB give us for strengthening in this area? (p. 82)

8. When examining freedom of choice, there are two elements involved, what are they? (p. 83)

9. Theosophical teachings do not support the deterministic view. What do these teachings state instead? (p.83)

10. It is true that at this stage of evolution manas is always conditioned by *kāma*, to a larger or smaller extent; however, what—when active, gives the ability to choose? (p. 85)

11. Consistently choosing the best course of action that can be perceived … will continue to open the door wider to the action of the higher manasic consciousness. Now, what if a person systematically dismisses the voice of his conscience? (p. 86)

12. When a person systematically ignores the voice of his conscience, the field of choice gradually diminishes and the process of thinking becomes more and more, what? (p. 86)

13. What happens to the higher ego in the case of a soulless personality when its vitality is exhausted, and it finally vanishes? (p. 89)

14. Soulless entities and Dwellers on the Threshold, are rare cases because in nature few people are able to get too close to either absolute evil or absolute good. What does this illustrate? (p. 90)

Points to Ponder

As you ponder over these points, what insights do you come up with that help you hold the understanding of this chapter?

"Thus the reincarnating Ray may be separated, for convenience, into two portions; the lower kāmic ego is dissipated in *kāma-loka*; the manasic part accomplishes its cycle and returns to the higher ego." (CW, vol. 12, pp. 659-60 … p. 79)

"This metaphorical bridge is the means through which the ray of manasic consciousness can break its identification with the personality and reunite with its original source. Allegorically speaking the True in the realm of illusion." (p. 80)

"The Heart is the center of the spiritual consciousness. … The pangs of remorse for wrong done, the prickings of conscience, reproaching for evil, inciting to good. These come from the Heart, not from the Head." (CW, vol. 12, p. 695 … p. 81)

"Conscience is a manifestation of the experience already acquired by the Ego in its evolutionary journey." (p. 82)

"Conscience is the means by which the higher nature can warn the psyche against blindly following the kāmic impulses, thus affording the possibility of choice." (p. 83)

"We should not lose sight of a very important fact—the influence from our higher nature through *antaḥkaraṇa* can break through the conditioning in which our reason or sense-thought is trapped." (p. 84)

"As long as there is the presence of the higher through *antaḥkaraṇa*, no matter how obscured by *kāma* its influence may be, there will be the possibility of a conscious choice between right and wrong at some level." (p. 85)

Exercises to Explore

In his book *Las Siete Dimensiones del Ser,* Pablo gives us two approaches to awakening the pure self-consciousness:

A. The aim of this exercise is to reach spiritual self-consciousness. For this, as Nisargadatta Maharaj said, "*All one has to do is hold on to the sense of I am*." Since all spiritual perfections are already present in our higher consciousness, we do not need to add or acquire something from outside. What we must do, essentially, is to disentangle our pure sense of *being* from its identification with the personality, that is, we need to transcend the sense of "*I am this name, this body, etc*." The emphasis here is not on *doing* something (because the one who *does* is the *personal* self), but on simply allowing ourselves *to be*—to be with clear self-consciousness. This attitude gradually purifies the personal elements from our consciousness.

   To carry out this exercise, sit completely relaxed—physically, emotionally, and mentally—and simply rest in the sense of being, of existing. This is an abstract sensation and may require some time to perceive it, but with each attempt the perception will become clearer. Once you can remain in contact with this pure sense of *I-am-ness*, remain there, being conscious of it, without worrying if there are other thoughts, emotions, or sensations.

B. Ramana Maharshi said that for those "addicted to thinking" there is an alternate approach that is more active, but which eventually leads to the same state. He recommends using the question "Who Am I?" as a seed for meditation:

> "*When other thoughts arise, one should not pursue them, but should inquire: 'To whom do they arise?' It does not matter how many thoughts arise. As each thought arises, one should inquire with diligence, 'To whom has this thought arisen?'. The answer that would emerge would be 'To me.' Thereupon if one inquires 'Who am I?', the mind will go back to its source; and the thought that arose will become quiescent. With repeated practice in this manner, the mind will develop the skill to stay in its source*."(Ramana Maharshi, "Who am I?", p. 4)

Here we are using thought in order to transcend thought since, according to Ramana Maharshi, the question "Who Am I?" will be destroyed in the end, together with all other thoughts. This question is not intended to produce a conceptual answer about who we are. It is simply a means for focusing on this sense of being, which we have been talking about, and to remain there. In this state, *manas* can come in contact with *buddhi*.

Seeds for Meditation

"… We must not only be unselfish, but must do all the duties that karma has given us, and thus intuition will point out the road of duty and the true path of life." (CW, vol. 9, p. 400-H … p. 83)

"The lower *manas*, taken as a whole, is, in each Earth-life, what it makes [of] itself. It is possible for it to act differently on different occasions, although surrounded each time by similar conditions, for it has Reason and self-conscious knowledge of right and wrong, of good and evil, given to it. …" (CW, vol. 12, p. 711 … pp. 83-4)

Diagrams

There is an example on page 85, of the slave owner and choices. Pablo uses this to illustrate how the field of free will can expand or contract depending on the choices that we make, in spite of our conditioning. Think about this and come up with your own analogy, illustration or example of this principle.

Further Reading – see Appendix

Antaḥkaraṇa at Theosophy Wiki

Chapter VII
Evolution of the Higher Ego

Words to Know

omniscience – the state of knowing everything.

inherent omniscience – the ability to know anything that one chooses to know. In the case of the higher ego, its inherent omniscience is limited to its own plane—the Intellectual realm or the higher mental plane.

universal aum – the sacred syllable; the triple-lettered unit; hence the trinity in one; it is an invocation, a benediction, an affirmation and a promise.

involution – the monad "descending" through the different planes, falling into matter; from unity to multiplicity

evolution – the "re-ascent" back from the more material planes to the spiritual planes; from diversity to unity.

devachan – a blissful post-mortem state between two earth-lives into which the higher ego enters after its separation from the *kāma-rūpa*. It is a period of rest, reward for spiritual efforts, and assimilation of the experience gained during life.

Adept – one in whom the union of *manas* with *buddhi* is permanent.

buddhi – source of wisdom, germ of enlightenment present in every human being from the beginning

divine spark – monad, *ātma-buddhi*, because it is too spiritual to be able to affect directly the consciousness of the lower personality, this wisdom remains latent in most people.

reason – important tool of consciousness in the material world, inadequate when it comes to the perception of spiritual realities. It distinguishes and defines; it works within the domain of arguments and dialectics.

spiritual intuition – the expression of *buddhi* through the mind, a faculty higher than our reason, can always conceive the abstract idea; that which is never perceived by the senses.

sense-thought – what we normally call "thinking," operating from our lower mind; thinking based on what we come to know through our senses.

supersensuous thought – a transcendental form of thinking from the higher ego, not based on information gathered by means of the senses.

divine wisdom – beyond supersensuous thought, operates from the buddhic plane; no-thinking as a process to realize truth but an immediate perception of truth, which is trans-mental.

Name Game

Antaḥkaraṇa … helps the personality by providing a means for spiritual influence from the higher nature … not only the source of "all good and noble aspirations" expressing through the lower nature, but also the bridge to transfer any valuable personal experience to the higher ego … represents "the upward energies of the lower *manas*, the energies and the tendencies which become it devachanic experiences ...

Devachan … in it, all of the unselfish and spiritual memories and qualities of a particular incarnation are integrated into the developing monad ... they become part of what we could call "the evolutionary experience" of the Ego … survive the oblivion into which all that was purely personal inevitably falls ...

Questions for Discussion

1. When talking about the inherent omniscience of the higher ego, what is the first thing to keep in mind? (p. 93)

2. Why are the spiritual faculties of the higher ego said to be dormant? (p. 93)

3. What is the second goal of the Ego? With this development, what does the Ego realize? (p. 94)

4. The Egos (divine beings), in order to become one with the whole, need to purify themselves. For this, they must experience the differentiated universe on two levels, what are those two levels? (p. 94)

5. How does the higher ego awaken to self-consciousness in the Psychic and Physical realms? (p.95)

6. Most spiritual teachings have to do with moving beyond the lower ego; Blavatsky points out, there is also … what? (p. 95)

7. What is the "real life" for the real Ego? (p. 96)

8. What is the aim of this stage of evolution [the Individual aspect of the Ego's evolution taking place on the higher planes]? (p. 96)

9. What are the aspects of our daily life that will help the evolution of the Ego? What activities are irrelevant for the Ego? (p. 98)

10. What is the effect of the assimilation in the monad during devachan? What is assimilated? (p. 100) And what becomes conscious? (p. 101)

11. Once an incarnation is finished, what becomes sorted out and discarded? And what becomes self-conscious? (p. 101)

12. As *buddhi* develops a spiritual sense of I-ness, what happens? (p. 101)

13. The last stage in the process of unfoldment consists of what? (p. 102)

14. What is the ultimate purpose of the human stage of evolution? (p. 102)

15. The self-consciousness of higher *manas* is a pure sense of being, which in not personal or selfish. However, what is it still? (p. 105)

16. What is the difference between "accumulation of information about spiritual matters" and "growth in spiritual knowledge"? (p. 106)

Points to Ponder

As you ponder over these points, what insights do you come up with that help you hold the understanding of this chapter?

"At the beginning of its evolution, the Ego is like an infant born in the Intellectual realm. Being endowed only with the seed of individual consciousness, it is neither aware of the higher nor of the lower planes. In the course of evolution, it begins to awaken to the realities of its own realm, but a long time passes before the Ego comes out of its passive state and becomes able to act in relation to the lower planes." (p. 93)

"The higher ego is highly spiritual, and is linked very closely with the higher Principles, *buddhi* and *ātman*. These higher Principles are entirely inactive on our plane, and the higher ego (*manas*) itself is more or less dormant during the waking of the physical Man." (CW, v10, p249 ... p. 93)

"Little by little, the experience gathered through lower *manas* awakens the Ego to the existence of the lower planes. In time, it begins to learn about them and gradually becomes able to assert its influence on the personality through the *antaḥkaraṇa*." (p. 94)

"The divine egos, in order to re-become the One-essence, or be indrawn again to the universal aum, have to purify themselves in the fire of suffering and individual experience." (CW, v12, p630 ... p. 94)

Use the diagram on page 96 to understand the aim of human evolution. (p. 96)

"Day-to-day affairs, when lived with a mundane attitude, are of little use to the Ego. However, if they are approached with a spiritual intent, they become the path to the higher." (p. 99)

"*Manas* is spiritual self-consciousness, in itself, and divine consciousness when united with *buddhi*." (SD, v2, p231, fn. ... p. 104)

"Blavatsky pointed out … 'the contrast between the laboriously acquired knowledge of the senses and mind (*manas*), and the intuitive omniscience of the spiritual divine soul—*buddhi'*." (SD, v1, p279 ... p. 107)

The Masters

"The 'gestation' of the spiritual ego comes gradually, incarnation after incarnation, through the assimilation that occurs in the womb of devachan. Eventually, the spiritual ego is born, in what is sometimes described as the 'second birth.' At this point there is no need for devachan

any longer. In order to acquire absolute wisdom, the union of these two principles [*buddhi-manas*] has to be expressed while the Adept is incarnated in the physical body." (p. 102)

"Although Adepts are able to raise their consciousness higher than the buddhic plane, they still retain the spiritual ego as a vehicle of consciousness. If they were to drop it and merely dwell in the ātmic vehicle they enter into nirvana and lose their ability to express themselves on the lower planes." (p. 103)

"In order to be able to help humanity, the Masters of Wisdom refuse to take the rightful prize of their efforts—the unalloyed bliss of nirvana on the ātmic plane, but instead make of *buddhi* the home of their enlightened consciousness. When *buddhi* evolves to become a seat of consciousness, it reflects the power of *ātman*, but now with the element of pure self-awareness added. The spiritual ego is thus a self-conscious vehicle of *ātman*, the real in us, and the latter becomes the higher self of that Individuality." (p. 103)

Exercises to Explore

In his book *Las Siete Dimensiones del Ser,* Pablo gives us an approach to awakening the abstract mind:

A. This exercise involves a systematic practice of the study of abstract spiritual literature as a means of elevating our consciousness. Dr. Besant explained it in the following manner:

> *If, studying man in his present stage of evolution, we seek to know the seat of this Self-consciousness, we find that in most of us its throne is the lower mind. … From this life of the lower mind, in which sensations still play so large a part, man rises to the life of the intellect [higher mind], and the lower mind becomes his instrument, ceasing to be himself. From the life of the intellect he must rise to the life of the Spirit, and know himself as the One. The seat of Self-consciousness is moved from the lower mind to the higher by strenuous thinking, by the intellectual travail of the student, the philosopher, the man of science—if the latter turn his thoughts from objects to principles, from phenomena to laws. (Annie Besant, "The Reality of the Invisible and the Actuality of the Unseen Worlds", pp. 13-16)*

The intellect (in the philosophical sense that Dr. Besant uses this word) is a higher aspect of our mind, sometimes called "the abstract mind," and has interests that are not related to the material world. Thus, our first step is to elevate the focus of self-consciousness from the concrete mind to the abstract, that is, to discover that life is much more than the concrete and material, and thus to begin experiencing this subtler dimension of our consciousness. Dr. Besant says that this is attained by adopting a philosophical attitude toward life, that is to say, trying to grasp the abstract principles and laws which govern our existence. Through such effort, the mind becomes refined and prepared to perceive the formless world of spirit. This, and not merely the accumulation of information, is one of the main objectives of the study of Theosophy.

So we must be aware: ... that spiritual study must not become a mere exercise of gaining information and repeating it. Only the true effort to reach something which is beyond our conception tends to activate the abstract mind. When we simply repeat something that we have learned, the effect on the abstract mind is practically nil. Theosophical literature is so profound that, if one tries, one can always discover more subtle and spiritual aspects, even in topics previously examined many times. In addition to this effort, for the study not to become a mere intellectual activity, it must be accompanied by a genuine effort to live according to what has been learned.

When there is a sincere effort to live in accordance with what has been studied, we are stimulating the development of *manas-antaḥkaraṇa*, which connects us with higher *manas*.

Seeds for Meditation

"Try to imagine a 'spirit,' a celestial being, whether we call it by one name or another, divine in its essential nature, yet not pure enough to be *one with the all*, and having, in order to achieve this, to so purify its nature as to finally gain that goal. It can do so only by passing *Individually* and *personally, i.e.*, spiritually and physically, through every experience and feeling that exists in the manifold or differentiated universe." (KT, p. 183 ... p. 94)

"The mission of the higher ego is to shoot out a Ray to be a soul in a child. Only thus can the higher ego manifest, for thus it manifests through [personal] attributes. Only thus also can it gather experience; and the meaning of the passage in the *Upanishads*, where it says that the Gods feed upon men, is that the higher ego obtains its Earth experience through the lower." (CW, vol. 12, p. 709 ... p. 97)

"Does it seem to you a small thing that the past year has been spent only in your "family duties"? Nay, but what better cause for reward, what better discipline, than the daily and hourly performance of duty? Believe me my "pupil," the man or woman who is placed by karma in the midst of small plain duties and sacrifices and loving-kindnesses, will through these faithfully fulfilled rise to the larger measure of Duty, Sacrifice and Charity to all humanity—what better path towards the enlightenment you are striving after than the daily conquest of Self, the perseverance in spite of want of visible psychic progress, the bearing of ill-fortune with the serene fortitude which turns it to spiritual advantage." (cML, no. 123, p. 419 ... p. 99)

Diagrams

Review the journey of the **monad** … beginning on the bottom of page 94, use the following statements to build your own diagram.

universal monad, source of all consciousness … to "develop" individual consciousness, it has to limit itself and separate … becoming many sparks within the one fire … (remember consciousness requires differentiation) … monad evolves through all the lower kingdoms of nature … gradually awakening to the external environment … self-consciousness (human

kingdom) belong to the mental Principle in the cosmos … universal monad is "Individualized" as a higher ego ("I am I") … a sharper sense of separation is needed … expressing itself on the lower planes as a separate personality … begins to get in touch with the illusory feeling "I am John Smith"… separate and distinct … brings the monad out of its natural unity into a realization of its own individuality

Further Reading – see Appendix

The Causal Body and the Ego by A.E. Powell – **Chapter 18, "Development and Faculties of the Causal Body**"

Self-Culture by I.K. Taimni – **Chapter 11, "Development of the Higher Mind"**

THE PRACTICE

Chapter VIII
The State of Manas Taijasa

I. Introduction

Words to Know

spiritual consciousness - the manasic mind illumined by the light of *buddhi*.

manas - the human soul.

taijasa - "the radiant" in consequence of its [*manas*'] union with *buddhi*.

manas taijasa - the radiant mind; the human reason lit by the light of the spirit.

buddhi taijasa - the human soul illuminated by the radiance of the divine soul.

Name Game

Spiritual consciousness … *manas taijasa* … *buddhi taijasa* … *taijasa* ...

Questions for Discussion

1. We have been unable to create a world of equality where everybody's basic needs are met and there are no wars. What is the reason for this? (p. 113)

2. The spiritual consciousness is that which perceives abstractions … the more these "abstractions" become a reality to us, the more they will have a bearing on our actions. Only then … what will be possible? (p. 114)

3. The psyche is the result of the union of what? And called what? (p. 115)

4. The general goal of the human stage of evolution is to produce [instead of the above] the union of what? And called what? (p.115)

5. In order to move in this direction we must try to … what? (p.115)

Points to Ponder

"Since the outer world is shaped by the inner, both from a psychological and a metaphysical point of view, a fundamental change can only be brought about by gaining knowledge and mastery of the inner world." (p. 113)

"Absolute truth is the symbol of eternity, and no finite mind can ever grasp the eternal, hence, no truth in its fullness can ever dawn upon it. To reach the state during which Man sees and senses it, we have to paralyze the senses of the external Man of clay." (CW, v9, p34 ... pp. 113-14)

"When the mind is illumined by *buddhi*, principles that appear as abstractions to the lower mind (such as virtue, altruism, unity, and so forth), are now perceived as realities." (p. 114)

"The spiritual life is not simply a mechanical repetition of a particular technique or discipline. It involves a gradual and natural transformation that embraces all aspects of our being." (pp. 114-15)

Exercises to Explore

A. "The aspirant must work on a number of fields, such as purity of life, reflective study of serious spiritual literature, self-sacrifice and service, awareness, self-knowledge, and meditation." (p. 115)

II. FOUNDATIONS

Words to Know

Antaḥkaraṇa - line of communication between the lower and higher *manas*. (p. 116)

Silent awareness - a state of self-perception not conditioned by the activities of the personal self. (p. 118)

Questions for Discussion

1. There are two general principles necessary to acquire inner knowledge—one negative and one positive. What is meant by "negative" and what by "positive"? (p. 116)

2. What is the aim in the practice of meditation? And … what we need is to _____ the lower while eagerly _____ for the higher? (p. 118)

3. To be successful in our efforts in meditation, we must lay the foundations for this during our daily life. What does Mahatma K.H. write as the "prime and constant qualification"? (p. 118)

4. We must realize that everything that comes into our field of consciousness creates, what? And this, then affects us how? (p. 119)

5. In this chapter, what has been discussed as the first general principle to bring about the state of *manas taijasa*, … is described as what? And what is its aim? (p. 120)

6. The second general principle, … implies what? (p. 120)

Points to Ponder

"As was repeatedly pointed out, our higher nature is already spiritual. The difficulty is that, because the lower nature is 'clouded,' the real within us cannot reach our waking consciousness. Therefore, an important factor in attaining a higher perception is purification of the body and, more importantly, the emotions and thoughts." (p. 116)

"The higher [triad] and the lower [quaternary] are separated, with only a line of communication (*antaḥkaraṇa*) between them. The aim of the spiritual life, as Blavatsky states, is 'to enclose the Square within the Triangle,' so that the lower is always acting within the context of the higher." (p. 117)

"It is upon the serene and placid surface of the unruffled mind that the visions gathered from the invisible find a representation in the visible world. Otherwise you would vainly seek those visions, those flashes of sudden light which have already helped to solve so many of the minor problems and which alone can bring the truth before the eye of the soul. It is with jealous care that we have to guard our mind-plane from all the adverse influences which daily arise in our passage through earth-life. (cML, n65, p169 ... p.119)

"Personal difficulties are necessary experiences in the process of awakening, and the suffering of others is a call for help whenever its relief falls within the field of our possibilities." (p. 119)

"In order to acquire inner knowledge, the first step is to turn our attention around. As Blavatsky points out, by turning our mental consciousness onto itself, a temporary union with the buddhic Principle—the source of wisdom—is naturally produced. In other words, the introversion of our consciousness induces the state of *manas taijasa*." (p. 120)

Exercises to Explore

A. We need to have a receptive attitude in regard to the higher consciousness, we gain this through meditation. (p. 117) … The practice of meditation affords an opportunity to turn our attention inwards (or "upward") in an "artificially" created situation—one where we momentarily retire from the world and avoid being involved with external activities and its challenges. This can provide the opportunity to perceive things in a way that would, at first, be difficult in our daily life. (p. 118)

B. Life will always bring challenges that stir our lower nature, but with earnest effort, the level of agitation can be gradually reduced. In this endeavor, we do not need to begin by tackling the stronger negative feelings or thoughts. Our daily life provides many occasions in which relatively superficial unworthy "visitors" seek to intrude upon our field of consciousness. …

start paying attention … realize unnecessary negativities … reduce the excitement over superficial situations … grow in strength to deal with more difficult ones. (p. 119)

C. Protect the "Temple" … be alert … deal with present situations as best as possible … keep an eye on thoughts and emotions … reduce your engagement with the negative as much as possible. (p. 120)

III. Self-Examination

Words to Know

self-examination - a method in which our consciousness examines the contents and functioning of the psyche, from a higher perspective.

Questions for Discussion

1. When the activity of the lower ego itself is being examined, who is doing this examining? (p. 121)

2. When the mind examines itself, what happens? (p. 121)

3. If self-examination is done by analyzing the mental activity from a personal point of view, what will happen? And what is the example given? (p. 121)

4. All virtues are already part of our higher nature. If they do not manifest on the physical plane it is due to … what? (p. 122)

5. The second requisite Blavatsky mentions has to do with what parameters we are going to use for this self-examination. What are the parameters she mentions? (p. 123)

Points to Ponder

"Somewhat paradoxically, it is our awareness of the personal elements (ambitions, fear, etc.) that will take us beyond them, because this non-judgmental perception is, in and of itself, an activity of higher consciousness." (p. 122)

"Genuine concentration and meditation, conscious and cautious, upon one's lower self in the light of the inner divine Man and the *pāramitā*-s, is an excellent thing." (CW, v12, p603 ... p. 122)

"First, the examination must be done 'in the light of the inner divine Man.' This means that we must look at the personality while keeping in mind that our true nature is the higher triad. … Thus, we may begin the inquiry by briefly meditating on the fact that who we really are is the universal self (*ātman*), perfect from the very beginning, whose qualities while expressing in the manifested universe are innate wisdom (*buddhi*) and pure self-awareness (*manas*)." (p. 122)

Exercises to Explore

A. Self-examination—in the beginning … start from the personal level … gradually move beyond by means of awareness of what the mind is doing … if done with ambition or fear—notice and recognize this fact … we need *complete and absolute impartial honesty* … realize the personal elements hide behind our inability to recognize their presence. (p. 121)

B. We should examine how our personality reacts in different situations in life, its strong and weak points, its attractions and repulsions, its fears and desires, etc. Meditative journaling may be a good tool for this endeavor. Mindful writing is a form of concentrated thinking. (p. 122 and fn.)

C. Self-examination in the light of the Buddhist *paramita*-s … There are multiple lists of virtues among the different serious spiritual traditions. Look into some of these lists from other spiritual movements. (p. 123 and fn.)

D. The following is a proposed practice … We can take a virtue per week (or per month) and do the following:

1- Daily, preferably in the morning, meditate for a few minutes as follows:

a) Begin by pondering over the essential quality of the chosen virtue.

b) Then bring to mind the fact that, if all obstacles were removed, you would spontaneously show this virtue, because it is part of your true nature.

c) Examine the lower self under the light of this virtue. Recall situations in which the personality needed to express the virtue. If it was not able to do so, try to see why. Get fully acquainted with the feelings, thoughts, or circumstances that stood in the way.

d) Recreate in imagination this or similar situations and visualize yourself responding in the ideal way.

e) In finishing the meditation, resolve to do your best to act more in tune with this virtue.

2- During your day, pay special attention to how the personality behaves in this respect. Make a gradual effort to act in ways that are more in tune with the virtue, starting with situations that are less challenging.

3- In the evening, before retiring to sleep, quickly review the activities of the day and journal about how you related to situations that involved the chosen virtue. This will serve as seeds for your meditation next morning. (pp. 124-5)

IV. Self-Observation

Words to Know

Self-observation - a deepening of one's awareness; the awakening to consciousness of the divine nature of Man.

Theos-sophia - divine wisdom.

Spiritual ego - *buddhi-manas*.

Manas-taijasa - union between *manas* and *buddhi*.

Questions for Discussion

1. Although the practice of self-examination, stimulates the activity of *buddhi* on this plane, what can it not do? And what does "this" require? (p. 125)

2. In the unitive state there is a merging of what? (p. 126)

3. As the personality goes through the different states of consciousness in its journey through life (pleasure, pain, desire, hope, fear, anger, etc.), what becomes a "refuge"? (p. 126)

Points to Ponder

"Self-knowledge … is unattainable by what men usually call "self-analysis" … it is not reached by reasoning or any brain process … is an awareness of the real in us … it cannot be produced by a brain process that involves the activity of thought, memory, etc. (pp. 125-6)

"So long as the contrast of subject and object endures … so long will it be impossible for the personal ego to break through the barrier which separates it from a knowledge of things in themselves." (SD, v1, pp. 329-30 ... p. 126)

"The real Knowledge here spoken of is not a mental but a spiritual state, implying full union between the knower and the known." (cML, n69, p. 204 ... p. 126)

Exercises to Explore

A. "In his hours of silent meditation ... the student will find that there is one space of silence within him where he can find refuge from thoughts and desires, from the turmoil of the senses and the delusions of the mind. By sinking his consciousness [*manas*] deep into his heart [*buddhi*] he can reach this place—at first only when he is alone in silence and darkness. But when the need for silence has grown great enough, he will turn to seek it even in the midst of the struggle with [the lower] self, and he will find it. Only he must not let go of his outer self, or his body; he must learn to retire into this citadel when the battle grows fierce, but to do so without losing sight of the battle." (CW, v8, p. 96 - p. 127)

B. "State of silent awareness … find this place in the 'silence and darkness' of your meditation … try to spend some time in a state of silent awareness every day … as you become familiar with this kind of awareness in meditation, extend it to your daily life … keep in mind that this refuge is not meant to be an escape … this quiet awareness keeps us untouched by the thoughts and emotions of the lower ego … this state brings order to the psyche spontaneously … through persistent effort, we can gradually "build"a dwelling place … then this is where the effort is finally transcended." (p. 127)

Further Reading – see Appendix

“Taijasa Awareness Meditation” – article by Pablo Sender

Chapter IX
States of Consciousness

I. Introduction

Here, we will try to draw a "map" of the different states of manasic consciousness one has to climb on the way towards *buddhi*. Familiarity with the main features of these states and how to work on each one may help provide a sense of direction and guidance in our spiritual journey. (p. 131)

II. Scales of Consciousness

Words to Know

scale – is used here with the meaning of "a graduated series or scheme of rank or order."

apperception – self-perception, conscious action … when attention is fixed on the perception. (*The Inner Group Teachings*, pp. 64-65)

Realms – fields or dimensions—Physical, Psychic, Intellectual, Spiritual. (ch. 1, p. 5)

Name Game

5th scale – sense-thought – lower *manas* – self-centeredness – identification – mechanical reaction ...

6th scale – volition [will] – *manas-antaḥkaraṇa* – self-control – duality – inner struggle ...

7th scale – awareness – higher *manas* – self-awareness – non-duality – spontaneous action ...

Questions for Discussion

1. Our sense-thought, and even our perception of things, are strongly conditioned by … what? (p. 132)

2. This [sixth] scale of consciousness is not necessarily … what? But rather one of … what? Then it becomes … what? (p. 132)

3. From this [seventh scale of consciousness] comes … what? This is a state of freedom, where … what? Flow … how? Because consciousness is not influenced by … what? (p. 133)

4. Both the fifth and the seventh scales seem to share some characteristics. What are those characteristics? (p. 133)

5. Both of them [the fifth and seventh] show an absence of inner conflict and duality. However, there is a radical difference between the two. In the first case, the will identified with and dominated by … what? And in the second, the purified personal will is aligned with … what? (p. 133)

6. What is the common mistake among followers of non-dual philosophies? (p. 133)

7. What is one of the reasons non-duality approaches in the past were frequently kept secret and taught only to those who had gone through the regular practices recommended in their religions. (p. 134)

Points to Ponder

"In some oral instructions to her close students, Blavatsky described a series of seven "scales of consciousness." The four lower ones are psycho-physiological, belonging to the consciousness of the body and the mechanism to transmit impressions to the mind. The three higher scales relate to our manasic consciousness working in the higher Psychic and Intellectual realms. Beyond the highest of these scales is *buddhi*."(p. 131)

"When we are operating in the fifth scale, we are entangled with our sensations, emotions, fears, desires, and memory; responding to the environment in a rather mechanical way. Because of the strong identification with the psyche, there is no action, but only reaction."(p. 132)

"The sixth scale—that of volitional perception—is one where *manas* is struggling to get disentangled from *kāma*. Here we begin to take control of our responses, and there is a deeper element of freedom of choice. We do not blindly react as in the previous case but are able to "regard or disregard" voluntarily any given idea, emotion, or physical sensation."(p. 132)

"The seventh scale is one of "apperception." The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines this term as "introspective self-consciousness" or also as "conscious perception with full awareness." In this state of conscious self-perception we become aware of our sense of being, as well as the different processes that happen in our field of consciousness."(pp. 132-33)

Exercises to Explore

A. "The journey through the scales of consciousness can happen naturally for those who guide their efforts keeping the whole picture in mind."

B. Normally, in the effort to lead a spiritual life, we will begin by going back and forth between the fifth and sixth scales. Through the effort to master personal desires and negative thoughts or emotions, we begin to establish ourselves more frequently in the sixth scale.

C. This gradually produces a certain freedom from the kāmic tendencies, which allows the manasic consciousness to begin to touch the seventh scale.

D. Through an effort to live with awareness, the coming back and forth will be mainly between the sixth and seventh scales, although we can still fall back into the fifth occasionally. In due

course, we will be able to dwell more frequently in the seventh scale, this state of awareness becoming more and more spontaneous. (p. 134)

III. Climbing the Scales

Words to Know

sense-thought – the process of thinking when we are engrossed in the external world and react to it mechanically.

self-examination – through which we become aware of how our personality tends to react to life.

spiritual apperception – self-perception that reaches the higher, self-conscious, *manas*.

willpower - control exerted to do something or restrain impulses.

Questions for Discussion

1. How do we begin to work our way through the scale of self-control [6th scale]? The first step is …? And this is important because …? (p. 135)

2. Why is the purification of emotions and thoughts a necessary foundation for this work? (fn., p. 135)

3. Once we are able to notice undesirable responses as they arise in the field of consciousness, the effort should be directed … where? The first step is to create … what? Next, we apply … what, to deal with responses? And how should it not be applied? … The best approach available on this scale of consciousness is to … what? (p. 136)

4. Use the diagram on page 138 and discuss the differences between the scales and their stages. Come up with examples to illustrate each stage. (p. 138)

Points to Ponder

"At the beginning of our efforts we will notice the reactions after they happened. … With continued attempts in this direction, awareness will come in the midst of the reaction. … Eventually, reactions will be noticed at their very beginning, and then the door to work on them opens." (p. 136)

"Applying our willpower … does not imply repression, but simply self-mastery. Repression is an unconscious mechanism to keep disturbing thoughts and emotions from becoming conscious. It has nothing to do with a deliberate choice of what kind of thoughts and feelings we want to harbor in our consciousness." (fn., p. 136)

"If there is a reaction that is frequent in our lives, at some point we will need to pay attention to it, watch its operation, question it, and try to understand why we react in this way. It would also

be helpful to apply the technique of self-examination that we have explored earlier. By these means we can work to eventually transcend the reaction." (p. 137)

"It is the state of awareness itself, and not any action on our part, that will bring order to consciousness. This stage can be regarded as self-centered in the sense that the whole of one's attention is absorbed in the process of watching the psychological activity." (p. 139)

Exercises to Explore

A. To pass on to the next [sixth] scale of volitional perception we have to start becoming aware of our inner world. … let us suppose something happens that produces a response … to avoid being taken over by it and reacting mechanically … we have first to notice this response … without a certain degree of awareness there is no possibility of choice between accepting and disregarding the response. (p. 134)

B. A useful practice in this endeavor is that of self-examination … although this exercise takes place at a specific moment in our day, the knowledge acquired will open the door to an awareness of the inner psychological movement while going through our daily activities. … as we aspire to follow the ideal of right action, we will find ourselves living more and more in the sixth scale. (pp. 134-35)

C. The effort to control our personality, although still rooted in duality, produces some important effects upon us:

a) it brings some order to the psyche by weakening the action of self-contradictory desires

b) it develops inner strength (willpower)

c) it brings some realization that we are beyond these thoughts, emotions, and sensations we are striving to master

These three conditions are the foundations on which we can later build a "dwelling place" in the seventh scale of spiritual apperception. (p. 135)

IV. Four States of Consciousness

Words to Know

jāgrat – the normal waking state; when consciousness is expressing itself through the body and its senses.

svapna – dreaming; based on what takes place on the physical plane—we see the body asleep and dreaming; while consciousness is on a higher plane where it has its own activity.

suṣupti – the deep sleeping state; sleep without dreaming; consciousness has retreated to the spiritual planes while the body is left behind in deep sleep.

turīya – beyond the dreamless state, the one above all, a state of high spiritual consciousness.

fractal – geometric figure where each part reflects the whole.

Points to Ponder

"Due to the "fractal" nature of the cosmos … these four states of consciousness are contained as sub-states within each other, in the same way we explored the "scales of consciousness."

jāgrat – awareness of external objects and actions (everything around us, including our body)

svapna – awareness of internal objects (emotions, thoughts, images, memories and ideas)

suṣupti – awareness with no objects (awareness in silence and darkness)

turīya – a state beyond the three, which integrates and transcends them (p. 142)

Exercises to Explore

A. Working on the lines above in Points to Ponder, we can draw a "map" to guide us on our path in raising our consciousness towards the spiritual states, while still aware on the physical plane:

– *Jāgrat of jāgrat:* This is the state where one is awake and conscious of external objects, … without being constantly distracted and conditioned by all kinds of sensations, thought, memories.

The first stage in our spiritual practice is to be truly awake in our daily life, that is, to be mindful of whatever we are doing on the physical plane, instead of reacting mechanically to life or being lost in daydreaming.

– *Svapna of jāgrat:* This state is one of self-observation, … paying attention to the workings of … "internal objects" such as thoughts, emotions, desires, memories, and so on.

Just as in the previous state, the practice involves being mindful, but now of the process of thinking and feeling that directs our actions.

– *Suṣupti of jāgrat:* Here, there are no objects separate from the observer. … during our waking consciousness this means to be able to remain aware in a state of silence.

Here, there is just awareness of being aware.

– *Turīya of jāgrat:* The fourth state is the foundation and source of the other three. It is essentially beyond description. … It may be related to Blavatsky's concept of "conscious non-consciousness"… a conscious sense of non-being. (pp. 142-44)

V. End of Chapter

Questions to Discuss (pp. 144-45)

1. At this point in evolution, where is our seat of consciousness?

2. This awareness includes the fields of and below the lower mind, which is … what?

3. For those not interested in leading a spiritual life the process of thinking is for the most part concerned with seeking gratification on these levels. This is the _____ scale, that of a _____ _____ perception.

4. By paying attention to the sense-thought our consciousness begins to do what?

5. Eventually, as we grow in this direction we come to a point where there is in us an _____ opposing the _____ thought and nourishing those that are good. This is the _____ scale, that of _____ perception.

6. Next, we discover that there is the possibility of a further step—the development of _____, that is, the _____ scale of _____ _____.

7. We begin to be mindful of our actions (called what?) and aware of psychological activity (called what?). This causes our consciousness to rise to a level of non-dual awareness (called what?).

8. Here, there is only a silent and impersonal I-ness or sense of being that is beyond … what?

9. Awareness of this pure _____ opens the door to a more permanent state that is "behind" all _____ and _____ movement. This could be described as one of _____ non-_____ (called what?) When we stabilize ourselves in this state, we are ready to go beyond … what?

Further Reading – see Appendix

"Occultism in Southern India" – article by T. Subba Row (*Esoteric Writings*, T. Subba Row, Chapter IX, p. 106-114)

Chapter X
The "Thought-Producer"

I. Introduction

Here we will explore some meditative techniques that can help us cultivate the state of *manas taijasa* [the illumined mind – talked about in chapter 8]. … It must be kept in mind that any technique of meditation is mainly an aid to discover a particular state. The actual assimilation of it requires the additional effort on the part of the aspirant to position himself in that state during his day. (p. 147)

II. Seeking the Thought-Producer

Words to Know

dhāraṇā – the practice of meditation when the mind is firmly concentrated on the chosen object, there may still be a struggle to keep the attention focused – here I am focusing on a rock and my mind may waver in and out of focus; undisturbed concentration is the goal or end product.

dhyāna – a state in the process of meditation where the attention flows uninterruptedly and effortlessly to the object of meditation – here my mind is focused attentively on the rock without distraction; however, there is awareness of me and the rock—still a state of duality.

samādhi – the highest state of yoga in which the meditator becomes one with the object of meditation – here there is awareness only of the rock – I am not separate from the rock – a unitive state *(now, remember that just as with most principles – there are various levels of *samādhi*)

Questions for Discussion

1. In order to listen to the spiritual voice, we need to _____ and _____ the source of illusion … which is what? (p. 147)

2. The first requisite to embark on this inner quest is, what? And that is to attain a certain level of what? (p. 147)

3. We have to be free from [external] distractions caused by _____, called what? And from internal distraction caused by, what? or reactions to, what? Which is the state of _____? (p. 148)

4. Artificial intelligence is a perfect example of what? (p. 149)

5. The main difference between personal intelligence and that of a computer is that the latter does not have, what? In consequence, the process of artificial intelligence does not develop, what? (p. 149)

6. Explain what Blavatsky called "the mystery of the ego." And for this reason, in the Theosophical teachings, lower *manas* is not seen merely as a _____ _____, but as a _____ _____ that has a degree of freedom and responsibility for its actions. (p.150)

Points to Ponder

"Theosophical teachings (along with many other serious spiritual traditions) postulate that the existence of a psychological thinker as an independent entity is an illusion." (p. 148)

"Most of us have the strong impression that we are the thought-producing entities that interpret what comes through the senses, make decisions, and shape our lives."(p. 148)

"As we have seen, the sense-thought is a highly mechanical and conditioned process … heavily influenced by *kāma* – the passional nature. It is the center of reaction … based on principles of self-preservation, pleasure-seeking/pain-avoiding, etc." (p. 149)

"Thus, although it is obvious that a process of thinking and choosing takes place in the mental field, this does not imply that there is a real entity behind it … ." (p. 149)

"Perhaps it would be helpful to think of the mental field (lower mental plane) as a dimension in which all incoming influences are "translated" as thought. Thus, when kāmic elements such as fear, desire, etc. stimulate the mental sphere, the response is self-centered thinking. In a similar manner, when the higher ego sends its influence to the lower mental Principle, this is translated into a type of "inspired" higher thinking. However, in neither case are the production of thoughts the result of a psychological entity, but rather a process of receiving and organizing data."

*Use the diagram on page 150 to illustrate this above concept. (pp. 149-50)

III. Meditative Self-Inquiry

Points to Ponder

In search of that element within our being which is permanent and essential …

"In order to hear the still small voice of our spiritual nature, the false idea about the existence of a personal self, and the subsequent identification with it, needs to be recognized and transcended. One method to move in this direction is to engage in a thorough self-investigation, trying to find the thought-producer "I." (p. 150)

"What is the element in our mind that produces our sense of identity? Memory plays a role. Memory ties all past experience to the present, giving continuity to the sense that I am the same entity during different stages of life." (p. 153)

"Some people may be tempted to say that the permanent element is the soul. That may be true, but it does not help in our inquiry. The soul is not personal. It is an impersonal Individuality." (p. 153)

Exercises to Explore

A. The permanent element

One of the features of the psychological "I" is the sense of continuity that persists throughout life, in spite of the changes that take place during the years. (pp. 151-53)

> Start at the level of the physical body and its sensations. Reflect on the fact that our bodies change over time, the ones we have now being completely different from the bodies we had when we were born. … Visualize the body as a collection of little luminous balls forming the shape of the body. These little balls are constantly moving, entering and exiting the body so that, after a while, all the originals balls are replaced (and continue to be replaced) by new ones.
>
> Our emotions and desires are also constantly changing. There is in us a continuous play of different emotions and feelings, appearing and disappearing.
>
> If we examine our thoughts and ideas, we can observe the same thing – they are in constant change (even though there may be some tendencies or habits of thought) and yet our sense of identity remains.

Thus, when we try to find out whether there is a permanent element within our thoughts, emotions and body, we see that everything within us is in constant flux.

B. The essential element

In this self-inquiry we will try to identify the essential element that makes each one of us ourselves – that something without which I would not be, without which I would cease to exist as "I."

> To be able to follow this approach we need to understand the difference between an *essence* and its *attributes*. … The essence is a property something *must* have for it to be what it is. [Discuss examples.] An attribute is an accidental property, that is, a quality that can be changed or removed without the object losing its identity. [Discuss examples.] (pp. 153-55)
>
> Again, let us start from the body. Does our name and form constitute our essential identity? What if we alter our height, our skin color, the shape of our face – would we cease to be ourselves? Is there any element in the body that can constitute our essence? Would we cease to exist if we replace our hearts with a mechanical pump? What about the brain? The brain may be very important for the "I" to express itself on the physical plane, but even if the brain stops working (as in near-death experiences), we can still be conscious and feel we are ourselves.
>
> Let us turn our attention to the emotional field. Would we cease to exist if we had different emotions or if we were to lack any of them? … Even at a time when we may not be feeling any emotion whatsoever, do we disappear? We don't, so the essence of the "I"must be beyond the emotional field.

> The realm of sense-thought … here again, is there any idea or thought without which we would cease to be? … What about memory? Without memory we would not know who we are … but would we cease to be? … A person may not know *who* he is, but he knows *that he is.*

From this inquiry we can see that there is nothing within the *personal aspect* of our nature that we can say this is the essence of "I."Even though from a logical point of view of our lower mind, these questions can be easily answered; when done with a quiet, meditative mind, this reality permeates more than the thinking brain and prepares our nature to perceive *the sense of being*.

IV. The Sense of Being

… there is a deeper *sense of being* that is always present. This obscure, abstract, and unformulated sense of being is a non-conceptual knowledge or intuition – a feeling of *I-ness* – that is present even when there are no thoughts or words to define it.

Questions to Discuss

1. Blavatsky states that none of our changing experiences are the source of our *I-ness*. The pure sense of being comes from, what? (p. 156)

2. It is clear that I can experience silence on an individual basis, but while my body, emotions, and thoughts have my uniqueness, can I say the same about silence? … What is silence? (p. 156)

3. Therefore, the bare sense of being is, what? (p. 156)

4. We have not found any personal element that is essential or remains always the same [permanent]. … If this is true, why do I feel – "I am John Smith"and she feels she is Mrs. Brown? … This is simply the result of a phenomenon related to, what? And the identification of what? Give an example of how this is so. (p. 157)

5. As in … reproducing in ourselves the feelings that the actors [in a movie we are watching] are conveying. In a similar way, the pure sense of being "forgets"… what? (p. 157)

6. This is the result of the confusion between, what? (p. 157)

7. Use the diagram on page 159 to summarize these inquiries. (pp.158-59)

Points to Ponder

"As we have seen, *nowhere within our personal* features can we find an essential or permanent "I." … But, there is a quiet *sense of being* "behind"the personal attributes. … According to Blavatsky, the different experiences we go through (actions, feeling, thought, etc.) 'produce the feeling of egoity [or *I-ness]* only while they last.' … Our sense of being this or that is constantly changing along with whatever is present in consciousness at the moment. But the one invariable

common factor, remaining the same during every conscious moment throughout our lives, is the simple felling of 'I am.'" (pp. 155-56)

"'The *true* self is, *per se,* impersonal; the personal or brain-consciousness being but an illusory reflection in incarnated existence.' (CW, v8, p. 96) In the silence where personal thought, emotions, and sensations are absent, one is not aware of being Mr. Smith or Mrs. Brown. These distinctions come with thinking and memory. From this, it is clear that the silent and *impersonal f*eeling of 'I am I' cannot be the *personal* ego we are looking for." (p. 157)

"We have not found any *personal* element that is essential or remains always the same. Our true being, therefore, is none of the passing sensations, emotions and thoughts, but the lasting, stable, and poised sense of just *being,* beyond any sense of separation." (p. 157)

Exercises to Explore

A. When the impersonal and simple feeling of "I am" identifies with the personal vehicles of consciousness (with thoughts, emotions, name and form) we say: "I am—John Smith" and the pure sense of *being* is turned into the sense of *identity*. It is this phenomenon of identification, supported by the faculty of memory, that creates an illusory center—the personal ego—with apparent continuity.

> As an exercise … we are encouraged to switch from the idea "I am the one that acts, feels, and thinks" to "I am the witness of the actions, feelings, and thoughts called Mr. Smith."

B. Only the impersonal is real, while the personal states appear and disappear in the field of consciousness. To be identified with the person is to be dragged into a restless and void existence. Only the stability of the impersonal can ever bring peace. (pp. 157-58)

V. Dwelling in the Sense of Being

Points to Ponder

"An important aspect of the spiritual practice is the endeavor to: (a) identify the true sense of being, and (b) dwell in it.

Our inquiry should not be a mere intellectual analysis repeating learned concepts. It should be a true investigation with a genuine effort at trying to *find out* or discover.

We must also remember that truly "spiritual" methods should eventually lead us beyond any thinking or inquiry, which are still activities in the realm of thought." (p. 159)

Exercises to Explore

A. After we examine and leave behind the impermanent sensations, emotions, thoughts and memories, we should try to remain aware in the silence that is left—even if for a few seconds. At the beginning of the practice, the state of silence may appear as one of darkness—mere void and negation. But as we dwell in it, we will start perceiving this pure sense of being, more and more clearly. Once this feeling is identified and "stabilized" in awareness, we will be able to perceive it at any moment, even in the midst of actions, sensations, emotions and thoughts. This effort will be greatly helped by the attempt to cultivate a state of self-observation in daily life.

> Sit completely relaxed—physically, emotionally and mentally—and rest in that sense of being, of existing. … just sit and be—fully aware. … not with an idle attitude … with a clear awareness always present.
>
> Difficulties – (1) Generating a passive "mediumistic" mind … for this, shorter sessions of sitting may be more appropriate. (2) Becoming distracted by the movement of thoughts and feelings; and engaging in the distraction or a struggle to fight it … when this happens, just notice the distraction and come back to the feeling of *I-am-ness,* without trying to manipulate things. With practice, the "correct positioning" of our awareness will be found, where there is neither struggle nor distraction nor dullness. (pp. 159-60)

B. A repeat from chapter 6: An intermediate approach between the direct attempt at dwelling in the sense of being and the full self-inquiry. … it is based on the question "*Who am I?"*… Ramana Maharshi, explained:

> When other thoughts arise, one should not pursue them, but should inquire: "To whom do they arise?"… The answer that would emerge would be "To me."Thereupon if one inquires "Who am I?" the mind will go back to its source; and the thought that arose will become quiescent. With repeated practice in this manner, the mind will develop the skill to stay in its source. (*The Spiritual Teaching of Ramana Maharshi,* p. 5)

C. When asking the question – Who am I? we should not engage in any kind of analysis or attempt at answering it. We should just look inside and dwell in the feeling of "I am I," remaining there in silent awareness until another thought arises, at which time we repeat the inquiry. "Who am I?" not "Who is the thinker?"… the latter is dualistic and allows one part of the mind to assume the role of an entity looking at the other parts as if they were separate from it. (pp. 160-61)

Further Reading

"Some Interesting Aspects on Meditation" – article by I. K. Taimni

Chapter XI
The Sense of Space

I. Introduction

Earlier we saw that *ātman* (the spirit in individuals) is not a "something" that each person possesses. It can be thought of as the "space" an individual occupies in the ocean of the indivisible, universal spirit. It is clear that this space is not the three-dimensional physical expanse in which objects are found. Rather, it alludes to a kind of metaphysical or spiritual aspect of what we call space. (p. 163)

Questions for Discussion

1. We have also seen that although the source of our consciousness is beyond the personal mind, emotions, and physical body, when expressed through these vehicles, what happens? This _____ of _____, does what? (p. 163)

2. The principle obstacle to the realization of this oneness is the inborn habit of man of always placing himself at the center of the universe. … This, as will appear, … is that which prevents every individual from, what? (p. 163)

3. Consciousness in an infant is awakened by means of the impressions received by the brain from the outer world. This causes the pure awareness to identify with, what? … which then becomes, what? And the body thus becomes, what? (p. 164) This is a good pondering point for discussion.

4. Does real space have boundaries? (p.164)

5. How do we create the limits of our own psychological space? And as we become, what? … our field of expansion, does what? (p. 164)

6. In this process of ever-increasing expansion, the day comes when we realize, what? (p. 164)

Points to Ponder

"Since our consciousness is not habituated to perceive beyond the personal center, our practice must involve an attempt to decentralize it. The instructions found in Mme. Blavatsky's "Diagram of Meditation" are very useful in this endeavor. They are designed to help us break the identification with our lower consciousness." (p. 164)

II. Being All Space and Time

As long as we are identified with the body, we will always feel we are right here and nowhere else. As long as we identify ourselves with the mind, we will always think we exist right now, were born in the past, and will die in the future. (p. 165)

Mme. Blavatsky's Diagram begins by prescribing the cultivation of an awareness of being in all space and time:

> First conceive of unity by expansion in space and infinite in time (either with or without self-identification)
>
> > Note: The conception [to be formed is] "I am all space and time."
> > Beyond that … (it cannot be said).
>
> Then the normal state of our consciousness should be molded by perpetual presence in imagination in all space and time. (*Inner Group Teachings of HP Blavatsky,* p. 221 – p. 165)

Exercises to Explore

A. Preliminary meditation

Since these methods will challenge our identification with the body and mind, … let us start with a brief exercise … to position ourselves in the sense of pure being. (pp. 165-66)

> Paying attention to the body and its sensations, we recognize we are beyond the limits of the physical nature. Watching the emotions, we recognize we are beyond the fluctuations of our feelings and moods. Looking at our thoughts and memories, we recognize we are beyond our conditionings and judgements. From this perspective, we proceed …

B. Meditation on unity

A meditation on unity in which we attempt to expand our awareness beyond the limitations of space and time that belong to the personal ego. … The first and foundational step in this diagram is a meditation through which we make an effort, with the aid of our imagination, to expand the field of consciousness so as to feel we are in all space and time.

(1a) Expansion in space, without self-identification

> Start by contemplating (in imagination) the place where you live, as if you were looking down from above. Visualize your house or apartment while trying to have a sense of unity (or love) with everything there. Include the people that may live with you, as well as animals, plants, insects, and objects. Try to feel that everything is an expression of the One Self.
>
> Then, include in the visualization your neighborhood, … zooming out … the state … country, the world, the solar system, the galaxy, and the whole universe …
>
> Try to have a sense of unity or love. Feel as if you were embracing every person, object, and motion. … embrace everything. … See everything, good or bad, as the effort of the divine spirit to express itself in the manifested world.
>
> Spend enough time on one step before passing to the next. Move slowly, trying to have some feeling of unity.

(1b) Expansion in time, without self-identification

Visualize the totality of time as if you were a passive witness. Begin by moving back through various time in history. Recall first some events at the beginning of this century. … Keep moving back to the various ages in time. … Go back in history of the planet, the formation of the galaxy, and eventually the beginning of the whole universe.

Now move back to the present and in a similar way, visualize the future, … development of humanity until it fulfills its evolutionary journey on Earth, … continue to the eventual dissolution of the planet, the solar system, the galaxy, and finally the universe.

Go through the different stages … while maintaining the attitude of being an eternal witness – always present and unaffected by the passing of time. … keep your sense of being a constant and immutable presence amid the change, even in the darkness and silence of universal rest (*pralaya*).

(2a) Expansion in space, with self-identification

Imagine again a gradual expansion … yourself at the center of a growing sphere … see how far your sphere extends – the room, country, planet, etc. … go slowly, trying to feel that your presence pervades each area before you move on.

Try to feel your consciousness is filling or embracing the whole … expansion. Cultivate the sense of everything within you. Start using your imagination – with practice a more genuine feeling will gradually appear.

(2b) Expansion in time, with self-identification

Here the expansion in time will be done by imagining we embody different personalities. … Start by going back in imagination about ten or twenty years ago. … visualize all details … continue to go back … Feel how, despite the changes in body, emotions, thoughts, and circumstances, you are still the same I-am-ness. … Spend enough time on each step to perceive how everything changes and, yet your silent presence is still there – immutable. … Imagine yourself (as awareness) overshadowing a different personality, about a thousand years ago. … a different race, sex, culture … go back, until there is an age with no human beings … experience existence as a silent witness in an animal form, a tree, and a mineral. … feel your presence witnessing the … forming of the earth, the cosmic dust of a developing solar system, and galaxy … finally, witness before the universe was formed.

At all these stages sense how you are still there as a cosmic presence.

Do the same in this or another meditation … visualize about the future. … incarnations and future personalities … remembering you are the same silent presence, regardless of the passage of time. … all the way forward to the dissolution of Earth and the solar system, and eventually the whole universe.

Feel how in all these stages you are still there, as a silent immutable presence, even in the midst of universal pralaya. … watch any feelings that appear … without identification … then continue with the visualization. (pp. 169-70)

C. Beyond words and imagination

The conception "I am all space and time" is the farthest that we can go in our endeavor to realize our true nature by means of reason and imagination. … but there is something beyond.

> Once we get to the highest point in our meditation on space or time … with the use of imagination, we drop any conscious effort and stay in a state of silent awareness. … "absorbing" or merging with the state produced … This will eventually open the door for a perception that is beyond the realm of words, images, and thoughts. (pp. 170-71)

D. Daily life

In order to stabilize the perception of unity, this attempt should not be limited to the practice of sitting meditation, but gradually extended to our daily life. … aided by the use of imagination, our normal state of consciousness should be molded by a constant sense of being present in all space and time. … habituate our consciousness to perceive in a non-centered way, feeling we are more than the body, emotions, and thoughts of the separate self.

> How do we avoid the focalization of consciousness to this spot where we are in space and time? … not easy, but the very effort in that direction develops the capacity to perceive in a different way.
>
> a) At certain moments of the day, look at yourself and your life as if you were outside of it, as if you were a spectator.
>
> b) When going for a walk … try to feel that you embrace everything around, "your"body being just one of the objects within your field.
>
> As you generate an abstract "memory of universality," the feeling will begin to emerge in your daily life whenever you are not busy doing something.

III. Taijasa Awareness Meditation

The techniques … so far make use of (a) the activity of reason, to inquire into our real unchanging nature [the thought-producer]; (b) a quiet willpower, to retrieve attention from the psychological movement and dwell in the pure *sense of being* [dwelling in the sense of being] ; or (c) the faculty of imagination, to counteract the idea that we are limited to our body and mind [being all space and time]. (p. 172)

This method is connected to the quality of *awareness*. … we seek neither to focus our attention … nor to induce any given state. Instead, we simply pay attention to whatever is actually happening in our ordinary consciousness at the moment, without judgment or manipulation.

We are like the immutable space that contains the psychological movement but is not affected by its activity.

Exercises to Explore

A. Sitting meditation

Sit quiet, close your eyes, relax. … turn your attention inward and watch whatever enters … do not seek to manipulate … let sensations, emotions, and thoughts rise and fall by themselves … observe their motion with a silent and uninvolved awareness … shift from normal identification to a pure witnessing of them. (p. 170)

This eventually results in the state of *manas taijasa* as a clear, radiant awareness, beyond all mental effort.

Questions for Discussion

1. The taijasic perception can only appear when there is no, what? … an activity that belongs to, what? (p. 172)

2. Therefore, you must be aware of sensations, emotions, and thoughts with complete, what? And no attempt to, what? (p. 172)

3. Reacting to the reaction will get you, what? … Relax and watch everything with, what? (p. 173)

4. Since *buddhi* is associated with _____ and _____, it cannot manifest … Instead, watch whatever is in the field of consciousness with a sense of _____, _____, and _____, even towards so-called "negative states."(p. 173)

5. Free from fear and judgement, relax all effort inward and outward. Open up, and what? This will eventually develop into, what? (p. 173)

6. To be able to have this attitude two facts must be kept in mind … what are they? (pp. 173-74)

7. Even with this technique, there may be a subtle state of _____, where there is a feeling of separation between the contents of _____ and the _____ of the contents. This will happen as long as we are making an ____ to get involved with the _____ process. At a certain point in the practice the state of _____ _____ will become stable so that no effort to maintain it will be needed. Then, the difference between the _____ and the _____ disappears and there is _____-_____ _____. This is the highest stage in the scale of spiritual apperception, one of _____ _____.

Daily Life

While engaged in our daily activities stay with this pure, detached awareness as frequently as possible. … The real attitude, however, is to allow all mental, emotional and physical actions take place as usual, while we remain a silent, passive witness of everything that happens, inwardly and outwardly.

Use the exercise below and discuss your reactions to each level. (p. 176)

Level of Awareness	Description
TO THE ACTIONS (EXTERNAL)	Be fully aware of the act of doing the dishes. Do them very mindfully, moving slowly and with grace. Pay attention to the dishes as you grab them, wash them, and put them to dry. Do not let any movement be mechanical, perform every action purposefully.
TO THE ACTOR (EXTERNAL/INTERNAL)	Now shift your awareness back, so to say, and begin to watch the motion of your hands and body. Encourage the feeling that the body is moving by itself, as if you were looking at somebody else's movements. Also, be aware of the physical sensations of the water, the weight of the dishes, etc.

TO THE THINKER (INTERNAL)	Then, pay attention to the mind. Watch the thoughts or emotions that may occur while doing this activity. Do not correct them, do not engage with anything that may appear in your mind. Just watch the thoughts and emotions as if they were somebody else's.
TO PURE BEING (INTERNAL/BEYOND)	Here, do the dishes and pay particular attention to the simple sense of *being present*. Be aware of the other levels of consciousness happening spontaneously—the body moving and the thoughts running through your mind—but do not focus your attention on them. Simply *be*.

IV. THE TAIJASIC STATE

"Learn now that there is no cure for desire, no cure for the love of reward, no cure for the misery of longing, save in the fixing of the sight and hearing upon that which is invisible and soundless." (*Light on the Path*, Appendix "Karma," p. 79 ... p. 177)

Points to Ponder

"As we said, the taijasic state is one full of wisdom. Wisdom here means that we see things as they really are, without perceiving through our conditioning or getting entangled in personal reactions. Being beyond the realm of thinking, this state is beyond the field of psychological time, and here illusion is dissolved." (p. 177)

"Live neither in the present nor the future, but in the Eternal. This giant weed [the lower self] cannot flower there: this blot upon existence is wiped out by the very atmosphere of eternal thought." (LP, part 1, p. 20 ... p. 177)

"The 'very atmosphere' of this state, in and of itself, gradually purifies our self-consciousness from its personal elements. This purification is not the result of a conscious action—because this would be the action of the lower self. In this state of awareness the personal ego disappears and, therefore, thinking and feeling take place without the ego's distorting influence." (p. 177)

"Within yourself is the light … The light of the higher self and of the Mahatma are not different from each other." (CW, v. 9, p. 400-F ... p. 178)

"In the taijasic awareness the impersonal feeling of "I am I" shines, which can be taken as the presence of our own inner Master. … In the presence of the Master the lower nature is spontaneously transformed." (p.178)

"When we are aware of our innate divine wisdom, conscious of our identity with everything, and aware of our transcendental and immutable nature, the human evolutionary pilgrimage comes to an end. New fields of self-expression open up to the liberated consciousness, which now becomes a beneficent force aiding human and planetary evolution." (p. 178)

Further Reading and such …

The Diagram of Meditation is a whole path of yoga in itself, in the book Pablo was able only to develop one part of the practice. Here, we offer you a series of videos that can further explain the other parts of the Diagram.

Mme. Blavatsky's Diagram of Meditation (this is a cleaned-up version, for easier reading) – http://fohatproductions.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/HPBs-Diagram-of-Meditation-Pablo.pdf

Mme. Blavatsky's Diagram of Meditation … with Michele Sender

An Overview
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_zh7CWyzpi8

Mme. Blavatsky's Diagram of Meditation … with Michele and Pablo Sender

Meditation on Unity
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T1-M1PudxLI

Beyond the Centralization of Consciousness
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGlzxo4a1nQ

Equanimity
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_dU8F_woKw&list=PLrbyJv4tUQSQmdMhoch9QXw6ZmxCYo2S0&index=4

Stepping Above Limitations
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hJiRt1DfHzw&list=PLrbyJv4tUQSQmdMhoch9QXw6ZmxCYo2S0&index=5

Appendix

A. Resources for Research

Theosophical Web Search - http://www.theosophicalsearch.org
Theosophy Wiki - https://theosophy.wiki

B. Further Reading – Preface and Introduction

Excerpt from ***Madame Blavatsky on How to Study Theosophy***
by Robert Bowen

... TRUTH lies beyond any ideas we can formulate or express. Exoteric interpretations are all very well, and she does not condemn them so long as they are taken as pointers for beginners, and are not accepted by them as anything more. ...

... I suggest that this is a kind of mental exercise which must be exceedingly fatiguing. H.P.B. smiled and nodded. One must not be a fool (she said) and drive oneself into the madhouse by attempting too much at first. The brain is the instrument of waking consciousness and every conscious mental picture formed means change and destruction of the atoms of the brain. Ordinary intellectual activity moves on well beaten paths in the brain, and does not compel sudden adjustments and destructions in its substance. But this new kind of mental effort calls for something very different — the carving out of 'new brain paths', the ranking in different order of the little brain lives. If forced injudiciously it may do serious physical harm to the brain.

This mode of thinking (she says) is what the Indians call Jnana Yoga. As one progresses in Jnana Yoga, one finds conceptions arising which, though one is conscious of them, one cannot express nor yet formulate into any sort of mental picture. As time goes on these conceptions will form into mental pictures.

This is a time to be on guard and refuse to be deluded with the idea that the new found and wonderful picture must represent reality. It does not. As one works on, one finds the once admired picture growing dull and unsatisfying, and finally fading out or being thrown away. This is another danger point, because for the moment one is left in a void without any conception to support one, and one may be tempted to revive the cast-off picture for want of a better to cling to. The true student will, however, work on unconcerned, and presently further formless gleams come, which again in time give rise to a larger and more beautiful picture than the last. But the learner will now know that no picture will ever represent the TRUTH. This last splendid picture will grow dull and fade like the others. And so the process goes on, until at last the mind and its pictures are transcended and the learner enters and dwells in the World of NO FORM, but of which all forms are narrowed reflections. ...

C. Further Reading – chapter 1

The Roots of Modern Theosophy
by Pablo Sender
The Theosophist, November 2011

The word theosophy is one with a long history. It has been used in different traditions and contexts, and consequently acquired a multiplicity of meanings. The term derives from the Greek theosophia (θεοσοφία), which is composed of two words: *theos* ('God', 'gods' or 'divine') and *sophia* ('wisdom'). According to the context and tradition in which this term has been used, *theosophia* can be translated as the 'wisdom of God (or the gods)', 'wisdom in things divine', or 'divine wisdom'.

The person in touch with this *theosophia (*variously called *theosophos* (Greek), theosopher, or Theosophist) acquires a knowledge that is not the product of his or her rational faculty. The source of this divine knowledge has been variously considered to be God, a divine being, or a state of inner illumination attained through purification and spiritual efforts.

In its deeper meaning, the concept of *theosophia* implies that there is in human beings a faculty higher than reason—an "interior principle" or spiritual intuition through which we can reach the Divine Wisdom. In HPB's words:

But all [sacred] books it [Theosophy] regards, on account of the human element contained in them, as inferior to the Book of Nature; to read which and comprehend it correctly, the innate powers of the soul must be highly developed. Ideal laws can be perceived by the intuitive faculty alone; they are beyond the domain of argument and dialectics, and no one can understand or rightly appreciate them through the explanations of another mind, though even this mind be claiming a direct revelation. [1]

History and development of the term

The word theosophy has been used in connection with a number of religions and philosophical schools. Although the Neo-Platonic, Christian, and modern Theosophical traditions have used this term more prominently, we can also find references to a Hermetic theosophy, a Jewish theosophy (found in the Kabbalah), a Muslim theosophy (mainly among the Sufis), a Persian theosophy, etc. In this article we will limit ourselves to examine briefly the use of this term among the Neo-Platonists, Christians, and members of the Theosophical Society.

a) The Neo-Platonist theosophos

The origin of the term *theosophia* is unknown, but it is likely to have been coined by the Neo-Platonists (a philosophical school founded by Ammonius Saccas, who was born ca. 175). Based on the writings of the famous Platonist Prof. Alexander Wilder, Mme Blavatsky suggests that the term was commonly used by all Neo-Platonists. [2] However, researches made in the late 1980s by scholars James Santucci [3] and Dr. Jean-Louis Siémons [4] showed that it is only with the third-generation Neo-Platonist Porphyry (234–305) that we find the term in writing for the first time. In Porphyry's view, the divine wisdom is a state of illumination that can be attained by self-exertion. The *theosophos* (Gr. θεόσοφος) tries "by himself, to elevate himself, alone to

alone, to a communion with the divine." With Iamblichus (250–325), the pure mystical meaning given to the term by Porphyry acquires a more occult or magical significance. He proposed that the *theosophia* can be attained through *theurgy* (Gr. θεουργία), a series of religious rituals and magic operations aimed at elevating consciousness. Proclus (412–485) uses the term in yet another way to denominate specific spiritual doctrines, making reference to a local 'Hellenic theosophy', but also to a foreign or barbarian (that is, non-Greek) theosophy, referring to Chaldean doctrines. [*]

b) The Christian theosopher

Many early Christians, including a number of Church Fathers, were students of Neo-Platonic teachers. They also adopted the term *theosophia*, but used it in a more Christian sense to mean "the Wisdom of God". Clement of Alexandria (150–215) talks about a *theosophos* as one who writes "driven by divine inspiration," and thus in time this term came to be used to refer to the prophets of old. An important difference between the Neo-Platonic and Christian concepts of *theosophia*, is that in the former view no one is a born *theosophos*—he becomes such by long exertion, application to philosophy, self-purification and contemplation of the divine. [5] In the Christian view the divine wisdom is bestowed by God—as He chooses—upon the prophet, in the form of a revelation. After the Neo-Platonists disappeared in the 6th century, the term *theosophia* continued to be used in Christianity during the Middle Ages, but frequently in a lower sense as a synonym of *theologia.* [**] In the 9th century, after the re-discovery of the works of Pseudo-Dionysius (a Christian Neo-Platonist that lived ca. 500) the term regained a lofty meaning among great mystics such as Meister Eckhart, J. Tauler, John of Ruysbroeck, and others. It was through their writings that 17th to 19thcentury European mystics such as Boehme, Saint-Martin, Swedenborg, and others, inherited the term *theosophy* and adopted it as their own. With these "theosophers" (as they came to be known) the term became popular, being on the title of a number of books during the 1700s. [6] There continued to be publications on Christian theosophy until the middle of the 19th century.

c) The modern Theosophist

At the opening of the last quarter of the 19th century a committee formed by Mme. Blavatsky, H. S. Olcott, W. Q. Judge, and others, founded what they called the Theosophical Society. According to Col. Olcott, the choice of the name of the newly formed Society was subject of discussion in the committee, and several options were suggested, such as the Egyptological, the Hermetic, the Rosicrucian, etc. However, none of them seemed the right one. 'At last,' he recalls 'in turning over the leaves of the Dictionary, one of us came across the word "Theosophy," whereupon, after discussion, we unanimously agreed that that was the best of all.' Olcott explained this name was appropriate because it expressed 'the esoteric truth we wished to reach' and covered the ground of 'methods of occult scientific research.' [7]

It does not seem likely that the name for the Society was chosen merely out of a dictionary search, since Madame Blavatsky had already connected her knowledge with the term theosophy a few months before, in a letter to Hiram Corson:

My belief is based on something older than the Rochester knockings [that began the Spiritualistic movement in 1848], and springs out from the same source of information that was used by Raymond Lully, Picus della Mirandola, Cornelius Agrippa, Robert Fludd, Henry More, et cetera, etc., all of whom have ever been searching for a system that should disclose to them the "deepest depths" of the Divine nature, and show them the real tie which binds all things together. I found

at last, and many years ago, the cravings of my mind satisfied by this theosophy taught by the Angels and communicated by them that the protoplast might know it for the aid of the human destiny. [8]

As shown in a previous article ("What is Theosophy?" *The Theosophist*, Dec. 2007) Mme. Blavatsky used the term Theosophy with the following meanings:

i) As a state of illumination where the theosophist is in touch with the Divine Wisdom. This, as we have seen, is the meaning used by Porphyry.

ii) As a universal Ancient Wisdom, similar to the *perennial philosophy* of the Renaissance. This idea has been present under different names through a number of philosophers since the beginning of recorded history. Marcelo Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, whose writings influenced Christian theosophers, called this Ancient Wisdom *prisca theologia*. Essential elements of this *perennial philosophy* are shared by the different theosophies, the term being applied here as a name for different doctrines, much as Proclus did.

Regarding the word "Theosophist," although today it is commonly used to refer to a member of the Theosophical Society, since the beginning of the organization its leaders established a difference between a real Theosophist and a member of the TS. While a Theosophist is in touch with the Divine Wisdom, members of the Society are students of the teachings of Theosophists, with the aspiration to develop their "inner senses" so to eventually become a real Theosophist.

On the modern and the Christian theosophies

The modern and the Christian theosophies differ in their language, style, and reference books they use. Modern Theosophy is outside any religious framework. It does not teach the existence of a personal God and does not accept the idea of vicarious salvation. Blavatsky never claimed the Theosophical Society to be a direct continuation of the Christian current. As seen in an earlier quote, the first time that HPB associates herself to the word *theosophy* she does not mention Christian theosophers but refers to Alchemists, Kabbalists, and Platonists. [***] It is with them that she claims to share the same "source of knowledge." This does not mean, however, that she identified the modern Theosophy with the mediaeval European esotericism either:

But *real* Theosophy—i.e., the Theosophy that comes to us *from the East*—is assuredly Pantheism and by no means Theism. Theosophy is a word of the widest possible meaning which differs greatly in Eastern and Western literature. Moreover, the Theosophical Society being of Eastern origin, therefore goes beyond the narrow limits of the mediaeval Theosophy of the West ... [9]

Some scholars feel that H.P. Blavatsky *et al.* unduly appropriated of the term when they used it for a worldview that was not based on the Judeo-Christian religions. This feeling cannot be justified unless we refuse to recognize its earlier use within a non-Christian philosophy by the Neo-Platonists. As a matter of fact, HPB did claim the Society was a successor of what Prof. Wilder called the "Theosophical Eclectic School" of Neo-Platonism:

The chief aim of the Founders of the Eclectic Theosophical School was one of the three objects of its modern successor, the Theosophical Society, namely, to reconcile all religions, sects and nations under a common system of ethics, based on eternal verities. [10]

The most important of [the Society's objects] is to revive the work of [the Neo-Platonist] Ammonius Saccas, and make various nations remember that they are the children "of one mother."[11]

Since we can argue that modern Theosophy is closer to the original Neo-Platonic system than Christian theosophy is, Mme. Blavatsky seems justified in having used the term for her teachings.

This being said, we have to keep in mind that HPB was not so much concerned with the "academic" aspect of a word that has been used with a multiplicity of meanings. Just as the term "gnosis" can be used in a universal way, with no reference to a particular school of philosophy or religion, she employed the term "Theosophy" more based on its meaning than on the traditions that had previously used it:

The Theosophical Society, then, does not derive its name from the Greek word *Theosophia,* composed of the two words "God" and "wisdom" taken in the dead letter, but rather in the spiritual sense of the term. It is the Society for searching into *Divine Wisdom*, occult or spiritual wisdom. [12]

Common elements in the various theosophies

One feature that strikes us when reading the teachings of those "possessed of divine wisdom" is that there is no doctrinal unity among them. Jacob Brucker (1696-1770), one of the first historians of Western philosophy, wrote about Christian theosophy: "There are as many theosophical systems as there are theosophers."[13] This statement is applicable to other theosophies as well. There is a marked difference between the approaches of Plotinus and Iamblichus, while some people call "Neo-Theosophy" the teachings of Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater because they differ in some aspects from those of H. P. Blavatsky.

If this is the case within the particular traditions, what happens when we compare different theosophies, with differences in language and in their religious or philosophical background? Do they share any common elements?

Jacob Brucker identified some doctrines present in all of the Christian theosophical teachings. These principles, when expressed in a more religious-neutral language, are also to be found in Neo-Platonism and in modern Theosophy. They include the idea that everything emanates from a common source and must return to it; that one can get an immediate revelation of the soul by divine means or faculties, and not by philosophical reason; that the universal spirit resides in all things and we can find "signatures" of the divine everywhere; that the forces of nature can be manipulated by magical means; and that human beings are three-fold, being composed of a divine spark, an intermediary spirit or soul, and a physical body.

But perhaps what *theosophoi,* theosophers, and Theosophists have in common cannot be found so much at the doctrinal level, but rather at the level of attitudes of mind and general notions. For example, modern scholar Antoine Faivre (again in relation to the Christian theosophy, but applicable to the Neoplatonic and the modern ones) describes three common notions found in most theosophical systems: The interest in the relationship between Man, God and the Universe; the use of myths to explain reality; and the possibility of direct access to higher worlds. [14] Working on this line of thought, we can add some other common features:

i) The lack of doctrinal uniformity. This fact discussed earlier is not merely a negative quality but an important common feature of all theosophical teachers. Given the fact that their knowledge is not the result of reading and reasoning, but of a supra-conceptual wisdom, those in touch with it have to find their own words in an attempt to describe their original spiritual perceptions. Since the spiritual realities cannot be appropriately expressed through words created to describe the material world, their teachings will be different, and even seem to be

opposing in many points, without necessarily being really so. This is also a reason why many of them chose the fluid language of symbols and allegories to transmit their wisdom.

ii) Knowing by personal experience about the limitations of language to describe spiritual realities, they are not literalists, and usually advocate for an esoteric understanding of sacred scriptures and myths.

iii) Theosophical authors tend to be eclectic, being inclined to integrate different elements (even from other traditions) within a general, harmonious whole. Theosophy is essentially holistic, frequently aiming at offering "a synthesis of Religion, Philosophy and Science," as described in the subtitle of Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine.*

iv) Those in touch with *theosophia* seek union with the divine, becoming at the same time spectators of the "mysteries of creation". These new perceptions and images are not created by the activity of the intellect, but by divine revelations. Therefore, theosophical teachings are not only mystical, but also metaphysical, including a cosmology, a theogony, and an anthropogenesis.[****] Due to the rich intellectual aspect of the theosophical teachings there is the danger of forgetting the real purpose of its metaphysics. It is not meant to satisfy the intellectual curiosity of the student. In the theosophical view, human beings (microcosm) are an expression and reflection of the universe (macrocosm), containing in them every element present in the cosmos. By knowing the universe we get to know our true nature and potentiality, as well as our relation to the whole. This knowledge becomes thus an important element of the theosophical spiritual practice.

v) All theosophies encourage an inner path, which is to be treaded individually. The "battle" between the spiritual and the material takes place inwardly, and produces the soul's transmutation and a spiritual awakening. Man does not find God or the Divine in a temple but in his heart. However, although this intimate experience is independent of any external framework, many of those "wise in things divine" have created spiritual societies, orders, or communities to encourage and assist people in this individual change. These organizations were neither lay nor clerical. They were composed of people who maintained their outward place in society, but who were inwardly devoted to the spiritual practice. They existed in the boundaries between institutional religions and the lay populace. [15]

vi) The direction of this inner path is from the bodily consciousness towards an illumined, spiritual one. In other words, the psychological ego and its desires must be transcended. Here lies an important difference with the New Age. Although this movement shares many doctrinal elements with theosophy, its approach is typically the opposite one, focusing on the personal ego, and regarding the universal laws as means to produce personal satisfaction, which is mistakenly taken as a "spiritual state."

NOTES

[*] Porphyry also wrote about foreign sages (Egyptian and Indian) as being *theosophoi* (*De Abstinentia,* IV.9 and 17), while Iamblichus applied the term to the Indian yogis or *sadhu*-s. (*De Mysteriis 7*.1)

[**] Among the Greeks *theosophia* was generally regarded to be higher than *theologia,* since the source of the former is a direct perception or experience of the divine, while *theologia* is based on reasoning about the divine.

[***] The mystics mentioned by HPB in this quote lived from the 1200s to the late 1600s. Though not theosophers, a number of them are regarded as early influences in the shaping of Christian theosophy.

[****] This is an important difference with the mystics of the Catholic type, who are usually not interested in the workings of the universe but simply aim at going beyond all images to reach a state of union with God.

REFERENCES

[1] H. P. Blavatsky, "What are the Theosophists?" *Collected Writings (CW)* v. II, TPH, Wheaton, Il., [1967], p. 103.

[2] H. P. Blavatsky, "The Meaning of the Name," Section 1, *The Key to Theosophy (KT)*, TPH, London, [1968], pp. 1-2.

[3] James A. Santucci, "On *Theosophia* and Related Terms," *Theosophical History*, vol. II, no. 3 (July 1987), London, pp. 107-110.

[4] Jean-Louis Siémons, *Theosophia in Neo-Platonic and Christian Literature*, Theosophical History Centre, London, 1988, 32 pp.

[5] Siémons, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

[6] Antoine Faivre, "The Theosophical Current," *Theosophy, Imagination, Tradition*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 2000, p. 19.

[7] H. S. Olcott, *Old Diary Leaves*, v. 1, TPH, Adyar, Madras., 1974, p. 132.

[8] John, Algeo (Ed.), Letter 21, *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky*, v. 1, Quest Books, TPH, Wheaton, Il., 2003, p. 86.

[9] H. P. Blavatsky, "The Theosophist's Right to His God" *CW* v. XI, TPH, Wheaton, Il., 1973, p. 414, fn.

[10] H. P. Blavatsky, "The Meaning of the Name", Section 1, *KT*, TPH, London, [1968], pp. 2-3.

[11] H. P. Blavatsky, "What are the Theosophists?" *CW* v. II, TPH, Wheaton, Il., [1967], p. 100

[12] H. P. Blavatsky, "What is Theosophy?" *CW* v. II, TPH, Wheaton, Il., [1967], p. 505.

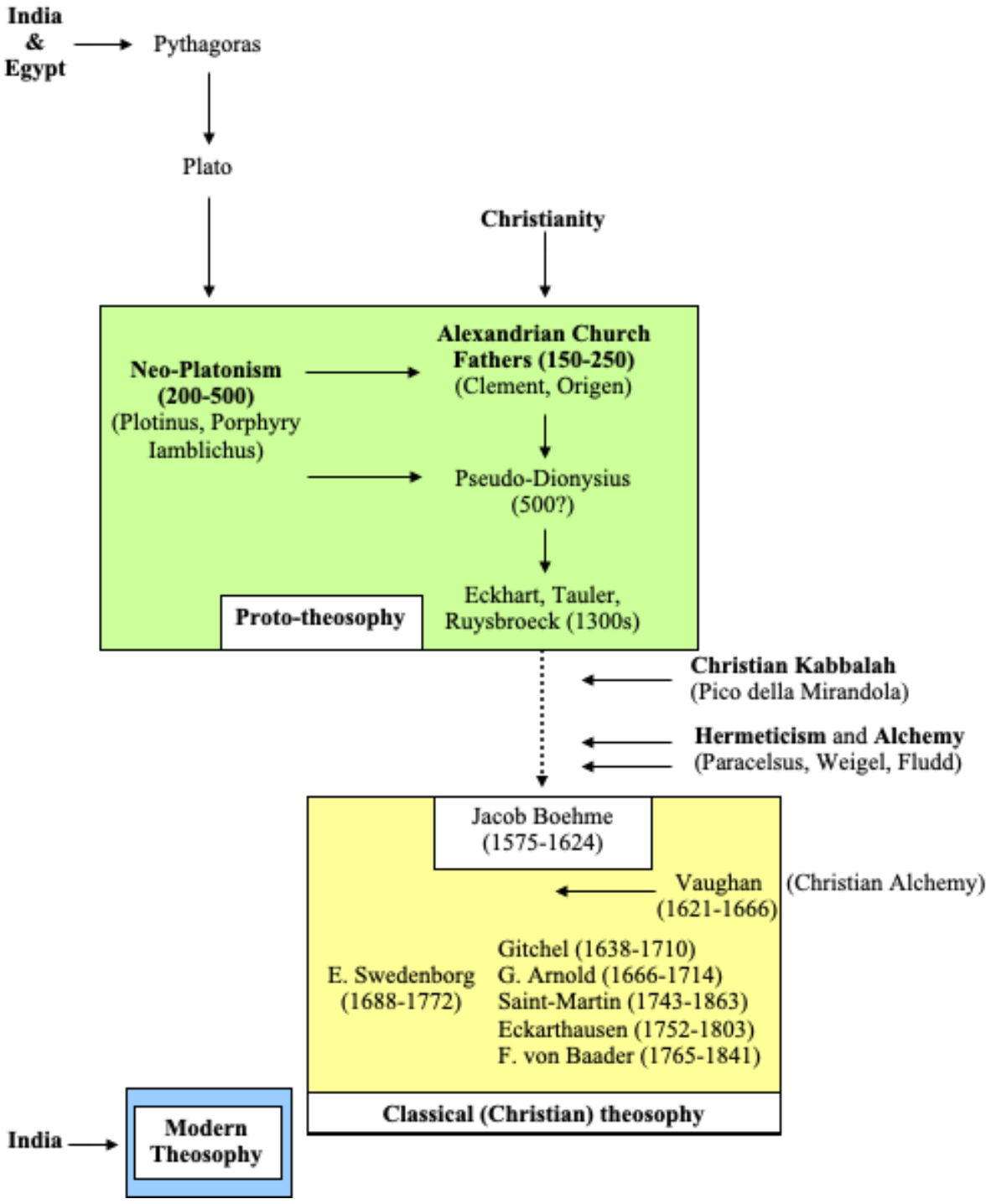
[13] Quoted in Faivre, *op. cit,* p. 18.

[14] Faivre, *op. cit.*, p. xvi.

[15] Arthur Versluis, "Theosophy," part 1, ch. 4, *TheoSophia,* Lindisfarne Press, Hudson, NY, 1994, pp. 63-4.

The Roots of Theosophy - Diagram
by Pablo Sender

The chart shows diagrammatically the use of the word theosophy in Western history, along different traditions. Only a few representatives of these traditions are presented as examples. Arrows indicate influences.



D. Further Reading – chapter 2

Space
Theosophy Wiki

Space

In the Theosophical view, *Space* is not only the boundless three-dimensional extent in which objects and events have relative position and direction, but the container of a number of unperceived dimensions or "planes" constituted by different kinds of matter. All these planes have place within the cosmic space, which is a temporal manifestation of the eternal pre-cosmic absolute abstract space.

General description

In Theosophical literature "space," when treated as an abstract metaphysical principle, is used as symbol for the Absolute Reality and actually seen as one aspect of it:

The One All is like Space—which is its only mental and physical representation on this Earth, or our plane of existence—neither an object of, nor a subject to, perception ... it is, therefore, that ABSOLUTE ALL.[1]

A similar concept is found in one of the letters from Master K.H. who wrote:

The book of Khiu-te teaches us that space is infinity itself. It is formless, immutable and absolute.[2]

In talking about space as an abstract principle, Blavatsky commented:

Of course the distance between two points is called space; it may be enormous or it may be infinitesimal, yet it will always be space. But all such specifications are divisions in human conception. In reality Space is what the ancients called the One invisible and unknown (now unknowable) Deity.[3]

In one of the letters from Master K.H. he relates space with the Universal Mind:

Like the human mind, which is the exhaustless generator of ideas, the Universal Mind or Space has its ideation which is projected into objectivity at the appointed time; but space itself is not affected thereby.[4]

Absolute abstract space

In the first Fundamental Proposition found in the Proem of *The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. Blavatsky says that the ultimate Reality is symbolised under two aspects, one of which is "absolute abstract Space, representing bare subjectivity, the one thing which no human mind can either exclude from any conception, or conceive of by itself":[5]

Now, for us, space is a word which has no meaning unless we limit and condition it; but in reality, space is the most abstract thing, and space containing all is just that unknown deity which is invisible and which we cannot understand, which we can but intellectually sense.[6]

Space, in its absolute sense, is different from the relative physical space we know of:

... Space, which is an abstraction too, and is equally without beginning or end. It is in its concretency and limitation only that it becomes a representation and something. Of course the distance between two points is called space; it may be enormous or it may be infinitesimal, yet it will always be space. But all such specifications are divisions in human conception. In reality Space is what the ancients called the One invisible and unknown (now unknowable) Deity.[7]

Thus, space is seen as the one eternal and immutable principle:

"What is that which was, is, and will be, whether there is a Universe or not; whether there be gods or none?" asks the esoteric Senzar Catechism. And the answer made is—SPACE.[8]

Pre-cosmic space

James S. Perkins wrote that "Space, itself, exists in some otherness of being prior to its presence in the physical world as the emptiness medium that is familiar to us."[9]

In the first cosmological Stanza, which describes the universe before its re-awakening, space is referred to as the "Eternal Parent," which was slumbering, "wrapped in her ever invisible robes."

Before the beginning of differentiation, space is generally regarded as potential and feminine. It is symbolized by the virgin mother (to be). As soon as the period of activity starts, space assumes an androgynous form:

Space is called the "Mother" before its Cosmic activity, and Father-Mother at the first stage of re-awakening.[10]

In a dialogue with students, however, Mme. Blavatsky interpreted the Eternal Parent both as the feminine mūlaprakṛti and its later androgynous form, svābhāvat:

Q. What aspect of Space, or the unknown deity, called in the Vedas "THAT," which is mentioned further on, is here called the "Eternal Parent"?

A. It is the Vedantic Mulaprakriti, and the Svabhavat of the Buddhists, or that androgynous something of which we have been speaking, which is both differentiated and undifferentiated. In its first principle it is a pure abstraction, which becomes differentiated only when it is transformed, in the process of time, into Prakriti. If compared with the human principles it corresponds to Buddhi, while Atma would correspond to Parabrahm, Manas to Mahat, and so on.[11]

This "Mother-Father" is frequently said to be seven-skinned, these skins being the germ for all the septenaries that will be manifested:

Space is called in the esoteric symbolism "the Seven-Skinned Eternal Mother-Father." It is composed from its undifferentiated to its differentiated surface of seven layers.[12]

Cosmic space

Cosmic space is the manifestation of its pre-cosmic root. In Theosophical teachings cosmic space is regarded as consisting of seven planes.

According to H. P. Blavatsky, space itself is devoid of dimensions. What possesses different numbers of dimensions is the matter that emanates from space. Thus, our perception that the space around us has three dimensions is due to the fact that physical matter has three dimensions, while astral matter has four:

It is worth while to point out the real significance of the sound but incomplete intuition that has prompted . . . the use of the modern expression, “the fourth dimension of Space.” To begin with, of course, the superficial absurdity of assuming that Space itself is measurable in any direction is of little consequence. The familiar phrase can only be an abbreviation of the fuller form—the “Fourth dimension of MATTER in Space.”[13]

No empty space

Mme. Blavatsky rejected the philosophical and scientific idea prevalent at her time, which regarded space as being empty:

Locke’s idea that “pure Space is capable of neither resistance nor Motion”—is incorrect. Space is neither a “limitless void,” nor a “conditioned fulness,” but both: being, on the plane of absolute abstraction, the ever-incognisable Deity, which is void only to finite minds, and on that of mayavic perception, the Plenum, the absolute Container of all that is, whether manifested or unmanifested.[14]

She quotes a "private commentary hitherto secret” as follows:

As its [the seventh plane's] substance is of a different kind from that known on earth, the inhabitants of the latter, seeing THROUGH IT, believe in their illusion and ignorance that it is empty space. There is not one finger’s breath (ANGULA) of void Space in the whole Boundless (Universe). . . . .[15]

Scientific view of space

In classical mechanics space is one of the few fundamental quantities in physics, which means it cannot be defined via other quantities because nothing more fundamental is known at the present.

In cosmology, it is postulated that space was created in the Big Bang, 13.7 billion years ago and has been expanding ever since very rapidly due to the Cosmic Inflation.

Before Einstein's work on relativistic physics, time and space were viewed as independent dimensions. His discoveries showed that our space and time can be mathematically combined into one object, forming a boundless four-dimensional continuum known as "spacetime". In Einstein's general theory of relativity, it is postulated that space-time is geometrically distorted - curved- near to gravitationally significant masses.

The current scientific view of space is changing, and seems to be getting closer to the occult view:

Albert Einstein was the first person to realize that empty space is not nothing. Space has amazing properties, many of which are just beginning to be understood. The first property that Einstein discovered is that it is possible for more space to come into existence. Then one version of Einstein’s gravity theory, the version that contains a cosmological constant, makes a second prediction: “empty space” can possess its own energy. Because this energy is a property of space itself, it would not be diluted as space expands. As more space comes into existence, more of this energy-of-space would appear.[16]

Robert Betts Laughlin, Nobel Laureate in Physics, endowed chair in physics, Stanford University, had this to say about space in contemporary theoretical physics:

Space is more like a piece of window glass than ideal Newtonian emptiness. It is filled with 'stuff' that is normally transparent but can be made visible by hitting it sufficiently hard to knock out a part. The modern concept of the vacuum of space, confirmed every day by experiment, is a relativistic ether. But we do not call it this because it is taboo."[17]

Online resources

Articles

Space at Theosopedia
Space, Time, and Relativity by David Pratt
A Brief Overview of Sacred Time and Space by Fred Alan Wolf

Notes

1. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine* vol. I, (Wheaton, Ill: Theosophical Publishing House, 1993), 8.
2. Vicente Hao Chin, Jr., *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett in chronological sequence*No. 119 (Quezon City: Theosophical Publishing House, 1993), 407.
3. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *Collected Writings* vol. X (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1988), 310.
4. Vicente Hao Chin, Jr., *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett in chronological sequence*No. 119 (Quezon City: Theosophical Publishing House, 1993), 407.
5. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine* vol. I, (Wheaton, Ill: Theosophical Publishing House, 1993), 14.
6. Michael Gomes (transcriber), *The Secret Doctrine Commentaries* (The Hague: I.S.I.S. foundation, 2010), 66.
7. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *Collected Writings* vol. X (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1988), 310.
8. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine* vol. I, (Wheaton, Ill: Theosophical Publishing House, 1993), 9.
9. James S. Perkins, *Visual Meditations on the Universe* (Wheaton, Illinois: Theosophical Publishing House, 1984), 3.
10. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* vol. I, (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1993), 18.
11. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *Collected Writings* vol. X (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1988), 303-304.
12. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* vol. I, (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1993), 9.
13. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine* vol. I, (Wheaton, Ill: Theosophical Publishing House, 1993), 251.
14. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine* vol. I, (Wheaton, Ill: Theosophical Publishing House, 1993), 8.
15. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* vol. I, (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1993), 289.
16. Dark Energy, Dark Matter at NASA Science website.
17. Robert B. Laughlin, A Different Universe: Reinventing Physics from the Bottom Down (New York: Basic Books, 2005) 120–121.

Further Reading – chapter 3

The Monad
by Charles Leadbeater

CHAPTER I

THE information available on the subject of the Monad is necessarily scanty. We are not at present in a position to supplement it to any great extent; but a statement of the case, as far as it is at present comprehended among us, may save students some misapprehensions, such as are often manifested in the questions sent in to us.

That many misconceptions should exist on such a subject is inevitable, because we are trying to understand with the physical brain what can by no possibility be expressed in terms intelligible to that brain. The Monad inhabits the second plane of our set of planes - that which used to be called the paranirvanic or the anupadaka. It is not easy to attach in the mind any definite meaning to the word plane or world at such an altitude as this, because any attempt even to symbolise the relation of planes or worlds to one another demands a stupendous effort of the imagination in a direction with which we are wholly unfamiliar.

Let us try to imagine what the consciousness of the Divine must be - the consciousness of the Solar Deity altogether outside any of the worlds or planes or levels which we ever conceived. We can only vaguely think of some sort of transcendent Consciousness for which space no longer exists, to which everything (at least in the Solar System) is simultaneously present, not only in its actual condition, but at every stage of its evolution from beginning to end. We must think of that Divine Consciousness as creating for Its use these worlds of various types of matter, and then voluntarily veiling Itself within that matter, and thereby greatly limiting Itself. By taking upon Itself a garment of the matter of even the highest of these worlds, It has clearly already imposed upon Itself a certain limitation; and, equally clearly, each additional garment assumed, as It involves Itself more and more deeply in matter, must increase the limitation.

One way of attempting to symbolise this is to try to think of it in connection with what we call dimensions of space. If we may suppose an infinite number of these dimensions, it may be suggested that each descent, from a higher level to a lower, removes the consciousness of one of these dimensions until, when we reach the mental plane or world, the power of observing but five of them is all that is left to us. The descent to the astral level takes away one more, and the further descent to the physical leaves us with the three which are familiar to us. In order even to get an idea of what this loss of additional dimensions means, we have to suppose the existence of a creature whose senses are capable of comprehending only two dimensions. Then we must reason in what respect the consciousness of that creature would differ from ours, and thus try to image to ourselves what it would mean to lose a dimension from our consciousness. Such an exercise of the imagination will speedily convince us that the two-dimensional creature could never obtain any adequate conception of our life at all; he could be conscious of it only in sections, and his idea of even those sections must be entirely misleading. This enables us to see how inadequate must be our conception even of the plane or world next above us; and we at once perceive the hopelessness of expecting fully to understand the Monad, which is raised by many of these planes or worlds above the point from which we are trying to regard it.

It may help us if we recall to our minds the method in which the Deity originally built these planes. We speak with all reverence in regard to His method, realising fully that we can at most comprehend only the minutest fragment of His work, and that even that fragment is seen by us from below, while He looks upon it from above. Yet we are justified in saying that He sends forth from Himself a wave of power, of influence of some sort, which moulds the primeval pre-existent matter into certain forms to which we give the name of atoms.

Into that world or plane or level, so made, comes a second life-wave of divine energy; to it those atoms already existing are objective, outside of itself, and it builds them into forms which it inhabits. Meantime the first down-flowing wave comes yet again, sweeping through that newly-formed plane or level, and makes yet another, a lower plane, with atoms a little larger and matter therefore a little denser - even though its density may as yet be far rarer than our finest conception of matter. Then into that second world comes the second outflowing, and again in that finds matter which to it is objective, and builds of that its forms. And so this process is repeated and the matter grows denser and denser with each world, until at last we reach this physical level; but it will help us if we bear in mind that at each of these levels the ensouling life of the second outpouring finds matter already vivified by the first outpouring, which it regards as objective, of which it builds the forms which it inhabits.

This process of ensouling forms built out of already vivified matter is continued all through the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, but when we come to the moment of individualisation which divides the highest animal manifestation from the lowest human, a curious change takes place; that which has hitherto been the ensouling life becomes itself in turn the ensouled, for it builds itself into a form (symbolised as the cup, the Holy Grail) into which the ego enters, of which he takes possession. He absorbs into himself all the experiences which the matter of his causal body has had, so that nothing whatever is lost, and he carries these on with him through the ages of his existence. He continues the process of forming bodies on lower planes out of material ensouled by the first outpouring from the Third Aspect of the Deity; but he finally reaches a level in evolution in which the causal body is the lowest that he needs, and when this is attained we have the spectacle of the ego, which represents the third outpouring from the First Aspect of the Deity, inhabiting a body composed of matter ensouled by the second outpouring.

At a far later stage the earlier happening repeats itself once more, and the ego, who has ensouled so many forms during the whole of a chain-period, becomes himself the vehicle, and is ensouled in his turn by the now fully active and awakened Monad. Yet here, as before, nothing whatever is lost from the economy of nature. All the manifold experiences of the ego, all the splendid qualities developed in him, all these pass into the Monad himself and find there a vastly fuller realisation than even the ego could have given them.

Of the condition of consciousness of the Solar Deity outside the planes of His system, we can, form no true conception. He has been spoken of as the Divine Fire; and if for a moment we adopt that time-honoured symbolism, we may imagine that Sparks from that Fire fall into the matter of our planes - Sparks which are of the essence of that Fire, but are yet in appearance temporarily separated from it. The analogy cannot be pushed too far, because all sparks of which we know anything are thrown out from their parent fire and gradually fade and die; whereas these Sparks develop by slow evolution into Flames, and return to the Parent Fire. This development and this return are apparently the objects for which the Sparks come forth; and the process of the development is that which we are at the present moment concerned to try to understand.

It seems that the Spark, as such, cannot in its entirety veil itself beyond a certain extent; it cannot descend beyond what we call the second plane, and yet retain its unity. One difficulty with which we are confronted in trying to form any ideas upon this matter is that, as yet, none of us who investigate are able to raise our consciousness to this second plane; in the nomenclature recently adopted we give to it the name of monadic because it is the home of the Monad; but none of us have yet been able to realise that Monad in his own habitation, but only to see him when he has descended one stage to the plane or level or world below his own, in which he shows himself as the triple Spirit, which in our earlier books we call the Atma in man. Even already he is incomprehensible, for he has three aspects which are quite distinct and apparently separate, and yet they are all fundamentally one and the same.

The Monad in his first aspect cannot (or at least does not) descend below that spiritual level; but in his second aspect he does descend into the matter of the next lower world (the intuitional), and when that aspect has drawn round itself the matter of that level we call it divine wisdom in man, or the intuition. Meanwhile, the Monad in his third aspect descends also to that intuitional plane and clothes itself in its matter, and adopts a form to which as yet no name has been attached in our literature. It then moves forward or downward one more stage, and clothes itself in the matter of the higher mental world, and then we call it the intellect in man. When that threefold manifestation on the three levels has thus developed itself, and shows itself as Spirit, intuition and intellect, we give to it the name of the ego, and that ego takes upon himself a vehicle built of the matter of the higher mental plane, to which we give the name of the causal body. This ego, so functioning in his causal body, has often been called the higher self, and sometimes also the soul.

We see the ego then to be a manifestation of the Monad on the higher mental plane; but we must understand that he is infinitely far from being a perfect manifestation. Each descent from plane to plane means much more than a mere veiling of the Spirit; it means also an actual diminution in the amount of Spirit expressed. To use terms denoting quantity in speaking of such matters is entirely incorrect and misleading; yet if an attempt is to be made to express these higher matters in human words at all, these incongruities cannot be wholly avoided; and the nearest that we can come, in the physical brain, to a conception of what happens when the Monad involves himself in matter of the spiritual plane, is to say that only part of him can possibly be shown there, and that even that part must be shown in three separate aspects, instead of in the glorious totality which he really is in his own world. So when the second aspect of the triple Spirit comes down a stage and manifests as intuition, it is not the whole of that aspect which so manifests, but only a fraction of it. So again when the third aspect descends two planes and manifests itself as intellect, it is only a fraction of a fraction of what the intellect-aspect of the Monad really is. Therefore the ego is not a veiled manifestation of the Monad, but a veiled representation of a minute portion of the Monad.

As above, so below. As the ego is to the Monad, so is the personality to the ego. So that, by the time we have reached the personality with which we have to deal in the physical world, the fractionisation has been carried so far that the part we are able to see bears no appreciable proportion to the reality of which it is nevertheless the only possible representation for us. Yet it is with and from this ridiculously inadequate fragment that we are endeavouring to comprehend the whole! Our difficulty in trying to understand the Monad is the same in kind, but much greater in degree, as that which we find when we try really to grasp the idea of the ego. In the earlier years of the Theosophical Society there were many discussions about the relations of the lower and the higher self. In those days we did not understand the doctrine even as well as we

understand it now; we had not the grasp of it which longer study has given us. I am speaking of a group of students in Europe, who had behind them the Christian traditions, and the vague ideas which Christianity attaches to the word “soul”.

The ordinary Christian by no means identifies himself with his “soul”, but regards it as something attached to himself in some indefinite way - something for the saving of which he is responsible. Perhaps no ordinary man among the devotees of that religion attaches any very clear idea to the word, but he would probably describe it as the immortal part of him, though in ordinary language he talks of it as a possession, as something separate from him. In the Magnificat, the Blessed Virgin is made to say: “My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour”. She may here be drawing a distinction between the soul and the spirit, as St. Paul does; but she speaks of them both as possessions, not as the I. She does not say: “I as a soul magnify; I as a spirit rejoice”. This may be merely a question of language; yet surely this loose language expresses an inaccurate and ill-defined idea. That theory was in the air all about us in Europe, and no doubt we were influenced by it, and at first to some extent we substituted the term “higher self” for “soul”.

So we used such expressions as “looking up to the higher self”, “listening to the promptings of the higher self”, and so on. I remember that Mr. Sinnett used sometimes to speak a little disparagingly of the higher self, remarking that it ought to take more interest than it seemed to do in the unfortunate personality struggling on its behalf down here; and he used jokingly to suggest the formation of a society for the education of our higher selves. It was only gradually that we grew into the feeling that the higher self was the man, and that what we see down here is only a very small part of him. Only little by little did we learn that there is only one consciousness, and that the lower, though an imperfect representation of the higher, is in no way separate from it. We used to think of raising “ourselves” till we could unite “ourselves “with that glorified higher being, not realising that it was the higher that was the true self, and that to unite the higher to the lower really meant opening out the lower so that the higher might work in it and through it.

It takes time to become thoroughly permeated by Theosophical ideas. It is not merely reading the books, it is not merely hard study even, that makes us real Theosophists; we must allow time for the teaching to become part of ourselves. We may notice this constantly in the case of new members. People join us, people of keen intelligence, people of the deepest devotion, truly anxious to do the best they can for Theosophy, and to assimilate it as rapidly and perfectly as possible; and yet with all that, and with all their eager study of our books, they cannot at once put themselves into the position of the older members; and they will sometimes show that, by making some crude remark which is not at all in harmony with Theosophical teaching. I do not mean to suggest that the mere efflux of time will produce these effects, for obviously a man who does not study may remain a member for twenty years and be but little forwarder at the end of that time than he was at the beginning; but one who patiently studies, one who lives much with those who know, enters presently into the spirit of

Theosophy - or perhaps it might be better said that the spirit of Theosophy enters into him.

Evidently, therefore, new members should never intermit their studies, but try to understand the doctrines from every point of view. Year by year we are all growing into the attitude of those who are older than ourselves, and it comes chiefly by association and conversation with those older students. The Masters know almost infinitely more than the highest of Their pupils, and so those highest pupils continue to learn from association with Them; we who are lower pupils

know much less than those who stand above, and so we in turn learn by association with them; and in the same way those who are not yet even at our level may learn something from similar association with us. So always the older members can help the younger, and the younger have much to learn from those who have trodden the road before them. It was in this gradual way that we came to understand about the higher and the lower self.

It is a matter of exceeding difficulty to express the relation of the personality to the ego; as I have said above, I think that on the whole, the best way to put it is to say that the former is a fragment of the latter, a tiny part of him expressing itself under serious difficulties. We meet a person on the physical plane; we speak to him; and we think and say that we know him. It would be a little nearer the truth to say that we know a thousandth part of him. Even when clairvoyance is developed - even when a man opens the sight of his causal body, and looks at the causal body of another man - even then, though he sees a manifestation of the ego on his own plane, he is still far from seeing the real man. I have tried, by means of the illustrations in *Man, Visible and Invisible*, to give some indication of one side of the aspect of these higher vehicles; but the illustrations are in reality absolutely inadequate; they can give only faint adumbrations of the real thing. When anyone of our readers develops the astral sight, he may reasonably say to us, as the Queen of Sheba said to King Solomon: “The half was not told me”. He may say: “Here is all this glory and this beauty, which surrounds me in every direction and seems so entirely natural; it should be easy to give a better description of this”. But when, having seen and experienced all this, he returns to his physical body and tries to describe it in physical words, I think he will find much the same difficulties as we have done.

For when, using the higher mental sight, a man looks at the causal body of another, it is not actually the ego that he sees, but only matter of the higher mental plane which expresses the qualities of the ego. Those qualities affect the matter, cause it to undulate at different rates, and so produce colours, by examining which the character of the man can be distinguished. This character, at that level, means the good qualities which the man has developed; for no evil can express itself in matter so refined. In observing such a causal body, we know that it has within it in germ all the characteristics of the Deity - all possible good qualities, therefore; but not all of them are unfolded until the man reaches a very high level. When an evil feature shows itself in the personality, it must be taken to indicate that the opposite good quality is as yet undeveloped in the ego; it exists in him, as in every one, but it has not yet been called into activity. So soon as it is called into activity its intense vibrations act upon the lower vehicles, and it is impossible that the opposite evil can ever again find place in them.

Taking the ego for the moment as the real man, and looking at him on his own plane, we see him to be indeed a glorious being; the only way in which down here we can form a conception of what he really is, is to think of him as some splendid angel. But the expression of this beautiful being on the physical plane may fall far short of all this; indeed, it must do so - first, because it is only a tiny fragment; and secondly, because it is so hopelessly cramped by its conditions. Suppose a man put his finger into a hole in the wall, or into a small iron pipe, so that he could not even bend it; how much of himself as a whole could he express through that finger in that condition? Much like this is the fate of that fragment of the ego which is put down into this dense body. It is so small a fragment that it cannot represent the, whole; it is so cramped and shut in that it cannot even express what it is. The image is clumsy, but it may give some sort of idea of the relation of the personality to the ego.

Let us suppose that the finger has a considerable amount of consciousness of its own, and that, being shut off from the body, it temporarily forgets that it is part of that body; then it forgets also the freedom of the wider life, and tries to adapt itself to its hole, and to gild its sides and make it an enjoyable hole by acquiring money, property, fame and so on - not realising that it only really begins to live when it withdraws itself from the hole altogether, and recognises itself as a part of the body. When we draw ourselves out of this particular hole at night and live in our astral bodies, we are much less limited and much nearer to our true selves, though we still have two veils - our astral and mental bodies - which prevent us from being fully ourselves, and so fully expressing ourselves. Still, under those conditions we are much freer, and it is much easier to comprehend realities; for the physical body is the most clogging and confining of all, and imposes upon us the greatest limitations.

It would help us much if we could suppose away our limitations one by one; but it is riot easy. Realise how in the astral body we can move quickly through space - not instantaneously, but still quickly; for in two or three minutes we might move round the world. But even then we cannot get anywhere without passing through the intervening space. We can come into touch at that level with other men in their astral bodies. All their feelings lie open to us, so that they cannot deceive us about them, although they can do so with regard to their thoughts. We see in that world many more of the earth's inhabitants - those whom we call the dead - the higher nature-spirits, the angels of desire, and [14] many others. The sight of that plane enables us to see the inside of every object, and to look down into the interior of the earth; so that in many ways our consciousness is greatly widened.

Let us go a step further. If we learn to use the powers of the mental body, we do not therefore lose those of the lower, for they are included in the higher. We can then pass from place to place with the rapidity of thought; we can then see the thoughts of our fellow men, so that deception is no longer possible; we can see higher orders of the angels, and the vast host of those who, having finished their astral life, are inhabiting the heaven-world. Rising yet another step, and using the senses of the causal body, we find further glories awaiting our examination. If then we look at a fellow man, the body which we see within his ovoid is no longer a likeness of his present or his last physical body, as it is on the astral and mental planes. What we now see is the Augoeides, the glorified man, which is not an image of any one of his past physical vehicles, but contains within itself the essence of all that was best in each of them - a body which indicates more or less perfectly, as through experience it grows, what the Deity means that man shall be. By watching that vehicle we may see the stage of evolution which the man has reached; we may see what his past history has been, and to a considerable extent we can also observe the future that lies before him.

Students sometimes wonder why, if this be so, the evil qualities which a man shows in one life should so often persist in later lives. The reason is not only that because the opposing good quality is undeveloped there is an opportunity for evil influences to act upon the man in that particular direction, but also that the man carries with him from life to life the permanent atoms of his lower vehicles, and these tend to reproduce the qualities shown in his previous incarnations. Then, it may be asked: "Why carry over those permanent atoms?" Because it is necessary for evolution; because the developed man must be master of all the planes. If it were conceivable that he could develop without those permanent atoms, he might possibly become a glorious archangel upon higher planes, but he would be absolutely useless in these lower worlds,

for he would have cut off from himself the power of feeling and of thinking. So that we must not drop the permanent atoms, but purify them.

The task before most of us at present is that of realising the ego as the true man, so that we may let him work, instead of this false personal self with which we are so ready to identify ourselves. It is so easy for us to feel: “I am angry; I am jealous”; when the truth is that that which is pushing us to anger or to jealousy is merely the desire-elemental, which yearns for strong and coarse undulations, which help him on his downward way into grosser matter. We must realise that the true man can never be so foolish as to wish for such vibrations as these - that he can never desire anything but that which will be good for his own evolution, and helpful for that of others. A man says that he feels impelled by passion. Let him wait and think: “Is it really I?”And he will discover that it is not he at all, but something else that is trying to get hold of him and make him feel thus. He has the right and the duty to assert his independence of that thing, and to proclaim himself as a free man, pursuing the road of evolution which God has marked out for him.

Thus it is at present our business to realise ourselves as the ego; but when that is fully accomplished, when the lower is nothing but a perfect instrument in the hands of the higher, it will become our duty to realise that even the ego is not the true man. For the ego has had a beginning - it came into existence at the moment of individualisation; and whatever has a beginning must have an end. Therefore even the ego, which has lasted since we left the animal kingdom, is also impermanent. Is there then nothing in us that endures, nothing that will have no end? There is the Monad, the Divine Spark, which is verily a fragment of God, an atom of the Deity. Crude and inaccurate expressions, assuredly; yet I know of no other way in which the idea can be conveyed even as well as in words such as these. For each Monad is literally a part of God, apparently temporarily separated from Him, while he is enclosed in the veils of matter, though in truth never for one moment really separated.

He can never be apart from God, for the very matter in which he veils himself is also a manifestation of the Divine. To us sometimes matter seems evil, because it weighs us down, it clogs our faculties, it seems to hold us back upon our road; yet remember that this is only because as yet we have not learned to control it, because we have not realised that it also is divine in its essence, because there is nothing but God. A Sufi sage once told me that this was his interpretation of the cry which rings out daily in the call of the muezzin from the minaret all over the Muhammadan world: “There is no God but God, and Muhammad is the Prophet of God”. He told me that in his opinion the true mystical meaning of the first part of this cry was: “There is nothing but God”. And that is eternally true; we know that all comes from Him, and that to Him all will one day return, but we find it hard to realise that all is in Him even now, and that in Him it eternally abides. All is God - even the desire-elemental, and the things which we think of as evil; for many waves of life come forth from Him, and not all of them are moving in the same direction.

We, being Monads, belonging to an earlier wave, are somewhat fuller expressions of Him, somewhat nearer to Him in our consciousness than the essence out of which is made the desire-elemental. In the course of our evolution there is always a danger that a man should identify himself with the point at which he is most fully conscious. Most men at present are more conscious in their feelings and passions than anywhere else, and of this the desire-elemental craftily takes advantage, and endeavours to induce the man to identify himself with those desires and emotions.

So when the man rises to a somewhat higher level, and his principal activity becomes mental, there is danger lest he should identify himself with the mind, and it is only by realising himself as the ego, and making that the strongest point of his consciousness, that he can fully merge the personality in the individuality. When he has done that, he has achieved the goal of his present efforts; but immediately he must begin his work over again at that higher level, and try gradually to realise the truth of the position we laid down at the beginning, that as the personality is to the ego, so is the ego to the Monad. It is useless at our present stage to endeavour to indicate the steps which he will have to take in order to become a perfect expression of the Monad, or the stages of consciousness through which he will pass. Such conceptions as can be formed of them may be arrived at by applying the ancient rule that what is below is but a reflection of that which exists in higher worlds, so that the steps and the stages must to some extent be a repetition upon a higher level of those which have already been experienced in our lower efforts.

We may reverently presume (though here we are going far beyond actual knowledge) that when we have finally and fully realised that the Monad is the true man, we shall find behind that again a yet further and more glorious extension; we shall find that the Spark has never been separated from the Fire, but that as the ego stands behind the personality, as the Monad stands behind the ego, so a Planetary Angel stands behind the Monad, and the Solar Deity Himself stands behind the Planetary Angel. Perhaps, even further still, it may be that in some way infinitely higher, and so at present utterly incomprehensible, a greater Deity stands behind the Solar Deity, and behind even that, through many stages, there must rest the Supreme over all. But here even thought fails us, and silence is the only true reverence.

For the time, at least, the Monad is our personal God, the God within us, that which produces us down here as a manifestation of him on these all but infinitely lower levels. What his consciousness is on his own plane we cannot pretend to say, nor can we fully understand it even when he has put upon himself the first veil, and become the triple Spirit. The only way to understand such things is to rise to their level, and to become one with them. When we do that we shall comprehend, but even then we shall be utterly unable to explain to anyone else what we know. It is at that stage, the stage of the triple Spirit, that we who investigate can first see the Monad, and he is then a triple light of blinding glory, yet possessing even at that stage certain qualities by which one Monad is somehow distinct from another.

Often a student asks: “But what have we to do with it while we are down here - this unknown glory so far above us? “It is a natural question, yet in reality it is the reverse of what should be; for the true man is the Monad, and we should rather say: “What can I, the Monad, do with my ego, and through it with my personality?” This would be the correct attitude, for this would express the actual facts; but we cannot truthfully take it, because we cannot realise this. Yet we can say to ourselves: “I know that I am that Monad, though as yet I cannot express it; I know that I am the ego, a mere fraction of that Monad, but still out of all proportion greater than what I know of myself in the personality down here. More and more I will try to realise myself as that higher and greater being; more and more I will try to make this lower presentation of myself worthy of its true destiny; more and more will I see to it that this lower self is ever ready to catch the slightest hint or whisper from above - to follow the suggestions from the ego which we call intuitions - to distinguish the Voice of the Silence and to obey it”.

For the Voice of the Silence is not one thing always, but changes as we ourselves evolve; or perhaps it would be better to say that it is in truth one thing always, the voice of God, but it comes to us at different levels as we ourselves rise. To us, now it is the voice of the ego,

speaking to the personality; presently it will be the voice of the Monad, speaking to the ego; later still the voice of the Deity, speaking to the Monad. Probably, (as we have already suggested,) between these last two stages there may be an intermediate one, in which the voice of one of the seven great Ministers of the Deity may speak to the Monad, and then in turn the Deity Himself may speak to His Minister; but always the Voice of the Silence is essentially divine.

It is well that we should learn to distinguish this voice - this voice which speaks from above and yet from within; for sometimes other voices speak, and their counsel is not always wise. A medium finds this, for if he has not trained himself to distinguish, he often thinks that every voice coming from the astral plane must necessarily be all but divine, and therefore to be followed unquestioningly. Therefore discrimination is necessary, as well as watchfulness and obedience.

Does the Monad, in the case of the ordinary man, ever do anything which affects or can affect his personality down here? I think we may say that such interference is most unusual. The ego is trying, on behalf of the Monad, to obtain perfect control of the personality and to use it as an instrument; and because that object is not yet fully achieved, the Monad may well feel that the time has not yet come for him to interfere from his own level, and to bring the whole of his force to bear, when that which is already in action is more than strong enough for the required purpose. But when the ego is already beginning to succeed in his effort to manage his lower vehicles, the real man in the background does sometimes intervene.

In the course of various investigations it has come in our way to examine some thousands of human beings; but we found traces of such intervention only in a few. The most prominent instance is that given in the twenty-ninth life of Alcyone, when he pledged himself before the Lord Gautama to devote himself in future lives to the attainment of the Buddhahood in order to help humanity. That seemed to us then a matter of such moment, and also of such interest, that we took some trouble to investigate it. This was a promise for the far-distant future, so that obviously the personality through which it was given could by no means keep it; and when we rose to examine the part borne in it by the ego, we found that he himself, though full of enthusiasm at the idea, was being impelled to it by a mightier force from within, which he could not have resisted, even had he wished to do so. Following this clue still further, we found that the impelling force came forth unmistakably from the Monad. He had decided, and he registered his decision; his will, working through the ego, will clearly have no difficulty in bringing all future personalities into harmony.

We found some other examples of the same phenomenon in the course of the investigations into the beginnings of the Sixth Root Race. Looking forward to the life in that Californian Colony, we recognised instantly certain well-known egos; and then arose the question: “Since men have freewill, is it possible that we can already be absolutely certain that all these people will be there as we foresee? Will none of them fall by the way?” Further examination showed us that the same thing was happening here as with Alcyone. Certain Monads had already responded to the call of the higher Authorities, and had decided that their representative personalities should assist in that glorious work; and because of that, nothing that these personalities might do during the intervening time could possibly interfere with the carrying out of that decision.

Yet let no one think, because this is so, that he is compelled from without to do this or that; the compelling force is the real you; none else than yourself can ever bind you at any stage of your growth. And when the Monad has decided, the thing will be done; it is well for the personality if

he yields gracefully and readily, if he recognises the voice from above, and co-operates gladly; for if he does not do this, he will lay up for himself much useless suffering. It is always the man himself who is doing this thing; and he, in the personality, has to realise that the ego is himself, and he has for the moment to take it for granted that the Monad is still more himself - the final and greatest expression of him.

Surely this view should be the greatest possible encouragement to the man working down here, this knowledge that he is a far grander and more glorious being in reality than he appears to be, and that there is a part of him - enormously the greater part - which has already achieved what he, as a personality, is trying to achieve; and that all that he has to do down here is to try to make himself a perfect channel for this higher and more real self; to do his work and to try to help others in order that he may be a factor, however microscopic, in forwarding the evolution of the world. For him who knows, there is no question of the saving of the soul; the true man behind needs no salvation; he needs only that the lower self should realise him and express him. He is himself already divine; and all that he needs is to be able to realise himself in all the worlds and at all possible levels, so that in them all the Divine Power through him may work equally, and so God shall be all in all.

Further Reading – chapter 4

The Seven Principles
by Annie Besant

Principle V – Manas, the Thinker, or Mind

We have reached the most complicated part of our study, and some thought and attention are necessary from the reader to gain even an elementary idea of the relation held by the fifth principle to the other principles in man.

The word Manas comes from the Sanskrit word man, the root of the verb to think; it is the Thinker in us, spoken of vaguely in the West as mind. I will ask the reader to regard Manas as Thinker rather than as mind, because the word Thinker suggests some one who thinks, i.e., an individual, an entity. And this is exactly the Theosophical idea of Manas, for Manas is the immortal individual, the real "I", that clothes itself over and over again in transient personalities, and itself endures for ever. It is described in the *Voice of the Silence* in the exhortation addressed to the candidate for initiation: "Have perseverance as one who doth for evermore endure. Thy shadows [personalities] live and vanish; that which in thee shall live for ever, that which in thee knows, for it is knowledge, is not of fleeting life; it is the man that was, that is, and will be, for whom the hour shall never strike"(p. 31). H. P. Blavatsky has described it very clearly in the *Key to Theosophy*: "Try to imagine a 'Spirit', a celestial being, whether we call it by one name or another, divine in its essential nature, yet not pure enough to be one with the ALL, and having, in order to achieve this, to so purify its nature as finally to gain that goal. It can do so only be passing individually and personally, i.e., spiritually and physically, through every experience and feeling that exists in the manifold or differentiated universe. It has, therefore, after having gained such experience in the lower kingdoms, and having ascended higher and still higher with every rung on the ladder of being, to pass through every experience on the human planes. In its very essence it is Thought, and is, therefore, called in its plurality Manasaputra, 'the Sons of (universal) Mind.' This individualised 'Thought' is what we Theosophists call the real human Ego, the thinking entity imprisoned in a case of flesh and bones. This is surely a spiritual entity, not matter [that is, not matter as we know it, on the plane of the objective universe] – and such entities are the incarnating Egos that inform the bundle of animal matter called mankind, and whose names are Manasa or minds" (*Key to Theosophy*, p. 183-184).

This idea may be rendered yet clearer perhaps by a hurried glance cast backward over man's evolution in the past. When the quaternary had been slowly built up, it was a fair house without a tenant, and stood empty awaiting the coming of the one who was to dwell therein. The name Manasaputra (the sons of mind) covers many grades of intelligence, ranging from the mighty "Sons of the Flame" whose human evolution lies far behind them, down to those entities who gained individualisation in the cycle preceding our own, and were ready to incarnate on this earth in order to accomplish their human stage of evolution. Some superhuman intelligences incarnated as guides and teachers of our infant humanity, and became founders and divine rulers of the ancient civilisations. Large numbers of the entities spoken of above, who had already evolved some mental faculties, took up their abode in the human quaternary, in the mindless men. These are the reincarnating Manasaputra, who became the tenants of the human frames as then evolved on earth, and these same Manasaputra, reincarnating age after age, are the Reincarnating Egos, the Manas in us, the persistent individual, the fifth principle in man. The

remainder of mankind through successive ages received from the loftier Manasaputra their first spark of mind, a ray which stimulated into growth the germ of mind latent within them, the human soul thus having its birth in time there. It is these differences of age, as we may call them, in the beginning of the individual life, of the specialisation of the eternal Divine Spirit into a human soul, which explain the enormous differences in mental capacity found in our present humanity.

The multiplicity of names given to this fifth principle has probably tended to increase the confusion surrounding it in the minds of many who are beginning to study Theosophy. Manasaputra is what we call the historical name, the name that suggests the entrance into humanity of a class of already individualised souls at a certain point of evolution; Manas is the ordinary name, descriptive of the intellectual nature of the principle; the Individual or the "I ", or Ego, recalls the fact that this principle is permanent, does not die, is the individualising principle, separating itself in thought from all that is not itself, the Subject in Western terminology as opposed to the Object; the Higher Ego puts it into contrast with the Personal Ego, of which something is to be presently said .The Reincarnating Ego lays stress on the fact that it is the principle that reincarnates continually, and so unites in its own experience all the lives passed through on earth. There are various other names, but they will not be met with in elementary treatises. The above are those most often encountered, and there is no real difficulty about them, but when they are used interchangeably, without explanation, the unhappy student is apt to tear his hair in anguish, wondering how many principles he has got hold of, and what relation they bear to each other.

We must now consider Manas during a single incarnation, which will serve as the type of all, and we will start when the Ego has been drawn – by causes set a-going in previous earth-lives – to the family in which is to be born the human being who is to serve as its next tabernacle. (I do not deal here with reincarnation, since that great and most essential doctrine of Theosophy must be expounded separately). The Thinker, then, awaits the building of the "house of life"which he is to occupy; and now arises a difficulty; himself a spiritual entity living on the mental or third plane upwards, a plane far higher than that of the physical universe, he cannot influence the molecules of gross matter of which his dwelling is built by the direct play upon them of his own most subtle particles. So, he projects part of his own substance, which clothes itself with astral matter, and then with the help of etheric matter permeates the whole nervous system of the yet unborn child, to form, as the physical apparatus matures, the thinking principle in man. This projection from Manas, spoken of as its reflection, its shadow, its ray, and by many another descriptive and allegorical name, is the lower Manas, in contradistinction to the higher Manas – Manas, during every period of incarnation, being dual. On this, H. P. Blavatsky says: "Once imprisoned, or incarnate, their (the Manas) essence becomes dual; that is to say the rays of the eternal divine Mind, considered as individual entities, assume a twofold attribute which is (a) their essential, inherent, characteristic, heaven-aspiring mind (higher Manas), and (b) the human quality of thinking, or animal cogitation, rationalised owing to the superiority of the human brain, the Kama-tending or lower Manas" (*Key to Theosophy*, p. 184).

We must now turn our attention to this lower Manas alone, and see the part which it plays in the human constitution.

It is engulfed in the quaternary, and we may regard it as clasping Kama with one hand, while with the other it retains its hold on its father, the higher Manas. Whether it will be dragged down by Kama altogether and be torn away from the triad to which by its nature it belongs, or whether

it will triumphantly carry back to its source the purified experiences of its earth-life – that is the life-problem set and solved in each successive incarnation. During earth-life, Kama and the lower Manas are joined together, and are often spoken of conveniently as Kama-Manas. Kama supplies, as we have seen, the animal and passional elements; the lower Manas rationalises these, and adds the intellectual faculties; and so we have the brain-mind, the brain-intelligence, i.e., Kama-Manas functioning in the brain and nervous system, using the physical apparatus as its organ on the material plane. In man these two principles are interwoven during life, and rarely act separately, but the student must realise that "Kama-Manas" is not a new principle, but the interweaving of the fourth with the lower part of the fifth.

As with a flame we may light a wick, and the colour of the flame of the burning wick will depend on the nature of the wick and of the liquid in which it is soaked, so in each human being the flame of Manas set alight the brain and Kamic wick, and the colour of the light from that wick will depend on the Kamic nature and the development of the brain-apparatus. If the Kamic nature be strong and undisciplined it will soil the pure manasic light, lending it a lurid tinge and fouling it with noisome smoke. If the brain-apparatus be imperfect or undeveloped, it will dull the light and prevent it from shining forth to the outer world. As was clearly stated by H. P. Blavatsky in her article on "Genius"; "What we call 'the manifestations of genius' in a person are only the more or less successful efforts of that Ego to assert itself on the outward plane of its objective form – the man of clay – in the matter-of-fact daily life of the latter. The Egos of a Newton, an Aeschylus, or a Shakespeare are of the same essence and substance as the Egos of a yokel, an ignoramus, a fool, or even an idiot; and the self-assertion of their informing genii depends on the physiological and material construction of the physical man. No Ego differs from another Ego in its primordial or original essence and nature. That which makes of one mortal a great man and of another a vulgar silly person is, as said, the quality and make-up of the physical shell or casing, and the adequacy or inadequacy of brain and body to transmit and give expression to the light of the real inner man; and this aptness or inaptness is, in its turn, the result of Karma. Or, to use another simile, physical man is the musical instrument, and the Ego the performing artist. The potentiality of perfect melody of sound is in the former – the instrument – and no skill of the latter can awaken a faultless harmony out of a broken or badly made instrument. This harmony depends on the fidelity of transmission, by word and act, to the objective plane, of the unspoken divine thought in the very depths of man's subjective or inner nature. Physical man may – to follow our simile – be a priceless Stradivarius, or a cheap and cracked fiddle, or again a mediocrity between the two, in the hands of the Paganini who ensouls him." (*Lucifer*, November 1889, p. 228).

Bearing in mind these limitations and idiosyncrasies [Limitations and idiosyncrasies due to the action of the Ego in previous earth-lives, be it remembered] imposed on the manifestations of the thinking principle by the organ through which it has to function, we shall have little difficulty in following the workings of the lower Manas in man; mental ability, intellectual strength, acuteness, subtlety – all these are its manifestations; these may reach as far as what is often called genius, what H.P. Blavatsky speaks of as "artificial genius, the outcome of culture and of purely intellectual acuteness". Its nature is often demonstrated by the presence of Kamic elements in it, of passion, vanity and arrogance.

The higher Manas can but rarely manifest itself at the present stage of human evolution. Occasionally a flash from those loftier regions lightens the twilight in which we dwell, and such flashes alone are what the Theosophist calls true genius; "Behold in every manifestation of

genius, when combined with virtue, the undeniable presence of the celestial exile, the divine Ego whose jailer thou art, O man of matter." For theosophy teaches "that the presence in man of various creative powers"– called genius in their collectivity – is due to no blind chance, to no innate qualities through hereditary tendencies – though that which is known as atavism may often intensify these faculties – but to an accumulation of individual antecedent experiences of the Ego in its preceding life and lives. For, omniscient in its essence and nature, it still requires experience, through its personalities, of the things of earth, earthly on the objective plane, in order to apply the fruition of that abstract experience to them. And, adds our philosophy, the cultivation of certain aptitudes through out a long series of past incarnations must finally culminate, in some one life, in a blooming forth as genius, in one or another direction"– (*Lucifer*, November 1889, p. 229-30). For the manifestation of true genius, purity of life is an essential condition.

Kama-Manas is the personal self of man; we have already seen that the quaternary, as a whole, is the personality, "the shadow". and the lower Manas gives the individualising touch that makes the personality recognise itself as "I ". It becomes intellectual, it recognises itself as separate from all other selves; deluded by the separateness it feels, it does not realise a unity beyond all that it is able to sense. And the lower Manas, attracted by the vividness of the material-life impressions, swayed by the rush of the Kamic emotions, passions and desires, attracted to all material things blinded and deafened by the storm voices among which it is plunged – the lower Manas is apt to forget the pure and serene glory of its birthplace, and to throw itself into the turbulence which gives rapture in lieu of peace. And, be it remembered, it is this very lower Manas that yields the last touch of delight to the senses and to the animal nature; for what is passion that can neither anticipate nor remember, where is ecstasy without the subtle force of imagination, the delicate colours of fancy and of dream?

But there may be chains yet more strong and constraining, binding the lower Manas fast to the earth. They are forged of ambition, of desire for fame, be it for that of the statesman's power, or of supreme intellectual achievement. So long as any work is wrought for sake of love, or praise, or even recognition that the work is "mine" and not another's; so long as in the heart's remotest chambers one subtlest yearning remains to be recognised as separate from all; so long, however grand the ambition, however far reaching the charity, however lofty the achievement, Manas is tainted with Kama, and is not pure as its source.

Further Reading – chapter 5

The Seven Principles
by Annie Besant

Principle IV - The Desire Body

In building up our man we have now reached the principle sometimes described as the animal soul, in Theosophical parlance Kama Rupa, or the desire-body. It belongs to in constitution, and functions on, the second or astral plane. It includes the whole body of appetites, passions, emotions, and desires which come under the head of instincts, sensations, feelings and emotions, in our Western psychological classification, and are dealt with as a subdivision of mind. In Western psychology mind is divided – by the modern school – into three main groups, feelings, will, intellect. Feelings are again divided into sensations and emotions, and these are divided and subdivided under numerous heads. Kama, or desire, includes the whole group of "feelings", and might be described as our passional and emotional nature. All animal needs, such as hunger, thirst, sexual desire, come under it; all passions, such as love (in its lower sense), hatred, envy, jealousy. It is the desire for sentient experience, for experience of material joys – "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life". This principle is the most material in our nature, it is the one that binds us fast to earthly life. "It is not molecularly constituted matter, least of all the human body, Sthula Sharira, that is the grossest of all our 'principles' but verily the middle principle, the real animal centre; whereas our body is but its shell, the irresponsible factor and medium through which the beast in us acts all its life"(SD, vol. I, p. 280-81).

United to the lower part of Manas, the mind, as Kama-Manas, it becomes the normal human brain-intelligence, and that aspect of it will be dealt with presently. Considered by itself, it remains the brute in us, the "ape and tiger" of Tennyson, the force which most avails to keep us bound to earth and to stifle in us all higher longings by the illusions of sense.

Kama joined to Prana is, as we have seen, the "breath of life," the vital sentient principle spread over every particle of the body. It is, therefore, the seat of sensation, that which enables the organs of sensation to function. We have already noted that the physical organs of sense, the bodily instruments that come into immediate contact with the external world, are related to the organs of sensation in the etheric double. But these organs would be incapable of functioning did not Prana make them vibrant with activity, and their vibrations would remain vibrations only, motion on the material plane of the physical body, did not Kama, the principle of sensation translate the vibration into feeling. Feeling indeed, is consciousness on the kamic plane, and when a man is under the dominion of a sensation or a passion, the Theosophist speaks of him as on the kamic plane, meaning thereby that his consciousness is functioning on that plane. For instance, a tree may reflect rays of light, that is, ethereal vibrations, and these vibrations striking on the outer eye will set up vibrations in the physical nerve-cells; these will be propagated as vibrations to the physical and on to the astral centres, but there is no sight of the tree until the seat of the sensation is reached, and Kama enables us to perceive.

Matter of the astral plane – including that called elemental essence – is the material of which the desire-body is composed, and it is the peculiar properties of this matter which enable it to serve as the sheath in which the Self can gain experience of sensation. (The constitution of the elemental essence would lead us too far from an elementary treatise). The desire–body, or astral

body, as it is often called, has the form of a mere cloudy mass during the earlier stages of evolution, and is incapable of serving as an independent vehicle of consciousness. During deep sleep it escapes from the physical body, but remains near it, and the mind within it is almost as much asleep as the body. It is, however, liable to be affected by forces of the astral plane akin to its own constitution, and gives rise to dreams of a sensuous kind. In a man of average intellectual development the desire-body has become more highly organised, and when separated from the physical body is seen to resemble it is outline and features; even then, however, it is not conscious of its surroundings on the astral plane, but encloses the mind as a shell, within which the mind may actively function, while not yet able to use it as an independent vehicle of consciousness. Only in the highly evolved man does the desire-body become thoroughly organised and vitalised, as much the vehicle of consciousness on the astral plane as the physical body is on the physical plane.

After death, the higher part of man dwells for awhile in the desire-body, the length of its stay depending on the comparative grossness or delicacy of its constituents. When the man escapes from it, it persists for a time as a "shell" and when the departed entity is of a low type, and during earth life infused such mentality as it possessed into the passional nature, some of this remains entangled with the shell. It then possesses consciousness of a very low order, has brute cunning, is without conscience – an altogether objectionable entity, often spoken of as a "spook."It strays about, attracted to all places in which animal desires are encouraged and satisfied, and is drawn into the currents of those whose animal passions are strong and unbridled. Mediums of low type inevitably attract these eminently undesirable visitors, whose fading vitality is reinforced in their séance rooms, who catch astral reflections, and play the part of "disembodied spirits"of a low order. Nor is this all; if at such a séance there be present some man or woman of correspondingly low development, the spook will be attracted to that person, and may attach itself to him or to her, and thus may be set up currents between the desire-body of the living person and the dying desire-body of the dead person, generating results of the most deplorable kind.

The longer or shorter persistence of the desire-body as a shell or a spook depends on the greater or less development of the animal and passional nature in the dying personality. If during earth-life the animal nature was indulged and allowed to run riot, if the intellectual and spiritual parts of man were neglected or stifled, then, as the life-currents were set strongly in the direction of passion, the desire-body will persist for a long period after the body of the person is dead. Or again, if earth-life has been suddenly cut short by accident or by suicide, the link between Kama and Prana will not be easily broken, and the desire-body will be strongly vivified. If, on the other hand, desire has been conquered and bridled during earth-life, if it has been purified and trained into subservience to man's higher nature, then there is but little to energise the desire-body and it will quickly disintegrate and dissolve away.

There remains one other fate, terrible in its possibilities, which may befall the fourth principle, but it cannot be clearly understood until the fifth principle has been dealt with.

Further Reading – chapter 6

Antaḥkaraṇa
Theosophy Wiki

Antahkarana (devanāgarī: अन्तःकरण Antaḥkaraṇa) is a Sanskrit term that means "internal organ." In Hindu philosophy it refers to the totality of the mind, including the thinking faculty, memory, the sense of I-ness, and the discriminating faculty.

In Theosophy the term is used with a special meaning that differs from the Hindu. According to H. P. Blavatsky the antahkarana is an aspect or function of the lower mind that retains its original purity, active whenever there is a spiritual aspiration. It is, figuratively speaking, a "path" or "bridge" that acts as a two-way communication. Through antahkarana the spiritual influence of the higher manas is conveyed to the personality, and all good and noble activity of the lower manas can reach the higher, to be assimilated in devachan.

General description

H. P. Blavatsky, in *The Theosophical Glossary* defines it as follows:

> *Antahkarana* (Sk.)., or *Antaskarana*. The term has various meanings, which differ with every school of philosophy and sect. Thus Sankaracharya renders the word as "understanding"; others, as "the internal instrument, the soul, formed by the thinking principle and egoism"; whereas the occultists explain it as the path or bridge between the higher and the lower manas, the divine ego, and the personal soul of man. It serves as a medium of communication between the two, and conveys from the lower to the higher ego all those personal impressions and thoughts of men which can, by their nature, be assimilated and stored by the undying Entity, and be thus made immortal with it, these being the only elements of the evanescent personality that survive death and time. It thus stands to reason that only that which is noble, spiritual and divine in man can testify in Eternity to his having lived.[1]

In the sevenfold constitution of human beings described in the Theosophical literature, the fifth principle (counting from the physical body upwards) is called manas, commonly translated as "mind." This principle is dual, comprising the higher mind (the spiritual mind, or reincarnating Ego), and the lower mind (the sensual mind, or the psychological ego). According to H. P. Blavatsky, antahkarana is the aspect of the lower mind that does not get entangled with kama (the animal soul), thus acting as an "imaginary bridge" between the lower and higher egos:

> The antaskarana is therefore that portion of the lower manas which is one with the higher, the essence, that which retains its purity; on it are impressed all good and noble aspirations, and in it are the upward energies of the lower manas, the energies and tendencies which become its devachanic experiences. The whole fate of an incarnation depends on whether this pure essence, antaskarana, can restrain the kama-manas or not. It is the only salvation. Break this and you become an animal.[2]

The antaḥkaraṇa in Theosophy is not seen as a structural principle but as a temporary function, active when the lower mind aspires towards the higher:

Q. The antahkarana is the link between the higher and the lower egos; does it correspond to the umbilical cord in projection?

A. No; the umbilical cord joining the astral to the physical body is a real thing. Antahkarana is imaginary, a figure of speech, and is only the bridging over from the higher to the lower manas. Antahkarana only exists when you commence to "throw your thought upwards and downwards." The mayavi rupa, or manasic body, has no material connection with the physical body, no umbilical cord.[3]

In order not to confuse the mind of the student with the abstruse difficulties of Indian metaphysics, let him view the lower manas or mind, as the personal ego during the waking state, and as antahkarana only during those moments when it aspires towards its higher half, and thus becomes the medium of communication between the two. It is for this reason that it is called "Path."[4]

Antahkarana can then be seen as a path that has to be trodden by developing spiritual qualities. A connection has been suggested between the "Portals" in the book *The Voice of the Silence* and the different "divisions" of the antahkarana:

Q. We are told in The Voice of the Silence that we have to become "the Path itself," and in another passage that antahkarana is that path. Does this mean anything more than that we have to bridge over the gap between the consciousness of the Lower and the Higher Egos?

A. That is all.

Q. We are told that there are seven portals on the Path: is there then a sevenfold division of antahkarana? Also, is antahkarana the battlefield?

A. It is the battlefield. There are seven divisions in the antahkarana. As you pass from each to the next you approach the higher manas. When you have bridged the fourth you may consider yourself fortunate.[5]

According to the law of correspondences there is a correlation between inner principles and outer organs. Within the human brain, it is said that the pituitary gland (or body) or hypophysis is connected to antahkarana:

The fourth of these cavities is the pituitary body, which corresponds with manas-antahkarana, the bridge to the higher intelligence; it contains various essences.[6]

According to C. W. Leadbeater

C. W. Leadbeater states that in an ordinary person who makes no effort to use the antahkarana has but little communication with the higher ego:

But though that personality is absolutely part of the ego - though the only life and power in it are those of the ego - it nevertheless often forgets those facts, and comes to regard itself as an entirely separate entity, and works down here for its own ends. It has always a line of communication with the Ego (often called in our books the antahkarana), but it generally makes no effort to use it. In the case of ordinary people who have never studied these matters, the personality is to all intents and purposes the man, and the Ego manifests itself only very rarely and partially.[7]

In these cases, the antahkarana is active mainly during Devachan:

> The antahkarana is usually considered in the Theosophical works as the link between the higher self or the divine ego, and the lower self or personal ego. The chitta in that lower self puts it at the mercy of things, so that our life down here may be compared to the experience of a man struggling to swim in a maelstrom. But this will be followed sooner or later after death by a period in the heaven-world. The man has been whirled about; he has seen many things; he has not dwelt upon them, however, with a calm, steady mind, but with kama-manas; therefore he has not understood their significance for the soul. But in the heaven-world the ego can widen out the antahkarana, because all is now calm; no new experiences are to be gathered. The old ones can be quietly turned over and dwelt upon, and their essence taken up, as it were, into the deva ego, as being of interest to him. So, very often, the ego really begins his personal life-cycle with the entry into the heaven-world, and pays a minimum of attention to the personality during its period of collecting materials.
>
> In that case the aspect of mind that is antahkarana (in Madame Blavatsky's classification) functions but little before the period of the heaven-life.[8]

He adds that a practice that leads to calm the mind clears out the antahkarana and the higher self finds easier to influence the personality during life:

> He must bring the positive powers of the higher self down through that channel, by the practice of dharana or concentration, and so make himself entire master of his personality. In other words he must clear out the astral and mental whirlpools.[9]

In Hinduism

In Hindu philosophy, the antahkarana (Skt., often translated as the "internal organ") refers to the psychological apparatus of the individual. In the Vedantic literature, the antahkarana is organised into four parts:

1. Ahamkara (*ego*) — the origin to the psychological "I" associated to the body and its senses.
2. Buddhi (*intellect*) — the principle that is able to discern truth from falsehood and thereby to make wisdom possible.
3. Manas (*mind*) — the faculty of doubt and volition; the lower or instinctive mind, seat of desire and governor of sensory and motor organs.
4. Citta (*memory*) — the part that deals with remembering and forgetting.

Artistic representations

Theosophical artist Burton Callicott created ... this concept in his pastel *Antahkarana*. It hangs by the Meditation Room in the L. W. Rogers Building at the Theosophical Society in America headquarters.

Notes

1. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary* (Krotona, CA: Theosophical Publishing House, 1918), 22.
2. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *Collected Writings XII, Instruction No. V* (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1980), 710.
3. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *The Esoteric Writings of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky*, (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1980), 428.
4. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *Collected Writings XII, Instruction No. III* (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1980), 633.
5. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *The Esoteric Writings of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky*, (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1980), 428.
6. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *Collected Writings XII, Instruction No. V* (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1980), 697.
7. Charles Webster Leadbeater, *The Masters and the Path*, (Adyar, Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1992), 173-174.
8. Charles Webster Leadbeater, *Talks on the Path of Occultism* Volume 2, (Adyar, Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1980), 47.
9. Charles Webster Leadbeater, *Talks on the Path of Occultism* Volume 2, (Adyar, Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1980), 47.

Further Reading – chapter 7

The Causal Body and the Ego
by A. E. Powell

Chapter 18 – "Development and Faculties of the Causal Body"

In chapter XV, we saw that only good elements are stored in the causal body, evil finding in that body no means of expression. We may now consider this matter a little further, and study the effects which are produced, more or less indirectly, on the causal body by the practise of evil.

In a primitive man, the growth of the causal body is necessarily exceedingly slow. As we have seen, it is by the method of exciting sympathetic vibration that the higher qualities, developed by the life on lower planes, are gradually built into the causal body : but in the life of an undeveloped man there will be very few feelings or thoughts, belonging to the higher world, which can serve as food for the growth of the real man. Hence the growth is slow, for all the rest of life does not aid it.

But even the worst of men can commonly show himself on the causal plane, though as an entirely undeveloped entity. His vices, even though continued through life after life, cannot soil the causal body. They can, however, make it more and more difficult to develop the opposite virtues.

In every case, the existence of an evil quality in the personality means a lack of the corresponding good quality in the causal body. For an ego cannot be evil, though he can be imperfect. The qualities which the ego develops cannot be other than good qualities, and, when they are well defined, they show themselves in each of all his numerous personalities: consequently, those personalities can never be guilty of the vices opposite to those good qualities.

A good quality which is lacking, may nevertheless be said to exist in the ego, although it has not yet been called into activity. As soon as it is called into activity, its intense vibrations will act upon the lower vehicles, and it will be impossible, as said, for the opposite evil ever again to find place in them.

Where there is a gap in the ego, indicating that there is a quality undeveloped there need not necessarily be a definite vice in the personality; but there is also nothing positive in the personality to prevent the growth of the vice in question. Hence, since in all probability many other people around him already possess that vice, and since man is an imitative animal, it is more than likely that they will develop that vice. The vice, however, as we have seen, belongs only to the lower vehicles, and not to the real man in the causal body. In those lower vehicles its repetition may set up a momentum which it is hard to conquer: but, if the ego bestirs himself to create in himself the opposite virtue, the vice is cut off at the root, and can no longer exist, neither in this life nor in all the lives that are to come.

Thus the shortest way to get rid of evil, and prevent its reappearance, is to fill the gap in the ego, so that the good quality which is thus developed will show itself as an integral part of the man's character through all his future lives.

Whilst evil cannot be definitely stored in the causal body, yet the practise of evil may affect the causal body; for every intensification of vice in the lower vehicles, every indulgence in it in the lower worlds, tends somewhat to dim the luminosity of the opposite virtues in the causal body.

The "I" cannot assimilate anything that is evil, for it cannot touch the "I" level of consciousness. The ego is not conscious of evil; he knows nothing about it, so that it makes no impression upon him. The utmost result brought about, in the causal body by very, very long continued lives of a low type, is what may be called incapacity to receive the opposite good impression for a very considerable period afterwards, a kind of numbness or paralysis of the matter of the causal body. This is not so much consciousness as unconsciousness; an unconsciousness which resists impressions of the good of the opposite kind. That is the limit of the harm that is done. Hence, when the life of evil has been very much prolonged, it will take many more lives in order to bring out the first response to the good side of activity.

This result was observed when, in studying past lives, an endeavour was made to understand how the causal body was not injured through a number of savage lives. In very prolonged cases, where there was an abnormal number of such lives, this effect of numbness was noted, brought about by the repeated beating upon it of evil, over a long period of time. A number of lives then had to be spent in restoring, so to say, the responsive vitality to that portion of the causal body. Such cases, however, are abnormal.

We may pursue the study of the effects of evil still further. Where evil is subtle and persistent, it drags away, if the expression be permitted, something of the individual himself. If evil be continually followed, the mental body becomes so entangled with the astral body, that after death it cannot free itself entirely : some of its very substance is torn away from it, and, when the astral body in its turn dies and disintegrates, the matter of the mental body, which has been wrenched away, also goes back to the general stock of mental matter, and is thus lost to the individual. In ordinary cases, the harm done to the causal body does not go further than this.

Where, however, the ego has become strong, both in intellect and in will, without at the same time increasing in unselfishness and love, it contracts itself round its own separated centre, instead of expanding, as it grows : It thus builds around it a wall of selfishness, and uses its developing powers for itself, instead of for others. In such cases, there arises the possibility, alluded to in so many of the world-scriptures, of the ego setting himself consciously against the "Good Law", of fighting deliberately against evolution. Then the casual body itself shows the dark hues, brought about by contraction, and loses the dazzling radiance which is its characteristic property. Harm such as this cannot be wrought by an ego who is poorly developed, nor by ordinary passional or mental faults. To effect injury so far-reaching, the ego must be highly evolved, and must have its energies awakened on the mental plane.

It is for this reason that ambition, pride and powers of the intellect, used for selfish aims, are so far more dangerous, and deadly in their effects, than the more palpable faults of the lower nature. So that the "Pharisee" is often further from the "kingdom of God", than the "publican and sinner". Along this line is developed the "black magician", the man who conquers passion and desire, develops will and the higher powers of the mind, not to offer them as forces to help forward the evolution of the whole, but in order to grasp all he can for himself as a unit, to hold, and not to share. Such men set themselves to maintain separation as against unity, striving to retard instead of to quicken, evolution. They vibrate in discord with the whole, instead of

harmony, and are in danger of that rending of the ego himself, which means the loss of all the fruits of evolution.

Hitherto we have spoken mainly of the effects of evil on a man's growth: let us now look at the other side of the picture. All those who are beginning to understand something of the causal body, can make its evolution a definite object in life. They can strive to think, feel and act unselfishly, and so contribute to its growth and activity. Life after life this evolution of the individual proceeds, and, in aiding its growth by conscious effort, we are working in harmony with the Divine Will, and carrying out the purpose for which we are here. Nothing good, that is once woven into the causal body, can ever be lost or dissipated: for this is the man that lives, so long as he remains man.

Thus we see that by the law of evolution everything that is evil, however strong it may seem, has within itself the germ of its own destruction, while everything that is good has in it the seed of immortality, The secret of this lies in the fact that everything evil, is inharmonious, because it sets itself against the cosmic law. Sooner or later, therefore, it is broken up by that law, dashed into pieces against it. Everything that is good, on the other hand, being in harmony with the law, is taken on by it and carried forward: it becomes part of the stream of evolution, of that "not ourselves which makes for righteousness", and therefore can never perish or be destroyed.

We may conceive of all the experience of a man as passing through a fine sieve or mesh: only that which is good can pass through: that which is evil is left behind, rejected. In this, the very mechanism by which the causal body the vehicle of the man that endures, is built up, lies not only the hope of man, but the certainty of his final triumph. However slow the growth, it is there: however long the way, it has its ending. The individual, which is our Self, is evolving, and cannot be utterly destroyed. Even though by our folly we may make the growth slower than it need be, none the less everything we contribute to it, however little, lasts in it forever, and is our possession for all the ages that lie in front.

Whilst nothing evil can be stored in the causal body, it is, however, stored if we may so use the term, in the lower vehicles to which it pertains. For under the law of justice, every man must receive the results of his own actions, be they bad or good. But evil necessarily works itself out on the lower planes, because it is only the matter of those planes that its vibrations can be expressed, and it has not even overtones capable of awakening a response in the causal body. Its force, therefore, is all expended at its own level, and it reacts in its entirety upon its creator in his astral and physical life, whether in this or in future incarnations.

More precisely, the result of evil is stored in the mental unit and in the astral and physical permanent atoms: and so the man has to face it over and over again: but that, of course, is a very different matter from taking it into the ego and making it really a part of himself.

Good actions and thoughts also, of course, produce results on the lower planes, but, in addition to that, they nave the immensely higher and permanent effect upon the causal body. Thus all alike produce effects on the lower planes, and are manifested in the lower temporary vehicles, but good qualities alone are retained in the causal body as so much definite gain to the real man.

In this way, at first slowly, in the later stages with ever-increasing rapidity, a man's casual body is built. At each stage of his growth, a study of the colours, and striations of the causal body reveals the progress the ego has made since the causal body was first formed, when the entity emerged from the animal kingdom, and the exact stage of evolution at which he has now arrived.

As we have seen, in the later stages of evolution, both the causal and mental bodies expand enormously, exhibiting the most gorgeous radiance of many-coloured lights, glowing with intense splendour when comparatively at rest, and sending forth dazzling corruscations when in high activity.

As the causal body becomes able to express more and more of the ego, it extends further and further from its physical centre, until a man is able to enfold hundreds and even thousands of persons within himself, and so exercise a vast influence for good.

The pouring into the causal body of faculties acquired by a personality is analogous, to the pouring into the Group-Soul of the experiences acquired by the forms in which portions of the Group-Soul incarnate.

Thus, for example, supposing that the quality of accuracy is developed in a personality: when that quality goes back to the ego in the causal body, the same amount has to be spread over the whole causal body. The amount, which was quite sufficient to make one personality very accurate, when it goes into the ego, is only a fractional part of his requirements. He may consequently have many lives to develop enough of the quality to make it prominent in the next life, especially as the ego does not put into the next personality the same piece of himself but simply a piece of the whole mass of himself.

The student must, all through his studies, recollect that the causal body is not the ego, but only such matter of the higher mental plane which has been vivified, and which expresses the qualities the ego has acquired.

The real man himself—the divine trinity within—we may not see: but the more our sight and knowledge increase, the more nearly we approach that which veils Itself in him. Thus we may think of the causal body as the nearest to a conception of the true man that our sight will at present give us.

The student will recollect also, that it is by the size and shape of the causal body that are determined the size and shape of the mental body. In fact, the aura of a man, which has a definite size, is the same as that of a section of the causal body, and, as the causal body grows, that section becomes larger, and the man has a larger aura.

Furthermore, in the case of a developed man, the mental body becomes a reflection of the causal body, since the man learns to follow solely the promptings of the higher self, and to guide his reason exclusively by them.

In the process of meditation, as the mental body is stilled, the consciousness escapes from it, and passes into and out of the “laya centre”, the neutral points of contact between the mental body and the causal body. The passage is accompanied by a momentary swoon, or loss of consciousness—the inevitable result of the disappearance of objects of consciousness—followed by consciousness in the higher. The dropping out of objects of consciousness, belonging to the lower worlds, is thus followed by the appearance of objects of consciousness in the higher world. Then the ego can shape the mental body according to his own lofty thoughts, and permeate it with his own vibrations. He can mould it after the high visions of the planes beyond his own, of which he has caught a glimpse in his highest moments, and can thus convey downwards and outwards ideas to which the mental body would otherwise be unable to respond.

Such ideas are the inspirations of genius, that flash down into the mind with dazzling light, and illuminate a world.

We may here usefully repeat the substance of what was said in The Mental Body, directing our attention now, not so much to the lower brain consciousness, as to that of the ego working in the causal body. Genius, which is of the ego, sees instead of arguing. True intuition is one of its faculties. The lower manas or mind, working in the brain apparatus, arranges facts, gathered by observation, balances them one against the other, and draws, conclusions from them. By the process of ratiocination it operates, using the methods of induction and deduction.

Intuition on the other hand, as etymology indicates, is—in-sight, looking within—a process as direct and swift as physical sight. It is the exercise of the eyes of intelligence, the unerring recognition of a truth presented on the mental plane. Proof is unnecessary, because it is above and beyond reason. Great care must, of course, be taken to distinguish mere kamic impulse, from true intuition. It is only when the desires and appetites of the lower, kamic self are stilled and at rest that the voice of the higher mind can make itself heard in the lower personality.

In Isis Unveiled, pages 305-306, H. P. Blavatsky explains the matter with force and lucidity. Allied to the physical half of man's nature, she says, is reason ; allied to his spiritual part is his conscience, which is that instantaneous perception between right and wrong which can be exercised by the spirit which, being a portion of divine wisdom and purity, is itself absolutely pure and wise. Its promptings are independent of reason, and can manifest themselves clearly only when they are unhampered by the baser attractions of the lower nature. Reason, she points out, being wholly dependent on the evidence of other senses, cannot be a quality pertaining directly to the divine spirit. For spirit knows—hence reasoning is useless. Hence the ancient Theurgists maintained that the rational part of man's soul [spirit] never entered wholly into the man's body, but only overshadowed him more or less through the irrational or astral soul, which serves as an intermediary, agent or medium between spirit and body. The man who has conquered, matter sufficiently to receive the direct light from his shining Augoeides, feels truth intuitionally. He could not err in his judgement notwithstanding all the sophisms suggested by reason, for he is illuminated. Hence prophecy, vaticination, and so-called divine inspiration are simply, the effects of this illumination from above, by our own immortal spirit.

As with a flame we might light a wick , and the colour of the flame of the burning wick will depend on the nature of the wick, and of the liquid in which it is soaked, so in each human being the flame of manas sets alight the brain and kamic wick, and the colour of the light from the wick will depend upon the kamic nature, and the development of the brain-apparatus.

In her article on "Genius", H. P. Blavatsky explained this matter clearly: what we call the manifestations of genius in a person are only the more or less successful efforts of the ego to assert itself through its outer objective form. The egos of a Newton, an Aeschylus, a Shakespeare, are of the same essence and substance as the egos of a yokel, an ignoramus, a fool; or even an idiot. The self-assertion of their informing genii depends on the physiological and material construction of the physical man. No ego differs from another ego in its primordial or original essence and nature. That which makes of one mortal a great man and of another a vulgar, silly person is, as said, the quality and make-up of the shell or casing, the adequacy or inadequacy of brain and body to transmit and give expression to the light of the real inner man - the ego.

To use a familiar simile, physical man is the instruments, the ego the performing artist. The potentiality of perfect melody rests in the instrument, and no skill of the artist can awaken faultless harmony out of a broken or badly constructed instrument. This harmony depends on the

fidelity of transmission, by word and act, to the objective plane, of the unspoken divine thought in the very depths of man's subjective or inner nature: in a word, of his ego.

Mental ability, intellectual strength, acuteness, subtlety, are manifestations of lower manas in man: they may reach as far as what H. P. Blavatsky spoke of as "artificial genius" the outcome of culture and purely intellectual acuteness. Often its nature is demonstrated by the presence of kamic elements in it, i.e., of passion, vanity, arrogance.

At the present stage of human evolution, higher manas can but rarely manifest, itself. Occasional flashes of it are what we call true genius. "Behold in every manifestation of genius, when combined with virtue, the undeniable presence of the celestial exile, the divine ego whose jailer thou art, O man of matter." Such manifestations depend upon an accumulation of individual antecedent experiences of the ego in its preceding life or lives. For, although it is omniscient in its essence and nature, yet it still requires experience, through its personalities, of the things of earth, in order to apply the fruition of its abstract experience to them. And the cultivation of certain aptitudes, through out a long series of incarnations, must finally culminate, in some one life, as genius, in one direction or another. It is clear from the above that, for the manifestation of true genius, purity of life is essential.

It is important to recognise the part which the ego in the causal body plays in the formation of our conceptions of external objects. The vibrations of nerve threads present to the brain merely impressions: it is the work of the ego to classify, combine, and arrange them. The discrimination of the ego, acting through the mind, is brought to bear upon everything that the senses transmit to the brain. Furthermore, this discrimination is not an inherent instinct of the mind, perfect from the first, but is the result of the comparison of a number of previous experiences.

Before considering the possibility of functioning consciously on the causal plane, we may remind ourselves that, for a man still attached to the physical body to move in full consciousness on the mental plane—i.e. either the lower or higher mental—he must be either an Adept or one of Their Initiated pupils , for until a student has been taught by his Master how to use his mental, body he will be unable to move with freedom even upon its lower levels.

To function consciously during physical life upon the higher levels denotes, of course, still greater advancement, for it means the unification of the man, so that down here he is no longer a mere personality, more or less influenced by the individuality above, but is himself that individuality or ego. He is certainly still trammelled and confined by a body, but nevertheless he has within him the power and knowledge of a highly developed ego.

At present, most people are not more than just conscious in the causal body: they can work only in the matter of the third sub-plane, i.e., the lowest part of the causal body, and in fact only the lowest matter even of that is usually in operation. When they are on the Path, the second sub-plane opens up. The Adept, of course, uses the whole causal body, while his consciousness is on the physical plane. These details will be considered fully in a later chapter.

Passing now to more specific and detailed powers of the causal body, it will be recollected, as explained in the two preceding volumes of this series, that is not possible for a man to pass to another planet of our chain either in his astral or his mental body. In the causal body, however, when very highly developed, this achievement is possible, though even then by no means with the ease or the rapidity with which it can be done on the Buddhic plane, by those who have succeeded in raising their consciousness to that level.

It appears however, that a causal body would not normally be able to move in interstellar space. In that space it seems that the atoms lie apart and equidistant, and this is probably their normal condition when undisturbed. That is what is meant by speaking of the atoms as “free”. Within the atmosphere of a planet they are never found at all in that state, for even when they are not grouped in forms, they are at any rate enormously compressed by the force of attraction.

In interplanetary space, the conditions are probably not exactly the same as in interstellar space, for there may be a great deal of disturbance due to cometic and meteoric matter, and also the tremendous attraction of the sun produces a considerable compression within the limits of this system.

Hence the atomic matter of a man’s causal body is crushed together by attraction into a definite and quite dense shape, even though the atoms are in no way altered in themselves, and are not grouped into molecules. While such a body can exist comfortably on its own atomic plane, in the neighbourhood of a planet, where the atomic matter is compressed, it would not be able to move or function in far-away space where the atoms are “free” and uncompressed.

The power of magnification belongs to the causal body, and is associated with the brow chakram, the force-centre between the eyebrows. From the central portion of this chakram what may be called a tiny microscope is projected, having for its lens only one atom. In this way an organ is produced, commensurate in size with the minute objects, to be observed. The atom employed may be either physical, astral or mental, but, whichever it is, it needs a special preparation. All its spirillae must be opened up, so that it is just as it will be in the seventh round of our chain of worlds.

If an atom of a level lower than the causal be used as an eyepiece, a system, of reflecting counterparts must be introduced. The atom can be adjusted, to any sub-plane, so that any required degree of magnification can be applied, in order to suit the object which is being examined. A further extension of the same power enables the operator to focus his own consciousness in the lens through which he is looking, and then to project it to distant points.

The same power, by a different arrangement, can be used for diminishing purposes, when one wishes to view as a whole something far too large to be taken in at once by ordinary vision.

The sight of the causal body enables one to foresee the future to some extent. Even with physical senses, one may sometimes foretell certain things. Thus, for example, if we see a man leading a life of debauchery, we may safely predict that, unless he changes, he will presently lose health and fortune. What we cannot tell, by physical means, is whether the man will change or not.

But a man who has the sight of the causal body could often tell this, because to him the reserve forces of the other would be visible. He could see what the ego thought of it all, and whether he was strong enough to interfere. No merely physical prediction is certain, because so many of the causes which influence life, cannot be seen on this lower plane. But, when the consciousness is raised to higher planes, we can see more of the causes, and so can come nearer to calculating the effects.

It is, of course, easier to foresee the future of an undeveloped man than of one more advanced. For the ordinary man has little will-power; karma assigns him certain surroundings, and he is the creature of those surroundings; he accepts fate marked out for him, because he does not know that he can alter it.

A more developed man, however, takes hold of his destiny, and moulds it; he makes his future what he wills it to be, counteracting the karma of the past by setting fresh forces in motion. Hence his future is not so easily predictable. But no doubt even in this case an Adept, who could see the latent will, could also calculate how he would use it.

Students of The Mental Body will recollect that there is there given a description of the Akashic Records, or the Memory of Nature, as it is sometimes called. In reading these Records, the work is done through the causal body, the mental body vibrating only in response to the activity of the causal body. For that reason, no satisfactory or reliable reading of the Records can be done without definite development of the causal body.

C.W. Leadbeater describes an interesting and unusual case where, through, reckless mental overwork, a man so aroused the faculties of his causal body that he was able, spasmodically, to read the Records with great clarity of detail. In addition, he was able to exercise the power of magnification, to some extent, particularly in regard to perfumes. The result, which is characteristic of this faculty, was a roughening of a smell, the smell losing its smoothness, and becoming like woollen cloth, so to say, or a basin of sand. The reason for this is that the faculty of magnification, which belong to the causal body, causes tiny physical particles which arouse in us the sense of smell to become separately appreciable, like the grains on sandpaper, and so the sense of roughness is produced.

Needless to say, this method of arousing the powers of the causal body by overwork is strongly to be deprecated, as it is far more likely to result in breakdown of the brain or nervous system than, as happened in this rare instance, to arouse causal faculties.

If a man raises his consciousness to the highest subdivision of his causal body, and focusses it exclusively in the atomic matter of the mental plane, he has before him three possibilities of moving his consciousness, which correspond to some extent with the three dimensions of space.

Obviously [1] a way is open to him to move it downwards into the second sub-plane of the mental, or upward into the lowest sub-plane of the Buddhic provided of course that he has developed his Buddhic body sufficiently to be able to utilise it as a vehicle.

[2] A second line of movement is the short cut from the atomic subdivision of one plane to the corresponding atomic subdivision of the planes above or below, without touching any of the intermediate sub-planes.

[3] A third possibility is not so much a movement along another line, at right angles to both of these others, but rather a possibility to looking up such a line, the line that joins the ego and the Monad, much as a man at the bottom of a well might look up at a star in the sky above him.

For there is a direct line of communication between the atomic sub-plane of the mental in this lowest cosmic plane and the corresponding atomic mental in the cosmic mental plane. Although we are as yet infinitely far from being able to climb upwards by that line, yet C. W. Leadbeater states that once at least the experience came of being able to look up it for a moment. What is seen, he says, it is hopeless to try to describe, for no human words can give the least idea of it. But at least this much emerges, with a certitude that can never be shaken, that what we have hitherto supposed to be our consciousness, our intellect, is simply not ours at all, but His. Not even a reflection of His, but literally and truly a part of His consciousness, a part of His intellect. Some little help in understanding this, may be derived from the knowledge that the human ego

itself is a manifestation of the Third Outpouring which comes from His First Aspect, the eternal and all-loving Father.

The growth and development of the causal body is greatly assisted by the work of the Masters, for they deal more with egos in their causal bodies than with the lower vehicles of men. They devote themselves to the pouring of spiritual influence upon men, raying out, as the sunlight radiates upon flowers, thereby evoking from them all that is noblest and best in them, and so promoting their growth. Many people are sometimes conscious of helpful influences of this description, but are quite unable to trace them to their source.

Taijasa Awareness Meditation

by Pablo Sender
The Theosophist, June 2010

There is an approach to meditation that encourages the development of a choiceless awareness rather than the use of any process of thought such as analysis, visualization, repetition of mantrams, etc. This awareness meditation was held in high esteem by J. Krishnamurti as well as by different spiritual traditions. We find it, with variations, in several schools of Buddhism—like Vipassana in Theravada, Dzogchen and Mahamudra in Tibetan Buddhism, and Shikantaza in Zen—and in other traditions like Vedanta, Taoism, etc. This practice is frequently considered to be among the more transcendental.

Why is this meditation so highly regarded by different traditions? What happens in our consciousness when we are in a state of awareness? Using the detailed Theosophical teachings regarding human constitution and the processes of consciousness, we will explore these questions and the theosophical approach to awareness meditation.

Our Spiritual Nature and Its Evolution

The highest Principle in human beings, *atman*, is but a ray of the Absolute Reality. This universal Principle is eternal, incorruptible, perfect, and complete. Being absolute and unconditioned, it cannot manifest directly in the conditioned Cosmos. It needs a more differentiated vehicle, *buddhi*, through which the Real is reflected in the worlds of illusion. *Atma-buddhi* constitutes what in Theosophy is called the Monad, that is, the Divine Spark, which immerses in matter and undergoes the process of cosmic evolution. At the beginning of this process, the Divine Monad is unconscious on the lower planes. It evolves through the lower kingdoms of nature, from elementals to animals, pushed forward by physical evolution. As a result of this, the Monad gradually awakens to consciousness. The efforts of physical evolution, however, are not enough to develop self-consciousness.[*] This becomes possible only when the human kingdom is reached and the stage of intellectual evolution starts. At this point, the Monad is connected to the highest product of physical evolution—the animal man—through *manas*, which acts as a bridge between the spiritual and the material.

Manas is described as the Principle of Mind, and is and source of self-consciousness. In its original nature, however, it is beyond what we conceive of as mind. Our mind is only the shadowy reflection of this spiritual Principle, when working through our brain. The same happens with the pure *manasic* self-consciousness, which, according to HPB, is self-consciousness "in the higher spiritual sense."[1] It is not a consciousness of us being body or mind, this or that, but a pure *sense of being*, of *I-am-ness*, which is not identified with or conditioned by any particular characteristic.

By getting in touch with *manas*, the animal man is endowed with mind and self-consciousness. However, since this Principle is too spiritual to fully work through the physical brain, it can only send down a *ray* of itself. This greatly conditions the original quality and expression of *manas*. Now, the spiritual mind is limited to material perceptions, manifesting as the lower, or concrete, mind. And the pure self-consciousness, acting now in association to the body and its senses,

develops the sense of "I am—this particular personality or body, separate from the rest." This causes the birth of the illusory self, the lower ego.

Due to its association with *manas*, at the end of this cycle of evolution the dual Monad (*atma-buddhi*) acquires divine self-consciousness, thus becoming triple (*atma-buddhi-manas*). However, the Divine Spark can only assimilate the spiritual essence of *manas*. It is then necessary to purify our mind and self-consciousness in order to realize our spiritual nature.

Raising the Seat of Self-Consciousness

As a result of the process just described, most of us feel we are the personality, and are unable to recognize ourselves as being the spiritual Monad. How can we become aware of our real Self? Annie Besant explains the following:

The one certainty for each of us, needing no proof, beyond all argument, incapable of being strengthened by any act of the reason, is the sure truth: *I am*. This is the ultimate fact of consciousness, the foundation on which everything else is built. ... If, studying man in his present stage of evolution, we seek to know the seat of this Self-consciousness, we find that in most of us its throne is the lower mind. ... From this life of the lower mind, in which sensations still play so large a part, man rises to the life of the intellect, and the lower mind becomes his instrument, ceasing to be himself. From the life of the intellect he must rise to the life of the Spirit, and know himself as the One. The seat of Self-consciousness is moved from the lower mind to the higher by strenuous thinking, by the intellectual travail of the student, the philosopher, the man of science—if the latter turn his thoughts from objects to principles, from phenomena to laws. And as strenuous thinking can alone lift the seat of Self-consciousness from the mind to the intellect, so can deep concentration and meditation alone raise that seat from the intellect to the Spirit.[2]

The lower mind is the concrete mind; the one that is interested in material objects, and lives in and by sensations. Most people are self-conscious mainly at this level. They are not interested in *Ideas*, in an understanding of life and its purpose. They are interested in more "practical things", that is, in what can bring a palpable physical or psychological result. Besant says that the first stage in this process of raising the seat of our self-consciousness, is to start experiencing this less concrete dimension of life and of our being; to discover that our body and lower mind are not the only reality. This higher dimension is grasped by what she calls the "intellect", that is, the abstract mind. She said that a person begins to be conscious of these subtler aspects by studying universal themes that are not directly related to personal existence, by trying to grasp abstract principles and laws of life. In other words, the person has to adopt a philosophical attitude and become a seeker of truth. Through this effort the mind gets refined and becomes able to gradually perceive the formless world of the Spirit. This is what HPB called *Jnana Yoga* in connection to the study of the *Secret Doctrine*. [3]

Then Besant describes the second stage, which is beyond even "strenuous thinking." As HPB pointed out, gaining spiritual Self-knowledge and becoming conscious of our Divine nature is not possible by reasoning or by any brain process.[4] Here, non-conceptual meditation is needed. We have to resort to that source of wisdom in us which is beyond the intellect and its processes—*buddhi*. This Principle, besides acting as the vehicle of *atman*, is a faculty of unitive, spiritual, perception. However, Theosophical teachings state that if there is no *manasic* element united to *buddhi* this wisdom remains only potential on our plane. In other words: the original nature of our consciousness is full of wisdom, but we are unconscious of it. When there is a

union of wisdom (*buddhi*) and pure self-consciousness (*manas*), this innate wisdom becomes available and there is a transformation in us—we become consciously divine. In HPB's words:

> Manas is Spiritual Self-Consciousness, in itself, and Divine Consciousness when united with Buddhi. [5]

Taijasa Meditation

Let us explore now the Theosophical approach to this non-conceptual type of meditation.

Since all virtues are already present in our spiritual consciousness, we do not need to add or acquire anything. What is needed is to disentangle our pure self-consciousness from its association with the personality, thus becoming self-aware at the spiritual level. In other words, we need to transcend the sense of "I am this name, body, and mind." As we said, this cannot be done through any activity of thought, because thoughts belong to the personality. The problem, however, lies not in the thinking process itself—which is the natural activity of *manas* when working through the brain—but in the identification of our consciousness with the illusory thinker. It is important to realize that, though there is a continuous process of thinking, there is no *thinker* as a real entity at the psychological level. There seems to be one only due to the union of this living thinking process with the pure self-consciousness.[†] In other words, the illusory sense of "I am the thinker" is created when a succession of thoughts arises in our minds and the *manasic* self-consciousness is reflected on them.

There are several meditative practices to become self-aware at the spiritual level, some of which were explained in a previous article ("Who am I?" *The Theosophist*, Aug. 2009). In awareness meditation we accomplish this by watching our mind and its movements. According to HPB, when the individual consciousness is turned inward, there is a conjunction of *buddhi* and *manas*.[6] Here, there is "self-consciousness in its purest form". [7] This conjunction is permanent in the enlightened one who has realized his Divine consciousness, while the aspirant is able to attain it only momentarily. This temporary state of mind in the aspirant is called *taijasa*, "radiant", since *manas* is "illuminated by the radiance of the divine soul [*buddhi*].[8]

J. Krishnamurti explains the steps for this type of meditation as follows:

> First of all, sit very quietly; do not force yourself to sit quietly, but sit or lie down quietly without force of any kind. ... Then watch your thinking. Watch what you are thinking about. ... And when a thought arises, do not condemn it, do not say it is right, it is wrong, it is good, it is bad. ... When you look, when you go into thought very, very deeply, your mind becomes extraordinarily subtle, alive. No part of the mind is asleep. The mind is completely awake.
>
> That is merely the foundation. Then your mind is very quiet. Your whole being becomes very still. Then go through that stillness, deeper, further—that whole process is meditation.[9]

In the *taijasic* state of our mind, we are in contact with our innate wisdom (*buddhi*). This is a clear, radiant awareness, beyond all mental grasping. We cannot produce it in a direct way, by means of the activity of thought. It is only reached by the effortless recognition of one's transcendental identity through discriminating wisdom. "Effortless" here means that we cannot force or produce this perception. All we can do from *below* is to create the right conditions for the *buddhic* perception to appear from *above*. Let us explore these conditions.

The *buddhic* perception is beyond the personal. It can only arise when there is no distortion produced by our personal likes and dislikes. Therefore, we should remain aware of the

movements of our mind with equanimity, without engaging in judgments or reactions to what we perceive. We are pure witnesses. This higher consciousness, however, is also described as being associated with a state of love and bliss. It cannot manifest if there is any sense of condemnation or severity in our witnessing. We watch whatever is in the field of consciousness with a sense of love and integration.

Because this spiritual perception is non-dual, we have to let go of the separation between the observer and the observed, between the thinker and the thinking. As we said, thoughts are not a problem in and of themselves. They are like the waves of the ocean, like passing clouds on the immutable sky. We do not try to stop or manipulate them, because in that very act we are assuming the position of the thinker. Without intervening, we relax all effort, inward and outward, and let the continuous process of thinking work in its own self-directed activity. Dropping the identification with the illusory thinker, we simply stay quietly aware.

This taijasic state is full of wisdom. Wisdom here means that we see things as they really are, without getting entangled in personal reactions or conditionings. Being beyond the psychological process, this state is beyond time, and in its very atmosphere illusion is dissolved. As we read in *Light on the Path*:

> Live neither in the present nor the future, but in the eternal. This giant weed [the lower self] cannot flower there: this blot upon existence is wiped out by the very atmosphere of eternal thought. [10]

The state of *taijasa*, in and of itself, gradually purifies our self-consciousness from its personal elements. We become aware of the impersonal sense of *I-am-ness* and then our consciousness can go beyond, rising "to the life of the Spirit."

References

1- H.P. Blavatsky (HPB), *The Secret Doctrine* II, Stanza III, p. 79.

2- Annie Besant, *The Reality of the Invisible and the Actuality of the Unseen Worlds*.

3- R. Bowen, *Madame Blavatsky on How to Study Theosophy*.

4- HPB, *Collected Writings* (*CW*) VIII, "Self-knowledge", p. 108.

5- HPB, *CW* XII, "The Philosophical Rationale of the Tenet", p. 630.

6- HPB, *CW* XII, "ES Instruction No. II", p. 545.

7- HPB, *CW* VIII, "Modern Idealism, Worse Than Materialism", p. 96-7.

8- HPB, *Key to Theosophy*, Section 9, "On Post-Mortem and Post-Natal Consciousness", fn. 4.

9- J. Krishnamurti, *On Education*, p. 58.

10- M. Collins, *Op. cit.*, Part I, "Rule 4".

Footnotes

[*] In Theosophical literature self-consciousness is used in the philosophical sense, where self-awareness is the more common term used today.

[†] This thinking process (*kama-manas*) which expresses through the lower Principles has an intelligence of its own—the elemental consciousness. Even after the transpersonal Ego leaves behind these lower Principles after death, they can still reproduce the same thinking process when attracted to a medium, and be taken as the real person.

Further Reading – chapter 9

Occultism of Southern India

Esoteric Writings, T. Subba Row, Chapter IX, p. 106-114

SOUTHERN India has always produced the greatest Aryan philosophers. Madhvacarya came from Southern India, and Sankaracarya was born in Malabar; and at the present day there are high adepts and schools of occultism in Southern India. In the adept hierarchy, there are always seven classes of adepts, corresponding to the seven rays of the Logos. Two of these classes of adepts are so mysterious, and their representatives on earth so rare, that they are seldom spoken of. Perhaps one or two adepts of these two mysterious orders appear every two or three thousand years. It is probable that Buddha and Sankaracarya come under this category. But of the other five classes of adepts, representatives are always to be found on earth. All five classes are represented in the Himalayan school. At present, it is unlikely that all five classes are represented in Southern India: though all the adepts of this and every other school must belong to one of these five classes.

It is a doctrine of the Southern India school that, though belonging to one of these five classes, and falling into one of these five rays, all of which are represented in the Himalayan school, adepts in India, for example, need not be correlated to the Tibetan school - need not dovetail, so to speak, into the guruparampara chain of the Himalayan school - and need not therefore owe allegiance to one of the five Chohans, or chiefs, of the five classes of adepts in Tibet.

When a great adept has passed away from incarnated life, his spiritual self may select some suitable person on whom to impress his teachings, who thus becomes his unconscious medium and apostle: this chosen exponent of the adept's wisdom may not recognize the source of his knowledge and power; to recognise their source is almost impossible, since these ideas are instilled into the inmost spirit of the man, the deep, secret place of his nature, from whence arise moral leanings and spiritual ideals. Such apostles have often found that their wisdom left them even in life; when their work was done, the over-shadowing adept often withdrew his inspiration. The over-shadowing by a high adept is what is called a divine incarnation, an avatara.

It is probable that Sankaracarya was such an incarnation. He was already a great adept when he was sixteen years old, at which time he wrote his great philosophical works.

It seems that Gautama Buddha was not such an incarnation as we see in him the actual life-struggle of man striving for perfection, and not the fruition of a great soul who has already reached his goal. But in Sankaracarya we see no such struggle; this is why we say he is a divine incarnation.

The seven rays we have spoken of represent the outflowing energy from the seven centres of force in the Logos; they represent seven forces, so to speak, which must enter into everything in the universe. No object can exist without the presence of each of these seven forces.

A man’s past Karma determines which of the seven, practically speaking, five rays, of occult wisdom he shall take his place in; but it is impossible to say that the fact of belonging to one of these rays indicates the presence in a man of any particular moral or mental quality, such as patience, honesty, or courage, on the one hand, or the poetic or artistic faculty, on the other.

The Southern occult school divides the states of consciousness into three: (1) *jagrat*, or waking consciousness; (2) *svapna*, or dream consciousness, and (3) *susupti*, or the consciousness of dreamless sleep. As this classification stands, however, it is purposely obscure: to make it perfect, it must be understood that each of these three states is further divided into three states. Let us take these in their order beginning with the lowest.

The ***jagrat*** consciousness is divided into three: (1) the *jagrat of jagrat*, which is ordinary waking consciousness; (2) the *svapna of jagrat*, the ordinary dream state; (3) the *susupti of jagrat*, which is dreamless sleep.

Similarly, the ***svapna*** state has three divisions: (1) the *jagrat of svapna*, which is the consciousness of waking clairvoyance; (2) the *svapna of svapna*, or somnambulic [sleep walking] clairvoyance; and (3) the *susupti of svapna*, the consciousness of Kama Loka.

The ***susupti*** state is also divided into three states: (1) the *jagrat of susupti*, the consciousness of Devachan; (2) the *svapna of susupti*, the consciousness in the interval between two planets; and (3) the *susupti of susupti*, the true arupa (formless) consciousness which exists between two planetary rounds.

To make this clear, the following table may be useful:

Jagrat	*jagrat*	waking consciousness
	svapna	dreaming
	susupti	dreamless sleep
Svapna	*jagrat*	waking clairvoyant
	svapna	sleep walking
	susupti	kama-loka
Susupti	*jagrat*	devachan
	svapna	between planets
	susupti	between rounds

Above these nine stages, come the true mystical states of consciousness, to which the adepts have access.

These different states of consciousness mean simply this, that the one observer, the Atma, or self, observes nine classes of objects; the fact that the Atma observes one class of objects is indicated by saying that such and such a state of consciousness is active.

In each of these classes of objects, which are on the different planes, there are five elements, each corresponding to one of the senses. In the view of the occultists of Southern India, it is erroneous to speak of seven senses, two being considered still undeveloped. It is true that there are seven factors in each plane of consciousness; but only five of these are senses, nor, in the view of this school, will there ever be two additional senses analogous to these.

The sixth factor is the mind, which rules and guides the senses, and draws deductions from their impressions when collected and arranged. The seventh factor is the Atma, which is the observer of the generalisation which the mind makes from the impression of the senses. It is the self, the sense of "I," in us, behind which it is impossible to go, either in logic or in observation. The seven factors must be present on every plane: in dreaming, for example, objects corresponding to the senses of sight, touch, taste, smell and hearing, pass before the dreamer: his mind classifies these impressions and he feels the sense of "I," the observer which is subject of these subjects. There is the sense of "I" on each plane, but it is not quite identical, only the kernel, or basic notion of "I" remains unchanged.

Corresponding to the five senses are the five classes of objects on each plane; or, as we may call them, the five qualities of impression, or five elements. These are (1) earth, corresponding to the sense of smell; (2) water, corresponding to the sense of taste; (3) water air, corresponding to the sense of touch; (4) fire, corresponding to the sense of sight; (5) ether, or Akasa, corresponding to the sense of hearing. Each of these has its psychic counterpart; the counterpart of water is electricity; the counterpart of air is perhaps the forces discovered by Keely; while the counterparts of the other two are mystical forces the names of which it is useless to give. When the seven rays we have spoken of proceed from the Logos, they are separate, and subsequently co-mingle in the formation of all beings. When an individual begins his course of evolution, these rays are equally balanced in him, none preponderating more than another. In the course of time the man's actions, his Karma, cause him to come particularly under the influence of one or another of the rays. Up this ray he must make his further progress, till he has succeeded in merging his life in the life of the Logos - the grand fountain-head of light and power.

When this mergence takes place, the man does not suffer loss of individuality; rather he enjoys an almost infinite extension of individuality. Each of the seven classes of Logoi has its own peculiar consciousness, and knows that this is so; that is to say, each Logos recognises its own light; but each Logos also participates in the life of all the other classes of Logoi; that is to say, the peculiar quality of their life is represented in it also; so that an individuality, in merging in a particular Logos, is not cut off from the consciousness of the other Logoi, but shares in, and experiences, their consciousness also.

We have said that the Atma is represented on every plane, and the Logos is related to the Atma on each of the planes. It is however, useless to attempt to understand the relation between the Atma on any plane, and the Logos.

This relation must be known, however, after the last initiation, when man will thoroughly understand his spiritual nature. After the last initiation, the adept thoroughly comprehends the relation of Atma with the Logos, and the method of merging himself in the Logos, by which he obtains immortality: but it is a mistake to suppose that the life of the Logos rises up within the man at the last initiation, or that its light enters into him. He understands his spiritual nature, and sees the way to the Logos; but it may take him several incarnations after the last initiation before he can merge in the Logos.

This philosophy recognises two paths, both having the same end, a glorified immortality. The one is the steady natural path of progress through moral effort, and practice of the virtues. A natural coherent and sure growth of the soul is the result, a position of firm equilibrium is reached and maintained, which cannot be overthrown or shaken by any unexpected assault. It is the normal method followed by the vast mass of humanity, and this is the course Sankaracarya

recommended to all his Sanyasis and successors. The other road is the precipitous path of occultism, through a series of initiations. Only a few specially organised and peculiar natures are fit for this path.

Occult progress, growth along this path, is effected by the adept directing through the chela various occult forces, which enable him to obtain prematurely, so to speak, a knowledge of his spiritual nature: and to obtain powers to which he is not morally entitled by degree of his progress. Under these circumstances it may happen that the chela loses his moral balance, and falls into the dugpa path. From this it must not be concluded that the Southern Indian school of occultism regards adeptship and initiation as a mistake, as a violent and dangerous usurpation of nature's functions.

The adept hierarchy is as strictly a product of nature as a tree is: it has definite and indispensable purpose and function in the development of the human race. This function is to keep open the upward path, through which descend the light and leading without which our race would require to make each step by the wearisome, never-ending method of trial and failure in every direction, until chance showed the right way. In fact the function of the adept hierarchy is to provide religious teachers for the stumbling masses of mankind.

But this path is eminently dangerous to those who do not hold the talisman which ensures safety; this talisman is a perfectly unselfish, self-forgetting, self-annihilating devotion to the religious good of mankind, a self-abnegation, which is not temporal, but must have no end for ever, and the object of which is the religious enlightenment of the human race. Without this talisman, though the progress of the chela may be very rapid for a time, a point will come when his upward advance will be arrested, when real moral worth will tell; and the man who progressed along the slow and steady path may be the first to merge himself in the light of the Logos.

This school recommended as the best path for all, a devotion to virtue, a gradual withdrawal from the grosser material concerns, a withdrawal of the life forces from the outward world and its interests, and the direction of these forces to the inner life of the soul, until the man is able to withdraw himself within himself, so to speak. Then, turning round to direct himself towards the Logos and the spiritual life and away from the material plane, he passes first into the astral life, and then into spiritual life, till at last the Logos is reached, and he attains Nirvana.

It is, therefore, wiser not to seek the path of chelaship; if the man is fit for it, his Karma will lead him to it imperceptibly and infallibly; for the path of occultism seeks the chela and will not fail to find him, when the fit man presents himself.

[the foregoing is a summary of a discussion with Mr. Subba Row at the Adyar Library, held on 1st December 1888. - Ed.]

Some Interesting Aspects on Meditation

I. K. Taimni
This article was edited by the Department of Education, TSA

The word "meditation" stands for a large variety of mental exercises adopted by people who have a spiritual ideal of one kind or another in their lives and want to realize this ideal, at least to some extent. As the mental activity and discipline involved in meditation is of very wide scope, it is not easy to deal here with the subject systematically and comprehensively. Those who read this article are expected to be familiar with the general aspects of meditation. We shall therefore confine ourselves to the discussion of a few interesting aspects of meditation, which are not generally understood, but are of vital interest to those who are serious about the problems of the inner life and do not want to go through their meditation as a mere routine.

It is also not easy to define the purpose of meditation as this depends upon the mental background, temperament, and spiritual evolution of the individual. But it may be indicated, in most general terms, by saying that this purpose is to bring the lower personality in conscious touch with the Higher Self, thus making it increasingly aware of its divine origin, destiny, and nature. All those people who meditate regularly as part of a systematic spiritual discipline must believe that behind the physical world is hidden a real spiritual world of unimaginable splendor, and that it is possible for a human being to come into contact with this inner world in an increasing measure by means of meditation. Otherwise, there would be no point in engaging in this kind of mental activity.

The world of Reality is hidden within the mind of every human being and can be known more and more fully by penetrating progressively into deeper levels of the mind. This is why it is necessary in every true spiritual discipline not only to deal with the mind in various ways but also to go into its deeper levels through meditation.

Ordinary knowledge can be acquired through mental activity which is confined to what may be called the surface of things, to the observation of physical phenomena, the collection of sensory data and, working upon this data, through the mental processes of comparison, reasoning, etc. But knowledge concerning the invisible subtler worlds of a mental nature hidden within the physical world cannot be acquired in this manner. It is necessary to go into the deeper levels of mind and consciousness by means of well-defined techniques, which are part of yogic discipline.

The difference between these two kinds of mental activity can be understood by comparison with the technique of swimming. An individual who has learned to swim on the surface of water can explore everything that is present on the surface. But many worlds of infinite variety lie hidden beneath the surface of the ocean at various depths and in various localities. He can come in contact with these worlds and investigate them only when he learns to dive, to go beneath the surface into the deeper levels of the water. The process of diving is somewhat different from that of ordinary swimming on the surface and involves problems and techniques of a different kind. The difference between ordinary mental activity and meditation is of a similar nature.

Ordinary thinking—even when it is deep and purposeful—involves only movements of the mind on the surface. In rigorous reasoning, which represents perhaps the highest and most difficult

form of this kind of mental activity, the mind moves in a disciplined manner; but still the movement is superficial, if we may say so. It is not movement of increasing depth of the mind. The mind may be engaged in prolonged and concentrated mental activity, but as long as it moves in this manner it can deal with and know only what is related to our external life. All achievements in the realm of the mind, even those of a remarkable nature, are possible through this kind of mental activity. But the subtler and more real worlds hidden within the deeper levels of the mind cannot be explored and known in this manner. This requires a different kind of mental activity, which may be referred to as movement of mind in depth. In this kind of mental activity, the mind also moves but the individual tries at the same time to penetrate progressively into its deeper levels. What movement of the mind in depth means will be fully understood upon studying the *Yoga-Sutras*.

The above idea may provide a clue to the secret of successful meditation and shows us why (in the case of most people) meditation is not able to achieve its real aim, namely, progressive contact with the deeper levels of the mind owing to increasing penetrating power of perception. The movement of mind in depth, which is necessary for successful meditation, requires not only a somewhat different kind of movement but also more effort.

Most us who have learned to use our mind efficiently don't realize that the exercise of the mind in a particular kind of activity becomes almost effortless after a time; in fact, we cannot be really efficient until it becomes effortless. The experienced speaker can go on speaking fluently once he has mastered the technique of choosing and arranging his ideas, while standing and expressing them without a break. The ideas, whether trivial or profound, are already there in the mind of the speaker, perhaps expressed hundreds of times before; it is only a question of picking and choosing among them and then expressing them continuously. The experienced columnist takes up the pen and reels off pages after pages of commentary almost effortlessly. He has only to choose ideas ideas from the flood of printed matter, which is coming out of the press, and express them in a striking manner. Once the technique of marshalling ideas and expressing them effectively has been mastered, the rest is easy.

This, it will be seen, is not unlike learning to swim. Once a person has acquired the simple knack of keeping afloat on the water, swimming becomes merely a matter of physical stamina and certain movements of the body. No particular effort, in the real sense, is then needed for continuing to swim.

Most of our mental activities are of this nature. Our mind moves in accustomed grooves or is exercised almost effortlessly in doing things the technique of which has been mastered to an adequate degree. It has not to be kept concentrated or pushing in one direction by an effort of the will or by the overpowering attraction of an object to be accomplished or known. It is therefore not used for sustained mental effort guided by a definite objective and motivated by a continuous pressure of will or attraction—exactly what is needed for successful meditation.

So, merely sitting down in a certain posture and making the mind bring up a connected series of ideas on a chosen subject is not real meditation, though this is all that most people do. It may be seen that this kind of mental exercise is really like writing an essay without pen and paper or giving a lecture without speaking. Neither can the common practice of allowing the mind to move in accustomed and well-worn grooves created by repetition of religious texts, be considered as meditation in the true sense, though this is what most religious people do when they "meditate" during their daily religious observance. We tend to cast every kind of necessary

activity into a routine so that the mind has not to make much effort and has not to make a choice between alternative courses of action or ideas. This also accounts for the great popularity of rituals in carrying out our religious duties. The idea is to have at least the form of religious life, if not its substance. But anyone can see that stagnation is inevitable under these conditions. There is perhaps no greater obstacle on the path of spiritual unfoldment than the false sense of achievement and security engendered by the habit of routine.

Why is it not possible to produce the required mental state when we sit down to meditate? Mainly because our interest in things on which we want to meditate is not adequately intense and deep. We may imagine that we want to find the reality that we believe is hidden within the deeper layers of our mind and consciousness. But this is only a vague thought motivated by an equally vague wish. There is no clearly defined and dynamic purpose, no intensity of desire in the background of our mind to solve the problems of our inner life and unravel the mysteries of our existence. To have a qualitative idea of this particular kind of mental state we have to recall the tremendous intensity of purpose and concentration that characterized the mind of a scientist such as Edison when he was working on a scientific invention. His mind was so deeply absorbed in the pursuit of his aim that he forgot even to eat and sleep. That is the kind of mental state which is needed for real meditation; when it is present, results appear quickly as pointed out in the *Yoga-Sutras*. (I-21)

This condition is not present because we have not fulfilled certain basic conditions for treading the path of spiritual unfoldment through meditation. We are not really aware of the tremendous illusions and limitations under which we are living our present life; therefore there is no real urge to get out of this condition. The attractions of things down here are too powerful and provide a constant irresistible force for distracting the mind. The mind has not been trained properly to accomplish worthwhile tasks, which we have set before ourselves. The ideal does not attract us with sufficient force. In short, we don't possess the essential qualifications.

It is to provide the right conditions for the successful practice of meditation that all true systems of spiritual culture insist on preliminary training of the mind and character. In the well-known *Sadhana-Chatushthaya*, the fourfold system of Self- culture, it is necessary first to acquire the four basic qualifications for treading the Path. These are called in Sanskrit *Viveka*, *Vairagya*, *Shattsampatti*, and *Mumukshattva*. It is only at a fairly advanced stage of progress that the practice of intensive meditation is taken up to open up the channels between the lower and the higher and establish the center of consciousness on the spiritual planes of manifestation.

In treading the path of Raja Yoga outlined in the *Yoga-Sutras*, the aspirant has first to practice *Bahiranga* or External Yoga to prepare himself for the practice of meditation with its three stages of *Dharana*, *Dhyana*, and *Samadhi*. He is not expected to begin even the practice of *Dharana* until he has mastered the fourth technique of *Pranayama*, as is clear from Sutra II-53.

In every system of Yoga the candidate is expected to possess the basic qualifications for practicing Yoga, even when this is not specifically mentioned. If he does not possess them in an adequate degree he is first made to go through rigorous training for this purpose. It is only in pseudo systems of Yoga that so-called *Gurus* take on pupils and initiate them into the mysteries of "transcendental meditation" or *Samadhi* without even enquiring whether they possess the necessary qualifications or capacity for this purpose. To do so would seriously affect their clientele.

Those of us who cannot meditate successfully should do a little heart-searching and self-introspection. It will be possible then to see for ourselves that the fundamental cause of this failure is probably lack of serious purpose and earnestness.

We start the practice of meditation before we really want those things which are the object of meditation. This is like putting the cart before the horse. We must have real problems before we proceed to solve those problems. The object of meditation is to solve the problems of the inner life by penetrating into the deeper layers of mind and consciousness, where alone the solution of these problems can be found. If these problems do not exist for us, there is no use in sitting down to meditate day after day to solve these problems. Meditation is not an end in itself. It is merely a means to an end.

I am reminded in this connection of the mentality of many students who come to the universities for research. They want to do research, but if you ask them what problems they want to solve, they have no answer. You have to give them a problem to work on. In academic life it is possible to want to do research first and seek for a problem afterwards, because the object of such students is not really research, but training for research, which will enable them to undertake real research afterwards. But for an aspirant, who has to penetrate into the unknown realms of the mind by his own efforts, this is obviously impossible. In his case there will be no incentive and therefore no urge for the mind to leave the realm of the known and go within itself to discover what lies hidden within the deeper layers of consciousness.

It is only when the problems are real, the result of our own deep thought and experience—not problems which we have created artificially or adopted from others—that the intuitive faculty begins to function in meditation and spiritual knowledge, which throws light on these problems, begins to well up naturally from within.

We should not forget that in using the mind in real meditation we are trying to deal with the realities of life, and there should be present not only real problems but a real urge to solve those problems. Intuition can function only in this kind of mental atmosphere of realism. If sincerity and earnestness are not present in an adequate degree, the very basic requirements for gaining intuitive knowledge from within are absent and meditation is bound to be barren and frustrating.

When the problems of the inner life become real for us they not only permeate our whole life but their solution becomes a matter of urgency. Even when the lower mind is engaged in external activities, the higher mind is in the background constantly brooding over these problems and seeking their solution. This constant brooding over a problem is called *Bhavana* in Sanskrit and is a necessary part of real meditation, which brings the intuitive faculty into play. The effect of this constant brooding is further enhanced by *Japa*, in which the potency present in "sound" is utilized to reinforce the effect of thought. In the light of what has been said above, the student will be able to understand the significance of aphorism I-28 in the *Yoga-Sutras*.

It is necessary to note carefully that all knowledge concerning the spiritual realities of life is gained not through the intellectual faculty of reason but through the little known and much suspected spiritual faculty of intuition. True intuition is not a mysterious but unreliable capacity for guessing truth, as is generally supposed by people with an essentially materialistic outlook. It is the faculty of direct perception or awareness of truth, which results when the consciousness of the seeker somehow becomes attuned to the Divine Consciousness. In this Consciousness all realities of existence are present externally in their true form. In the exercise of ordinary intuition during the early stages, the consciousness of the seeker leaps, as it were, over the barriers of the

intellect and can know any reality at least partially by direct perception. In *Samadhi* the same result is brought about in a controlled and scientific manner, and the perception is therefore full and free from defects. The very nature of all spiritual facts of existence is such that they cannot be known by any other method. Those who seek for the ultimate secrets of the universe through telescopes and the ultimate secrets of human life through microscopes can, by the very nature of things, never succeed.

As intuition is the faculty of direct perception without the help of intermediate instruments, it is free from the inevitable distorting influence and error introduced by the vehicles of consciousness. All the imperfection which may be present in its exercise is due to the defective medium of the mind through which it is exercised and the knowledge is interpreted. If this is pure and harmonized, its lack of development does not matter, except when the results of this perception have to be interpreted and formulated in terms of the intellect for communication to others. Many saints who were highly developed spiritually were illiterate. The lack of a trained intellect prevented them from interpreting and conveying satisfactorily the truths of the inner life to others, but it did not affect their perception of these truths.

The effectiveness of the intuitive faculty depends upon its penetrating power. The more penetrating its perception, called *Viveka-khyati* in the *Yoga-Sutras*, the deeper the realities which it can perceive and the more comprehensive its vision. The acme of its penetrating power is reached when it can penetrate through all the complexities and bewildering variety of manifested existence and *perceive* them as derived from and existing in the One Reality. The unfoldment of intuition is thus not a question of putting together or building up something but that of sharpening the power of perception, so that it can cut through the jungle of illusions and obstructions which obscure our spiritual vision. That is why purification, renunciation, and harmonization play a more important part in treading the path of Holiness than acquisition of knowledge.

Since intuition plays such an important part in meditation, it will be worthwhile dwelling for a while on the manner in which intuitive knowledge appears in consciousness during the early stages. Direct perception of the realities of spiritual life in the fullest sense takes place only in *Samadhi*, but the aspirant need not wait for that advanced stage of yogic training in order to gain some qualitative experience of intuitive knowledge. It is possible to have definite experiences of this kind of knowledge, provided the conditions for the functioning of the intuitive faculty are at least present to some extent. In fact, it is not only possible but necessary to have this kind of experience, because it shows us that the channel between our spiritual and intellectual natures has begun to open up and the real purpose of meditation is being fulfilled at least partially.

There is something extraordinarily heartening in having even occasional experiences of this nature, because they assure us that there is an inexhaustible source of spiritual knowledge within us and it is possible for us to draw upon that source by progressive attunement to it. We, of course, believe in all this as a theoretical possibility, but it is quite a different thing to realize that our belief has a basis in fact and that it is possible to put it to practical use. With this definite assurance we turn increasingly inward for everything we need for our spiritual progress, and thus is laid the foundation of the true occult life—centered in our Divinity.

To understand how the intuitive faculty functions in the earlier stages of spiritual progress, it is necessary to have some idea of the difference between spiritual knowledge as it exists on the planes of Spirit and as it appears on the planes of the lower mind. On the higher planes it is

unencumbered by the lower mind and exists in its *Svarupa* or true form. On the lower planes it is clothed in the lower mind and can exist only in its *Rupa*, or in the form of concepts and ideas. Therefore, when spiritual knowledge descends into the realm of the lower mind it must assume a concept or set of ideas as a body, just as the Atma or the Spirit must take up a body when it has to function on the physical plane. Under these conditions the true spiritual knowledge serves as a soul of the intellectual concept present in the lower mind. But there is a tremendous difference between such a concept ensouled and irradiated by spiritual knowledge and a concept formed by the mind as a result of mere intellectual study and devoid of any spiritual insight. The former is living, dynamic, and of great significance to the aspirant. The latter is a mere collection of ideas, divorced from life and incapable of providing any inspiration or satisfaction to the individual.

The above considerations provide an explanation of the manner in which knowledge of a spiritual nature generally wells up from within as a result of the functioning of the intuitive faculty. It seems to come from nowhere, without any warning, and in its first impact on the mind, appears to be a mere void without form or substance. But very quickly it seems to crystallize into a pattern consisting of ideas, which give it a mental form and serve to embody its significance.

In this manner of its expression through the lower mind, one is reminded of a rocket in fireworks, which shoots up into the sky as if from nowhere and then bursts into a shower of colored sparks shining beautifully against the dark background. At one moment it is a mere streak of light in the sky, heralding an exquisite display of light and color, and at another it has transformed itself into a display of scintillating stars in the sky, revealing the splendor which was hidden within its bosom.

It is characteristic of intuitive knowledge which appears in this manner that it should be caught in a mental receptacle immediately, the moment it makes its first impact on the mind. All that is necessary for this is to direct the mind to it with full attention. It then records and gives shape to itself naturally, rapidly, and effortlessly. This effortless and lucid expression reveals its intuitive origin and is a part of its inherent nature. But the expression needs an alert and receptive mind, which is ready and competent to give it a suitable shape and keep itself out of the picture for the time being. The poet must convert it immediately into a beautiful song, the musician into a symphony, the mathematician into a theorem, the philosopher into a concept, the artist into a concrete form. Any delay or lack of attention means almost certainly that the heavenly visitor will turn back and depart and, perhaps, make his visits less frequently.

The mode of influx hinted at above is only one of the ways in which intuitive knowledge may appear within the mind of the aspirant. The ways of the Spirit are mysterious and unpredictable and don’t always conform to a set pattern, nor are all such communications associated with the same degree of intensity or enlightenment. But every time knowledge descends from those high realms, the hallmark of the Spirit is there and the recipient can always recognize it. There can be no confusion or bewilderment when the Spirit communicates, but only enlightenment, though of different degrees depending upon the capacity of the receiver.

Knowledge that appears in this manner should not be confused with experiences of a psychic nature, which take the form of visions and sounds of various kinds and have their origin in the psychic nature of man. Though generally spectacular, these lack the reliability and certainty associated with all manifestations of the Spirit. The fact that they frequently result in excitement and vainglorious ideas about one’s spiritual progress is enough to show their lower origin. All

expressions of the Spirit are associated with an indescribable imperturbability and impersonality and though there is an influx of peace and power there is no excitement of any kind.

Diagram of Meditation
by H. P. Blavatsky

First conceive of UNITY by Expansion in space and infinite in Time.
(Either with or without self-identification).

Then meditate logically and consistently on this in reference to states of consciousness.

Then the normal state of our consciousness must be molded by:

ACQUISITIONS

Perpetual Presence in imagination in all Space and Time.

Continued attempt at attitude of mind to all existing things, which is neither love, hate nor indifference.

The Perception in all embodied beings of Limitation only.

From this originates a substratum of memory which does not cease in dreaming or waking. Its manifestation is courage.

Different in external activity to each, because in each the capacity alters. Mentally the same to all.

Criticism without praise or blame

With memory of universality all dread vanishes during the dangers and trials of life.

Equilibrium and constant calm. Greater ease in practicing the "virtues", which are really the outcome of wisdom, for benevolence, sympathy, justice, etc., arise from the intuitive identification of the individual with others, although unknown to the personality.

Note: Acquisition is complete with the conception "I am all space and time". Beyond that …… (it cannot be said).

DEPRIVATIONS

Constant refusal to think of reality of:

Separations and Meetings Associations with Places, Times and Forms.	The Distinction Friend and Foe	Possessions	Personality	Sensation
Futile longings, Expectations, Sad memories, Broken-heartedness.	Resulting in absence of anger and bias (Replaced by Judgment)	Greed, Selfishness, Ambition	Vanity, Remorse.	Gluttony, Lust, etc.

Note: These deprivations are produced by the perpetual imagination—without self-delusion—of "I am without"; the recognition of their being the source of bondage, ignorance and strife. "Deprivation" is completed by the meditation: I am without attributes".