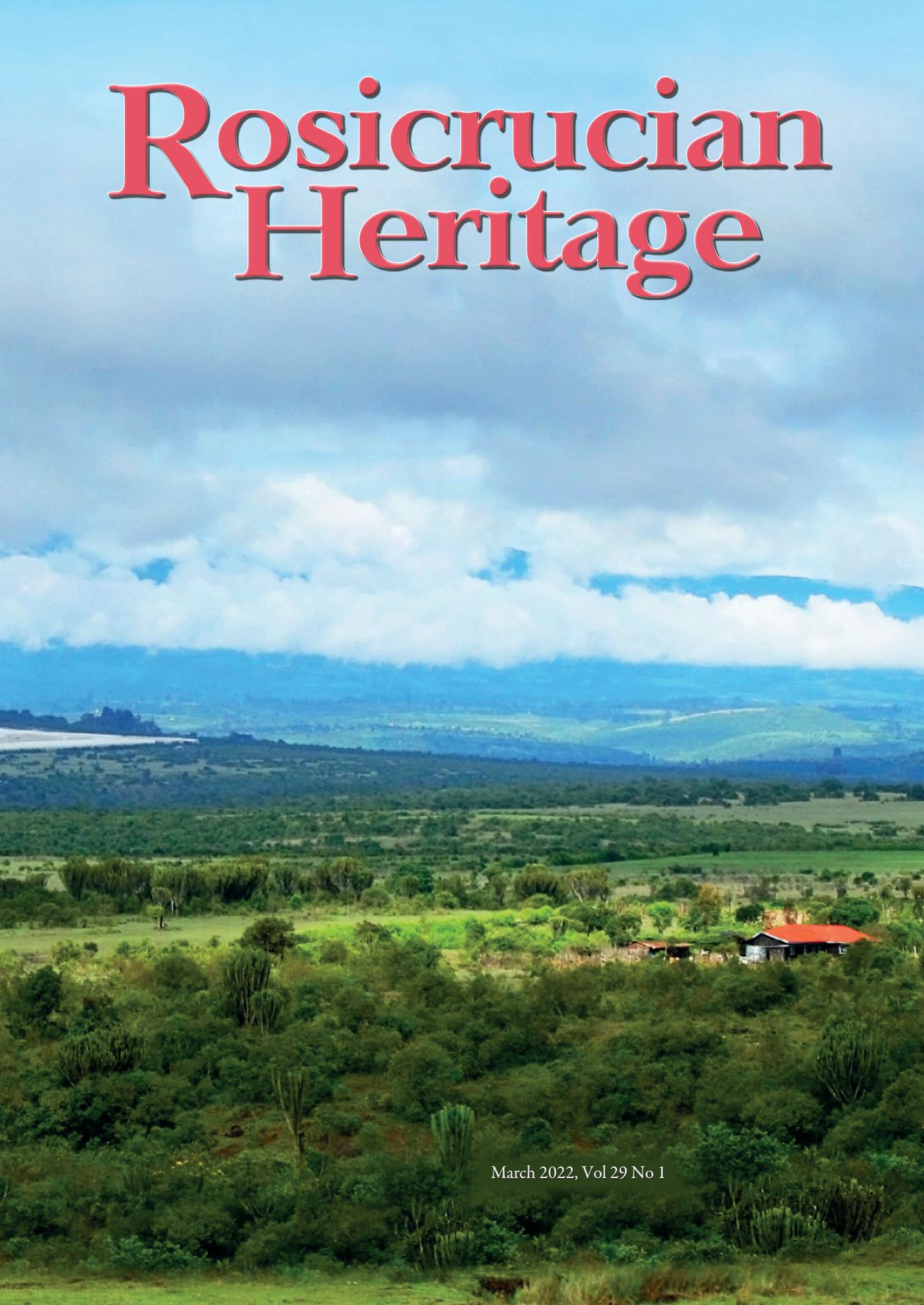


# Rosicrucian Heritage



March 2022, Vol 29 No 1

# Find the Deeper YOU

**Y**ou are much much more than you think, and discovering who you really are and what incredible power you have, is one of the great things you should accomplish in this life. It takes little to understand the privileged state of our existence on earth, and how valuable our limited time is. How many people truly make the effort to treasure this time and use their hidden talents for the good of all on our precious planet?

If you seek a closer connection with all that surrounds you..., if you seek a deeper appreciation of all things on earth..., if happiness, peace and justice for all people is what you seek..., then learn to commune with your deeper self. To find out more about the Rosicrucian Order contact us at...

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March 2022 - Volume 29, No 1

## CONTENTS

- 2 **Communicating: A Mystical Art** by Claudio Mazzucco
- 6 **Sanctum Musings: The Altar of Service** by Kenneth U Idiodi
- 12 **Apophthegms of Francis Bacon** by Ruth Olson
- 14 **Aton and the Cult of Ra-Horakhty** by Louis Caillaud
- 22 **Humility, Dignity, Courage** by Christian Bernard
- 26 **Traits of Spiritually Motivated People** by Stuart Scott
- 29 **Ancient Afghanistan** by Bill Anderson
- 39 **Prayer** by Ella Wheeler Wilcox
- 40 **Aspects of Silence** by Sven Johansson
- 46 **Life and the Journey into Self** by Lynn Hodgkinson

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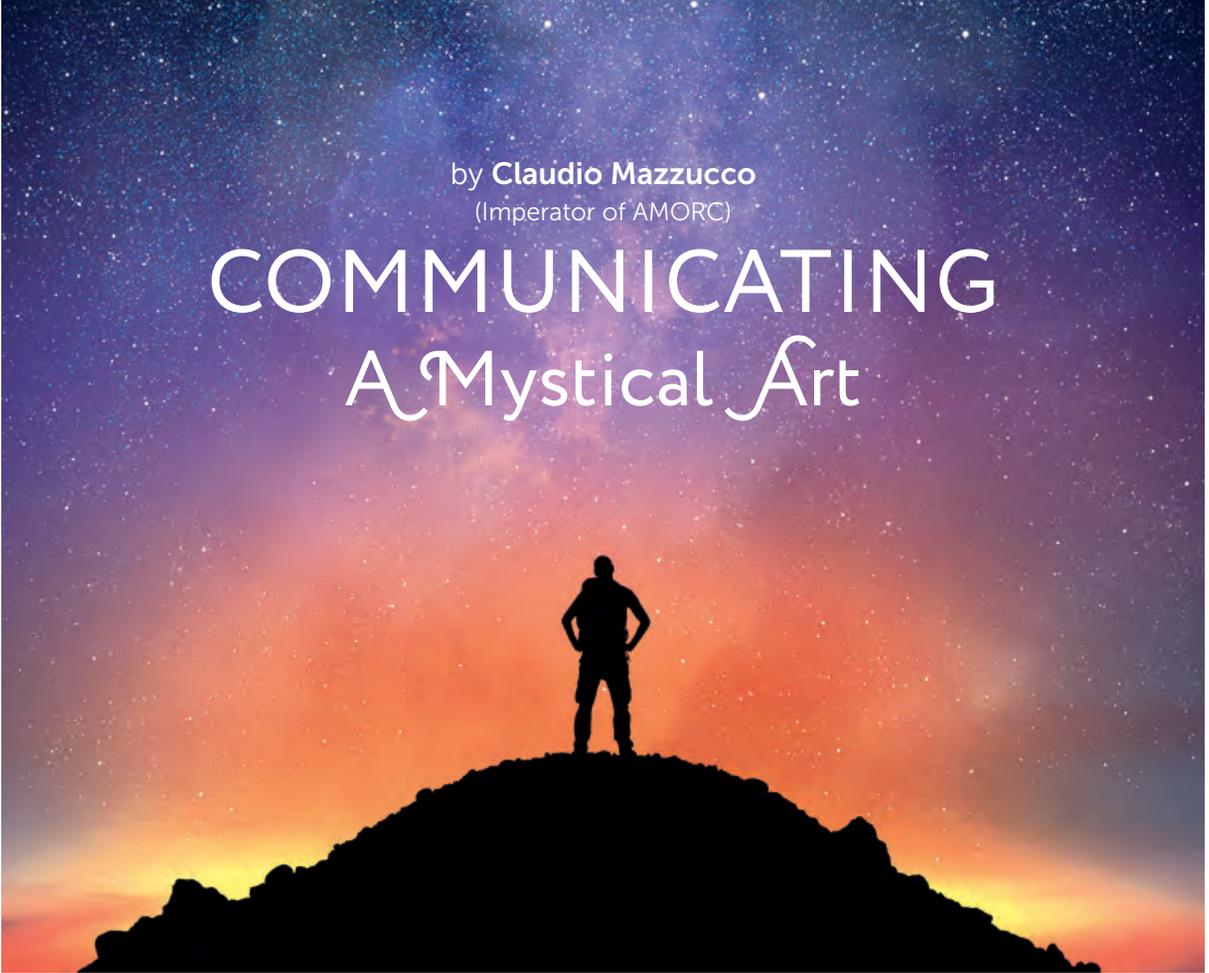
**Cover spread**

**Close to nature  
in Rural Africa**



by **Claudio Mazzucco**  
(Imperator of AMORC)

# COMMUNICATING A Mystical Art



I don't speak English. Chaplin doesn't speak French. However, we communicate without the slightest effort. How can this be? What is this new language of ours? It is a living language, the most alive of all, born of the will to communicate at all costs; the language of mimes, the language of poets, the language of the heart.<sup>1</sup>

-- Jean Cocteau --

I would like to share with you some reflections on the ability of living beings to communicate at different levels: from a written speech to the silence of lovers' glances, from philosophical discourses, to a mother's fingers caressing her newborn. I recently read that even bacteria exchange genetic material by means of a certain type of microbiological communication, and that trees communicate with each other through structures located at their roots, even exchanging nutritive substances.

As far as we Rosicrucians are concerned, we understand very intimately the celebrated French writer's message. We witness it every time we build the conditions for

the Egregore of our Order to manifest itself. One large experience of this kind - large due to the number of members who experienced it - was our World Convention in Rome, in August 2019, at which some 2,400 members from 72 countries took part. Today, as I watch again the Convention's video and images, I vividly recall the atmosphere we breathed, the vibrations we felt, the climate we built, and I am aware that we shaped a small Utopia. Every one of us communicated with gestures of affection, smiles, handshakes, hugs and a large number of mimic gestures. For us Italians that's easy, you know: they say we talk with our hands, that's true indeed.



However, I would like to underline the most important aspect of those four days; namely precisely the harmony we succeeded in building up and the resulting quality of communication. For harmony and communication between beings is not something that descends from heaven as a blessing, but a condition that must be built with commitment, effort, goodwill, energies and time. It also needs care, because building is a complex project, while dismantling takes very little time. Basically, what our Order conveys is precisely this: tools to construct harmony within and around us, instruments of dialogue with ourselves and with others.

It would be useful at this stage to define what we mean by *'harmony'*, but this is a difficult task, perhaps even an impossible one. Let's try this image: Have you ever experienced moments you'd like to be eternal? Moments you wish never ended? So, if we may not define harmony precisely, we could perhaps deduce what it is, what special condition characterises it.

### **Building moments of harmony in order to establish good communication is neither an obvious nor an easy task.**

If we speculate on this aspect, we come to realise that building moments of harmony in order to establish good communication is neither an obvious nor an easy task. In particular, in the times in which we live, relationships are often characterised by the absence of listening, both internal and to the other. For example, political exchanges are characterised more by an attempt to be right, rather than by searching for and safeguarding a truth that defends the wellbeing of a specific population or, better yet, of all humanity. This is not only the case in the realm of politics, but also in interpersonal relationships. Often, while one person is speaking, the other thinks about what he will say as soon as the former pauses to take a breath. There's no listening. But what are the elements that allow for deeper and a more elevated quality of communication? What motivates people to meet and share thoughts, emotions, joys, and at times even pains of life?

Those who are used to trekking on mountain trails will already have noticed that when you meet another walker you greet them, even if they are complete strangers, in fact, often even with a smile or a hand gesture. On the other hand, none of us - or really very few - would dare to greet everyone they meet in the streets of a city centre; if we did this, we would probably be viewed with suspicion and perhaps even shock. Why this difference? What makes us behave so differently in both these situations?

My explanation is that we venture on a mountain trail to experience nature, practise beauty, breathe clean air, live moments of harmony. Therefore, we intimately know that those we find on this very trail are there for the same reason. We are bound by identical objectives, similar resolve. Therefore, to sum up this brief reasoning, we could say that *'having common objectives promotes communication.'* Being aware that someone else is looking for the same things as we do, allows us to establish a relationship that leads to quality communication.

However, sometimes in this world of dualities it occurs that we are often convinced of the need to separate white from black, true from false, just from unjust, reason from non-reason, thus putting us in the



“The universe may not be mindful of us, but it turned the bed down and put a mint on the pillow like it knew we were coming.”

Chris Impey *Cosmologist*

condition of wanting to uphold views that appear to us more true, more rightful than others. We separate and clarify, define and correct, while being at all times convinced that we are right. In the dimension of objectivity, we are not able to perceive a third possibility that harmonises the apparent contrasts of human experience. To achieve this, it is necessary that this experience as a whole be perceived with a different, detached gaze, deprived of the eagerness to be right - this being the true element of discord. We must accept that there is always a greater truth than ours and that of our speaker, and that only by working together will we be able to highlight it. To see this, it is necessary to ascend, just as we ascend as we climb a mountain, thus revealing a new landscape that we had never imagined before.

I've used the word Utopia before. The word derives from Ancient Greek; experts in Greek history and language teach us that this language has the ability to express very articulated, subtle and precise concepts. It allowed the development of western philosophy as it alone was able to express the reasoning at such high levels of sophistication. Now the word utopia comes from *'ou-topos'* meaning *'no-place'*, namely *'a place that does not exist.'* So

Utopia is a place that isn't there. We Rosicrucians know from experience that this specific place, this Promised Land, does not really exist on a map, but has a real existence in the human heart. Every time humans tried to search for this site on a map, the result was devastating. Even today, two peoples are in a constant state of war and oppression since they are both convinced that the real Jerusalem is a city that exists on the map; so they are constantly shifting its boundaries, boundaries that really reside only in our minds, are mental constructions.

**The word utopia comes from 'ou-topos', meaning 'no-place', namely, 'a place that does not exist.'**

Many times we also hear the word Utopia used as a synonym for childish dreams, unattainable fantasies, but this is a gross mistake, since

many of the conditions now achieved by humanity were considered utopias at some point in the past. For instance, during World Wars I and II, there were people in Europe who dreamed of a united and peaceful continent. A peace that would not be a simple armistice (a brief pause between two offensives to regain strength and start fighting again), but a true coexistence based on cooperation, exchange and cultural growth. This condition envisioned by those men and women is being realised today thanks to the commitment of many people. Walking in the direction of our own Utopia,



our Promised Land, is perhaps the fate of every man and woman on our planet? Who knows.

Cosmologist Chris Impey stresses that “The universe may not be mindful of us, but it turned the bed down and put a mint on the pillow like it knew we were coming.”<sup>2</sup> This sentence encompasses all the experience that a “walker” builds up along a path of spiritual knowledge such as that of the Rosicrucian Order AMORC. It is essential that we discover the meaning of life, the meaning of our presence on this planet, the purpose of family that we have, the purpose of work that we have, the conditions in which we live and the people we find along the way, even why we are reading this very article here and now. If we look at each of these situations separately they may not make sense, but if we view them in their entirety and articulation, we may discover that the events of life actually have a profound meaning. They reveal something fundamental to us because they are inextricably linked to our own lives.

Therefore, it is essential to uncover this meaning: the whole universe tells us that things make sense; hence, even the encounters we make in life are not random, far from it. And communication, with the exchange of affection and knowledge that characterises our species, must be fostered at all times. Have you ever noticed that when we see people who expresses high degrees of empathy and compassion, who live in kindness and bestow affection, we usually define them as being ‘very human?’ This is precisely because we humans are characterised by the ability to communicate with affection, empathy, compassion and kindness. This is what it means to be human.

We are all harbingers of a Utopia in our hearts, for it is in the hearts of humans that this Promised Land exists; thus the journey that leads us there is an inner one. It is, in a way, our spiritual heritage. As we undertake this journey, this promenade along our inner path, it soon reveals those who share that same path, so we begin to greet them, because we understand how difficult it can be, the hardship with which each does everything they can to reach their ‘Ideal City’, as Plato called it - the mountain peak of our previous metaphor.

Robert Pogue Harrison, professor of literature at Stanford University, reminds us that for the 4<sup>th</sup> Century BCE philosopher Epicurus: “There is no

greater instance of human pleasure, no higher form of moral happiness, than intelligent, profitable and pleasant conversation between friends who know how to listen, inspire and enlighten.”<sup>3</sup> For us Rosicrucians it is essential to focus on this simple concept of listening and communicating with our heart, for we should never confuse a mystical and initiatic path like ours with a sterile form of intellectualism. We do not want to become erudite in philosophical and mystical thought, people capable of making cultured quotations from alchemical or airtight texts, but possibly unable to feel the Divine inside, in the other through us, in one word: everywhere. On the contrary, we yearn to feel in our hearts the Unity of all creation, the bond that unites us to all living forms of nature. That Reality is not merely of a sum of small realities, but a single Presence permeating the entire Cosmos, of which we are but one of the infinite expressions, since It is infinite.

Back to our metaphor: we must first of all recognise that walking can be tiresome, especially when mountain hiking. The path is more often than not uphill, and requires much effort at each stage. From time to time there are a few flat sections where we recover, sometimes even a few small downhill that make us believe that what is left will be easy; then, on the contrary, we start climbing again. However, we know that the mountains reward us with wonderful landscapes, inebriating aromas of rare flowers, fresh and pure air, animals and insects that we do not see anywhere else, and encounters with people, several people, since in the mountains it is good to walk in company, no one should be alone.

We are driven by the desire to reach the summit, where a wonderful landscape will finally be revealed to us. We don’t know what it looks like because we haven’t seen it before, but we’re sure it’s there, we feel it inside us: it’s our Utopia. It’s what animates us in the world, it’s the harmony we feel in our hearts and the desire to attain it along with others.

We were born for a meeting, let’s get ready for it.

1. Mon Premier Voyage (1936) – Jean Cocteau
2. How it ends: From You to the Universe (2010) - Chris Impey
3. Gardens: An Essay on the Human Condition (2008) - Robert Pogue Harrison





by **Kenneth U Idiadi**

*Grand Administrator Emeritus for English speaking West Africa and Honorary Grand Master of the Rosicrucian Order.*



# The Altar of Service

Keynote address at the English West Africa  
Rosicrucian Convention in Abuja, Nigeria

**T**he themes of our Conventions tell a story if we look at how they vary over the years. The story may be different for each person as they reflect on each theme and relate one theme to the subsequent one following it. For example, seventeen years ago in the year 2008, the theme of the Convention in Abuja was *'Illumination.'* Four years later in 2012 another Convention was held in Abuja with the theme *'Harmonium.'* The Convention after that, which was scheduled for 2016, was rather held in 2017 in Calabar with the theme *'Immortality.'* This year we are holding the Convention once again in Abuja with the theme 'Service.' So, you can form your own story out of the progress of our themes over the years.

With the onset of illumination, the initiate can expect to experience harmonium at all levels with the diligent application of the revealed or received

knowledge. The illumination and harmonium will lead to a keener appreciation of immortality emanating from the series of profound spiritual experiences typical at this level of development. And so, with illumination, harmonium, and immortality attained and appreciated, what next if not service? And so here we are in Abuja 2021 Rosicrucian Convention to focus on Service, on Self Mastery for Service, on Service above Self and hence the title of my address *'The Altar of Service.'*

## An Altar

In religious or spiritual terms, an Altar is a holy table which a Priest uses during service. An Altar is also a table or raised platform in temples, churches, synagogues and shrines where religious ceremonies or sacrifices are carried out. According to definitions and references from most dictionaries, *'A Service is*



*an organisation or system that provides something for the public.* In this regard, some government organisations are called services...for example *The Diplomatic Service, The Immigration Service, The Intelligence Service* and generally traditional state services such as the *Police, Navy, Air Force, and Army.*

The universal answer given by any contesting politician who is asked why he or she is running for the office is *'...to serve the people.'* It would be unthinkable for any other answer to be given, especially during the campaign period. Service to you, the customer, is also expounded by corporate banks in their numerous adverts in the public media offering a wide range of attractive packages. Prompt and courteous service is what you expect when you enter a restaurant, quite apart from the quality of food itself. Therefore, call to service could be employment in any of the armed forces or the taking up of a pastoral vocation. The idea of service can easily be applied to all sectors of society because service is the fundamental building block of society. A *'spirit of service'* therefore pervades a society and the quality of that society is directly related to the quality of the spirit of service contained in the hearts and minds of the individuals in the society.

We live in a world where material wealth has become the main criteria for the status and privileges enjoyed in society. There are, of course, other factors that can improve our status in society such as intelligence, morality, beauty or an impressive talent. However, to the average mind, these qualities add little or no value to the status of a person who is seen to lack material wealth. Because of this, the pursuit of material wealth has risen to near desperate levels in most societies of the world. Everyone wants to be rich. The Forbes magazine is well known for its ranking of the world's billionaires. To be ranked on that list is an official recognition sought after because of the special regard that comes with it. To be named the wealthiest person in the world is to be recognised as the foremost billionaire. To many, it is a crown of glory.

### **The Richest Man in History**

The richest man to have ever lived is said to have been Mansa Musa of West Africa who lived from 1280 to 1337. He was the ruler of the Ancient Mali Empire which spanned over 3200 kilometres. From the Atlantic ocean on the west coast of Africa, it took up an area inland that reached up to part of present-day Niger





including parts of areas now occupied by Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea and Ivory Coast.

During his reign, gold was the global currency for trade and the Mali Empire owned up to half of the total gold supply in the world. All this gold was at the disposal of Mansa Musa. On a famous journey he made to Mecca it was reported that he moved with an entourage of caravans with 60,000 men made up of soldiers, entertainers, merchants, medical personnel, craftsmen and servants, all well-attired with golden brocades and Persian silks. A long line of goats and sheep were in tow and up to a hundred camels carrying containers of gold. It was more or less a whole town in motion. When Mansa Musa passed through Cairo, he gave away so much gold that the value of gold fell drastically in the area and caused a crash in the economy of Egypt and the neighboring nations. The riches of Mansa Musa have been stated as breathtaking and indescribable.

## Pursuit of Wealth

There is a tendency to look up to people who are rich. On the other hand, those who are poor are seen as wretched. It is unfortunate but true that when you are poor, society makes you feel like you are nobody. This attitude has driven a lot of people to seek wealth by

all means possible. We have seen this attitude among some of the persons seeking to become members of AMORC. The reasons they give for wanting to become members is generally to have the power to invoke riches into their lives.

Some of them lose interest when we explain to them that the Order is actually about self-mastery through the study and practical application of universal laws. However, some remain interested and choose to join with the hope that their original request will be granted once they become members. From the moment they are admitted into the Order, they spare no effort in looking for the metaphorical goose that lays the golden egg. In so doing they fail to see the *'real gold'* in the practical Rosicrucian principles for health, happiness and peace contained in their monographs.

One such member approached an officer of the Order to complain about his poor financial condition which had persisted even after a year of membership. In a bid to make a philosophical point to the member, the officer asked him what his choice would be if he had the option of being very rich but unhappy on the one hand, or being very happy but without having a lot of money on the other hand. Without hesitation,

## Is there really any value in wealth that destroys happiness?

the member responded by saying he would rather be rich and unhappy! This kind of answer reveals a deep problem in the mentality of a significant number of persons in every society and poses a serious challenge to general security and happiness.

The glamour surrounding material wealth has become so alluring that many are prepared to forsake decency, principles, honour and even happiness in order to acquire it. Is there really any value in wealth that destroys happiness? Should wealth not rather be contributing to happiness? If we all learn to seek wealth only for its contribution to happiness, and not just for the sake of having it, there would be more happiness in the world.



## Global Wealth Imbalance

According to the Credit Suisse Global Report, the richest 12 % of the world population own about 84% of global wealth. The richest 1% own about 43% of global wealth. The combined wealth of the top ten wealthiest billionaires exceeds that of some of the richest nations on the planet. Incidentally, reports from Oxfam show that during the global coronavirus pandemic, the total wealth of global billionaires rose by 3.9 trillion dollars in just under a year. Over the same period, according to the International Labour Organisation, the total earnings of workers dropped by 3.7 trillion dollars worldwide, thus representing an actual case of the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer.

These dismal statistics cause many to wonder why there is such an unfair imbalance of material wealth in the world. In seeking an answer to this question let us refer to the book *'Self Mastery and Fate with the Cycles of Life'* written by *Fr Harvey Spencer Lewis* the first Imperator of AMORC in the current cycle of its existence.

## The Simple Periods of Human Life

In the cycle of simple periods of human life as described by Fr Lewis, lies a principle that provides an answer, namely, that human life can be divided into simple seven year periods, with each period capturing definite types of progress in human development. The first four 7-year periods, which together cover the period from birth to age 28 are associated with the physical and mental development required to live successfully and responsibly in the physical world.

In the fifth 7-year period, from age 28 to 35, there is great drive and potential for material success and achievement in our chosen career. It is during this age range that individuals often make their greatest impact on the world, with scientists making their greatest discoveries, inventors making world-changing inventions, businessmen and women establishing great companies and artists creating their greatest works.

In the next period, the sixth 7-year period between the age of 35 and 42, a marked shift in direction occurs. There is a loss of interest in personal gain or acquisition and a definite switch to activities that offer service to humanity. To quote Fr Lewis...

*It is truly the culminating period of all the years that have preceded in the life of the average human being, and starts the system of compensation in the average individual's life whereby the individual feels the need to return to the Cosmic and to humankind some of the benefits he or she has enjoyed.*

The remaining periods continue in this trend of the giving of oneself in service as well as a transformation from a physical entity to a spiritual being since in the words of H. Spencer Lewis...

*As man is born to become a living soul, and not merely a soul-animated physical body, so he evolves, period by period, from birth to his 63<sup>rd</sup> year (and beyond), from a physical being to a spiritual being, thereby approaching more closely the inevitable purpose of his existence.*

The relevant point to note in the simple periods of human existence is that the first five periods are marked by growth, development, and acquisition, but from the sixth period onwards, selfless service becomes uppermost, and this is directed towards humanity and the Cosmic. We must understand that the tendencies found in each period are underlying forces that exist and they influence us whether we are aware of them or not. The forces operate with mathematical precision. The first century CE Greek philosopher Plutarch wrote that



Plato once said: “*God geometrises..., continually.*” This alludes to the fact that there is a perfect mathematical structure behind all Creation, and this influences the progress of everything in existence. However, how these laws manifest in our lives depends on our personal levels of evolution and the knowledge we have.

## Working with Cycles

The Rosicrucian teachings introduce us to the fact that all things are vibratory in nature. This means that everything is cyclical in its manifestation. The keen student learns to observe the effects of cycles in Nature. The periodicity of cycles in the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms have been observed and documented in the various sciences.

The Rosicrucian from ancient times learnt how to observe and monitor the cycles that influence the lives of humans. As a cycle progresses, it is marked by different unique characteristics at each phase.

## The Rosicrucian teachings introduce us to the fact that all things are vibratory in nature.

This knowledge of phases and their effects was used as guidance for the most appropriate times to carry out certain activities. And this ensured the successful achievement of most intended goals. It was for this reason that the Rosicrucian from ancient times earned the title of ‘*Master*’ which was principally due to the mastery of life achieved from working with cycles.

## Resolving the Wealth Imbalance

If we work in harmony with the law of cycles, we will clearly observe all the progressive characteristics of each period. However, if we operate against the natural progression of the cycles, because of our ignorance, we will create an imbalance and distortion which will mask its true characteristics.

For example, an individual who enters his or her sixth period between the ages of 35 and 42, and



continues to focus primarily on the acquisition of wealth, while suppressing the urge to offer service to humanity, will begin to create an imbalance in the society. For many people, that age range may appear to be too young to have that kind of service-oriented consciousness. However, if all people in this age range within a society were to align with their natural inner tendency for service, the prevalent societal imbalance in wealth would soon cease to exist.

At a national level, this principle also applies. At a certain stage of growth in a nation, there should be a shift from an exclusive focus on GDP (gross domestic product) to a focus on service to humanity. GDP is the total value of commercial goods produced in a country plus the total value of commercial services offered within its borders. When this is growing, a country is said to be developing. However, a GDP growth does not necessarily translate to an improvement in the quality of life of the citizens in a country. For example, heavy investments into industry that pollute the environment, posing health challenges to the populace, thereby reducing their quality of life, could nevertheless result in an increased GDP.

An increase in the material wealth of the richest 10% of the population could increase overall GDP even when the remaining 90% become more impoverished over the same period. It must be said that the idea of an ever-growing GDP at all costs is



similar to that of an individual focusing on acquiring material wealth throughout life without ever thinking of giving back to society.

The unsustainability of this approach is evident when considered from this perspective. And it becomes clear that a service-oriented mentality at the appropriate stage of individual or national development, is the only hope for reversing the widening gap between rich and poor at the individual, national and global levels.

## The Cosmic Principle of Service

For a nation or an individual to survive, there must be a balance between inflows and outflows just as with breathing. The idea of breathing actually gives us a very good analogy for demonstrating the cosmic principle behind service. Our lives can be looked upon as a series of inhalations and exhalations. The inhalation brings in the vitality we need to survive. The exhalation on the other hand clears out toxins and prepares us for another inhalation. If, as a result of the energy we receive from inhalation, we attempt to continue inhaling without exhaling we would soon find ourselves in distress.

In line with the principle of giving and receiving, service is the complementary action we must carry out for all we have received from the world. And as is often said: *‘To whom much is given much is expected.’* It is true that some seem to receive more than others. However, there is no one who has not received something from others and the Cosmic. It is therefore obligatory that each of us, without exception, offer ourselves back in service to the Cosmic.

After much reflection, contemplation and meditation upon human life, suffering and success, I have come to the conclusion that *service* and indeed *self-mastery for service*, which in the final analysis is service above self, is truly the key to the resolution of many problems, challenges or difficulties that humans experience on Earth.

Fratres and sorores, to be able to function effectively at the higher levels of service, we need to be sincere and committed to helping one another to extricate ourselves from what the Mahatma, Mohandas Ghandi, described as the seven greatest social sins that have bedevilled our common humanity for centuries even up till today. They are:

- Wealth without work.
- Pleasure without conscience.
- Knowledge without character.
- Commerce (Business) without morality (ethics).
- Science without humanity.
- Religion (worship) without sacrifice.
- Politics without principle.

Whenever we reflect upon these axioms deeply, we discover the higher wisdom within our individual selves and are ready for service beyond mundane levels..., indeed at higher levels beyond imagination. In these higher levels of expression, we discover and confirm that the entire universe will always rearrange itself to bring you what you asked for, because you have discovered why you are wherever you are to render one thing..., *Service!*

It does not matter whether we are referring to professional service, humanitarian service (Red Cross) or spiritual service. It does not matter whether the service is being rendered at the level of politics, the economy or social life, Service is service!

As we shall see from various presentations throughout this Convention, Service is ultimately a mandatory expression of life itself, and manifests as the totality of contributions provided by all individuals in the course of their lives. We could easily evaluate our lives in terms of our positive contributions to the general experience of life through our thoughts, words and actions. We can contribute because we have received, for Service is indeed the rent we pay for the space we occupy in God’s Kingdom.

**For a nation or an individual to survive, there must be a balance between inflows and outflows just as with breathing.**





## *Apophthegms of* **Francis Bacon**

by **Ruth Olson**

**D**uring his life, Francis Bacon always enjoyed making terse, witty apophthegms, what we today would call *bon mots*..., although usually more acerbic in tone. An illness gave him the opportunity to dictate from memory those he liked best, and they were published in 1624. Later editions contained deletions and additions, and even later editions had spurious entries which were probably not his.

The following sayings can be found in *Lord Bacon's Works, Volume VII, Literary and Professional Works: edited by Shedd and Heath*. A warning: they seem simple but some are infuriatingly difficult to comprehend. But they all contain hidden truths. Let your mind wander a bit, therefore, and challenge it to grasp what Bacon meant.

- Simonides, when asked by Hiero what he thought of God, asked for seven nights to consider it. At the end of seven nights he asked for a fortnight; then at the end of a fortnight, he asked for a month. When Hiero marvelled at this, Simonides answered that the longer he thought about it, the more difficult he found it.
- Come to the point. Why? I shall not find you there.
- Solon said to Croesus when in ostentation Croesus showed him his gold: *"Sir, if anyone comes that has better iron than you, he will be master of all this gold."*
- The glory of God is to conceal a thing, and the glory of a man is to find out a thing.
- He that resolves in haste repents at leisure.



- Croesus told Cambyses that peace was better than war; because in peace the sons buried their fathers, but in wars the fathers buried their sons.
- In Chancery, the counsels of the parties set forth by plot the boundaries of the land in question. The counsel of one party said, *"We lie on this side, my Lord"*; and the counsel of the other party said, *"We [also] lie on this side."* The Lord Chancellor Hatton stood up and said, *"If you lie on both sides, whom will you have me believe?"*
- Nothing is impossible to a willing heart.
- Solon compared the people to the sea, and orators to the winds: The sea would be calm and quiet if the winds did not trouble it.
- There was a young man in Rome who looked very much like Augustus Caesar. Augustus heard of it, sent for the man, and asked him: *"Was your mother never at Rome?"* The man answered: *"No, sir, but my father was."*
- An orator of Athens said to Demosthenes: *"The Athenians will kill you if they wax mad."* Demosthenes replied: *"And they will kill you, if they be in good sense."*
- After Themistocles had been banished, he came into great favour and was honoured and sumptuously served. In his glory he said to one of his friends: *"If I had not been undone, I had been undone."*
- Bacon was wont to say of an angry man who suppressed his passion *"...that he thought worse than he spoke"*, and of an angry man that would chide, *"...that he spoke worse than he thought."*
- All is not in years, somewhat is in hours well spent.
- Sir Robert Hitcham said he cared not that men laughed at him, for he would laugh at them too. My Lord St Alban answered, that if he did so he would be the merriest man in England.
- Bishop Latimer said in a sermon at court that he had heard the King was poor and many ways were propounded to make him rich. For his part he had thought of one way, which was that they should help the King to some good office, for all his officers were rich.
- Antisthenes, on being asked what learning was most necessary for man's life, answered: *"To unlearn that which is naught."*
- Cato Major would say that wise men learned more from fools, than fools from wise men.
- Better to be envied than pitied.

**"We read that we ought to forgive our enemies; but we do not read that we ought to forgive our friends."**

- When examined about certain scandalous words that had been spoken against the King, someone said: "It is true that I spoke them, and if the wine had not failed I would have said much more."
- Cosimo, Duke of Florence, was wont to say of perfidious friends: *"We read that we ought to forgive our enemies; but we do not read that we ought to forgive our friends."*
- An Epicurean boasted that philosophers of various other sects turned to Epicureanism, but Epicureans never turned to the philosophies of other sects. Whereupon a philosopher of another sect said: *"The reason is plain, for cocks may be made capons, but capons can never be made cocks."*
- When a certain nimble-witted counsellor at the bar who was forward in speech repeatedly interrupted Sir Nicholas Bacon, the latter said: *"There is a great difference between you and me; a pain to me to speak, and a pain to you to hold your tongue."*
- Thales said that life and death were all one. When asked: *"Why do not you die then?"* Thales said again: *"Because they all are one."*
- Use Maketh Mastery.





by Louis Caillaud

# ATON

## and the cult of Ra-Horakhty

One of the pharaohs of the glorious ancient Egyptian 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty ascended the Throne of Horus as Amunhotep IV, whose name means '*Amun is satisfied.*' He is historically best known for having deposed the religion of Amun during his reign and removed the power held by the higher clergy of Thebes, in favour of the cult of an obscure god called the Aton which he portrayed as a sun disk with multiple downward hanging rays ending in human hands which dispensed vital energy. It is not surprising that this young pharaoh, during a regency with his mother Queen Tiye, could be considered as the precursor of a monotheism which already appeared during the reign of his father Amunhotep III '*the Magnificent.*'





*Colossal seated statue of Amunhotep III and his wife Queen Tiye in the Cairo Museum.*



*Karnak temple in Luxor, dedicated to the god Aton.*

## Amunhotep IV — Akhnaton

A particular fact noted in the decrees and proclamations of this young pharaoh was his veneration of the cosmic order of Ma'at, the principle of truth and justice. In his reform he maintained that the rule of Ma'at came into being at the time of the *Zep tepi*, the first time when the god Re appeared on the Benben, the mound that emerged from Nun, the primordial ocean. Amunhotep IV introduced his great religious reform by erecting a temple at Karnak dedicated to the god Aton. He called it the *Gem-pa-Aton*<sup>1</sup>, which translates as *'Aton is found.'*

This action was condemned by the priesthood of Thebes. In the first years of his reign, tension had arisen between him and the powerful clergy of the state god Amun, to the point that he even feared he might be attacked. Perhaps because of this, in the fourth year of his reign he changed his name to *Akhnaton*, namely, *'Soul of Aton.'* At that time, the god Ra-Horakhty was identified with the Aton, one of whose titles was *'Ra-Horakhty who rejoices in the horizon, in his Name as the Light which is in the sun disc.'* You see, Aton was not a new god, s/he had already been venerated as the Old Kingdom as a minor form of the god Horakhty.

During his reign the name of Ra-Horakhty was enclosed in a royal cartouche. Upon his accession to power, Amenhotep IV built a monument dedicated to Ra-Horakhty in the central axis of the temple of Amun in Karnak, it featured his throne name *'Neferkheperure Waenne'* which can be translated as *'Perfect are the manifestations of Ra.'* Historians agree that Akhnaton never completely broke with Re. When he raised, in

Amarna, a temple in honour of Queen Tiye, his mother, he named it *'the Sunshade of Ra.'*

## New Year

Akhnaton ascended the throne during the Sothic cycle which took place in 1353 BCE. It was the first day of the New Year, as Ra-Horakhty approached the summer solstice. This day, called *wepet-renpet*, literally *'the opener of the year'*, announced the advent of the fertilising Nile



*From the tomb of Nefertari, Great Wife of Ramesses II, in the Valley of the Queens is this picture of Ra-Horakhty with the goddess Hathor seated behind him.*





*Statue of Akhnaton in the early Amarna style.*

flood provided by the Nile god Hapi. In his reform, Akhnaton considered the worship of his god Aton as a continuation of the ancient solar cult of Heliopolis. At the Gebel el-Silsila near Aswan we find an inscription where he describes himself as the *‘First Prophet of Ra-Horakhty who rejoices in the-horizon-in-his-name-of-Shu-who-resides-in-the-Aton.’*

We trace the beginnings of the Egyptian calendar to around 2781 BCE to the time of the heliacal rising of Sirius, the brightest star in the constellation of Canis Major, which had been revered in Egypt since the first dynasties under the name of Sepedet. In the famous Zodiac of D ndera, the original of which is found nowadays in the Louvre Museum in Paris, Sepedet was represented by a small dog. This magnificent and beautiful star became invisible for 70 days, then shone again above the horizon, just before the rising of the sun in the east as Re. This astronomical phenomenon preceded the flood of arable land, fertilising them through the silt deposited by the waters of



*19<sup>th</sup> Century engraving of the D ndera Zodiac.*

the Nile, which was expected to reach the 16 cubits, or about 8.40 metres.

The ancient Egyptians believed fervently that the river Nile had its source in a cavern in the *Duat* (Underworld), in the same way that there is a stellar Duat, through which the solar barque of the god Re sailed. There is an inscription about the Sepedet star found on the Mamisi of the temple of D ndera: *‘she [Sepedet] shines in her temple on the day of the New Year, and she merges her light with that of her father Re in the horizon.’* The heliacal rising was considered to be a sacred marriage recreating the order of the world.

It is possible that the emergence of the Aton may have been influenced by astronomical motivations. Akhnaton wanted the birth of the city of the solar disk to coincide with the heliacal rising of Sirius and Ra-Horakhty, *‘Horus of the Two Horizons.’* The clergy of Karnak, celebrated the birth of the New Year at the winter solstice, in this the priests of Amun were in opposition with the cosmic law of Ma’at, who wanted to return the birth of Ra-Horakhty to the summer solstice, in the hottest season called, *Shemu*. Akhnaton was attached to cosmic order through Ma’at.

## Home of the Aton

It was in the eighth year of his reign, in the spring of the year 1348 BCE that Amenhotep IV, accompanied by members of his court, travelled to the site of the future city of Akhet-Aton now known as Tell el-Amarna, in Middle Egypt. He proclaimed to the people that his father Aton had appeared to him and told him: *‘this place will belong to you as the Horizon of the Solar Disk [Aton] forever!’*

It was his vision that drove this young pharaoh to choose this place to build the solar city. On one of the Foundation Stelae placed around the borders of the city reads: *‘It was the Aton who desired this city. See! His Majesty found it and it belongs to no God!’* Thus Akhnaton, became convinced that this place, by its situation, should be dedicated exclusively to his god Aton. He named the city Akhet-Aton, *‘the Horizon of the Aton.’*



After crossing the Nile from the village of Malawi, we can follow a track traced in the ochre expanse of the desert to a vast plain surrounded by hills in the shape of a crescent: it formed a sort of natural amphitheatre. It was in this unusual setting that he built the splendid city of the disc. Today we can only find meagre remains of the Palace and two columns. In its brilliance, the sprawling city was some 12 kilometres long and three wide. A magnificent ceremonial avenue lay parallel to the Nile, between the Palace and the great Temple of the Aton, the Hat Aton.

### It was his vision that drove this young pharaoh to choose this place to build the solar city.

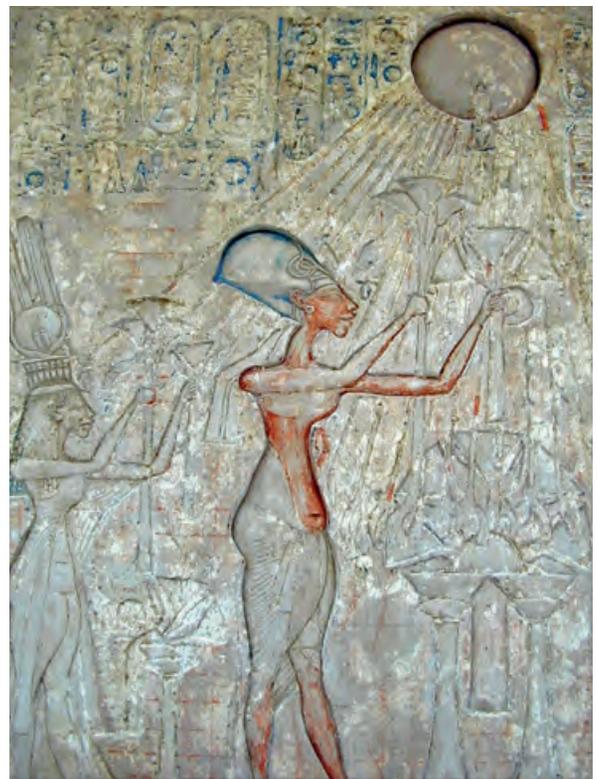
Akhnaton did not establish a new revelatory religion as many believe. He directed his doctrinal thoughts towards the horizons utilising mysticism and a profound poetry. A text was discovered which throws a significant light on his beliefs about the Aton: *I breathe the breath that emanates from your lips [Aton] every day. I breathe your beauty, I wait patiently to hear the sweetness of your voice. Give me your hand, and grant that I may receive your spirit. Pronounce my name eternally, so that it never dies!*

The reign of Akhnaton, which lasted about 18 years, curiously enough saw the return, in this new solar city, of the cult from Heliopolis dedicated to Ra-Horakhty, recalled to life from its last flowering in the Old Kingdom's 4<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. Did Akhnaton intend to stress the union or fusion of the Falcon god of Heliopolis with his god Aton to become Ra-Horakhty-Aton - the Unique? It is assumed that this was a strategy for his project, to counter the power and influence of the priesthood of Amun. But soon after Akhnaton renounced the idea of a fusion of the two gods in favour of one, sole unique god, the Aton, who upholds Ma'at, which made the image of the Falcon God disappear from the Aton religious reformation. Only the image of the solar disk remained, and Akhnaton replaced the term *'offering to Horakhty'* by that of *'offering to the Aton.'*

However, we find that the cult of the Falcon God was not forbidden as the High Priest of Akhet-Aton

bore the title of *'Chief of the Seers of Ra-Horakhty.'* In his epithets, Re retained his place: *"He is the unique one who belongs to Ra."* Thereafter we find that Shu the god of air was introduced into the worship of the sun disk and he was represented in pictures as supporting Nut the goddess of the sky. We find him in one text referred to as *'Ra-Horakhty in his name of Shu, who is the Aton.'*

The likely reason why the image of the god Horakhty disappeared, is that Akhnaton wanted to have one single representation of the Sun god Aton; the solar disk with hands. It was a spectacular turnaround of the concept of the divine, considering that before this time, all the gods and goddesses were represented as humans with human or animal heads. The solar disk with the strange hands holding the ankh, the sign of life, became the enduring symbol that Akhnaton had commissioned in order to elevate his father Aton, to glorify the solar image and therefore he deleted the various icons that were likely to create a schism between the god Horakhty, crowned with the solar disk, and the god Amun, crowned with the double high plumes. This explains the 'unique' character attributed to the Aton.



*Akhnaton and his family worshipping the Aton.*





*A house altar showing Akhnaton, Nefertiti and three of their daughters being showered by the rays of the Aton.*

After the outbreak of such devotion to Ra-Horakhty at the beginning of his reform, why then did he make it disappear? Was it an inclination towards one being who embodied the concept of Ma'at? Alternatively, was it an attempt to establish a compromise between his reform and the religious power of the country, based on the principle that the survival of Upper and Lower Egypt depended entirely on the mechanism of balance between the powers of nature and the heavenly powers, conditions for the annual flooding of the Nile and its variations? Pharaoh, the *'Great Seer'*, due to his earthly power and divine filiation, had to be the guarantor of cosmic order according to the Rule of Ma'at.

Akhnaton believed himself to be an incarnation of his father Aton, a solar Messiah, sent to monotheise the ancient religious systems of Heliopolis and Thebes. Some texts may suggest that it is possible that Akhnaton had the idea of associating a Jubilee with the Sothic cycle to mark the city of Ankh-Aton (Living Aton) as being the seat of the first time, the *Zep tepi*. A link is evident on a talatat, which is inscribed: *'Aton distinguished in his divine Jubilee.'* The Hymn of Akhnaton, with its eloquent, mystical language summarises all the ethics of the Aton cult, begins with this phrase: *'Ra-Horakhty who rejoices in the-horizon-in-his-name-of-Shu-who-*

*resides-in-the-Aton.'* With his transition in 1334 BCE, this mystical Pharaoh flew and joined *'Ra-Horakhty who rejoices in the horizon, in his Name as the Light which is in the sun disc.'*

For decades, excavations at Amarna have helped, both in historical and in religious contexts, to advance our knowledge of the bold reform of Akhnaton. However, despite the discoveries and the amount of archaeological material at our disposal, studies continue to reveal many areas of shadow on this revolutionary period of Egyptian history.

### Valley of the Kings

In the Valley of the Kings, the tombs are designated with two letters KV followed by a number, while the Valley of the Queens tombs are designated with the letters QV followed by a number. Today, where is the tomb and mummy of Akhnaton? We do not know the final resting place of the royal couple. However, there is the famous Tomb KV55 in the Valley of the Kings, which is believed to have been that of Akhnaton, who raises a series of contradictory hypotheses. A map of the Wadi that leads to the Royal Tomb has an inscription that says that *'this King must be buried at Amarna.'*

KV55 was discovered in January 1907 and it is this particular tomb which has triggered the most important



*Skull, believed to be of Akhnaton, recovered from KV55.*



conjecture of all the tombs in the Valley of the Kings. As the tomb was being cleared, among a lot of debris, lay one piece of wood with gold leaf, probably from a small chapel. A wooden coffin bearing an ornate uraeus and containing an unidentified mummy lay in the coffin, nearby in a niche were found four alabaster Canopic jars with female faces. A text on the jars identified them as belonging to Kiya the secondary wife of Akhnaton. The coffin itself had been desecrated and the name of the owner removed, but it was in the Rishi style of the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty.

It is generally accepted that the coffin was originally intended for a female, possibly Akhnaton's wife Kiya, and later reworked to accommodate a male. The mummy was found



*The temple of Hatshepsut, Valley of the Kings.*

## **KV55 was discovered in 1907 and it is this tomb which has triggered the most important conjecture of all the tombs in the Valley of the Kings.**

in very bad condition, reduced to a skeleton with a few fragments of flesh. Boxes with the names of Amunhotep III and Tiye, and terracotta seals with the name of Tutankhamun, in addition to two magical bricks of

Aton, lay near a golden lion-headed wooden funerary bed. Among the funerary equipment, recovered on the mummy, were a necklace and a strip of linen with the name of Akhnaton.

Contradictory views assume that KV55 belonged to Queen Tiye, or even her son who had been reburied. Akhnaton had been brought from Amarna to Thebes in order to remove him from the vengeance of the Amun priesthood. A survey in 1957 examined texts on the coffin and concluded that the owner was Akhnaton. Between 1981 and 1989, a debate reached multiple conclusions. Initially they opted in favour of Tiye, a second thought the coffin was reused for Kiya. But then came the moment when the removed face of the coffin revealed the uraei and cartouches of Akhnaton. In Year Eight of his reign, Horemheb, who had taken power after Tutankhamun's successor Ay, re-opened the tomb<sup>2</sup>. In 2001 a publication re-examined the problem and reached the conclusion that the coffin had been modified to accommodate a mummy with the epithet, Osiris Neferkheprure-Waenre (Akhnaton).

It is now believed that Akhnaton was probably not buried in the family tomb at Amarna. Funerary figurines in his name were found there, but there is nothing to say that the royal mummy was ever deposited there.

Photo by Einsamer Schütze (wikipedia.org)



*Remains of the Amarna North Palace, showing some light restoration and reconstruction.*





*Topographical map of the valley of 'Biban el Malook' ['Biban el-Muluk], in which the tombs of the kings are situated. (1820, by Belzoni)*

However, what is certain is that KV55 is an unfinished and undecorated tomb from the 18<sup>th</sup> Dynasty which remains an enigma.

Recent scientific research of DNA, on a number of mummies, including those of the enigmatic Tomb KV55, reportedly identified Tutankhamun as the son of Akhnaton. KV55 was revealed as the burial place of the reformer and mystic Akhnaton. We do not know who was the mother of Tutankhamun: the secondary wife Kiya, Maia his wet nurse, or one of the sisters of Akhnaton, Henuttaneb or Nebetah. New CT scans of the KV55 mummy also revealed an age-related degeneration in the spine and osteoarthritis in the knees and legs. It appeared that he had died closer to the age of 40. With the age discrepancy thus resolved, we could conclude that the KV55 mummy, the son of Amunhotep III and Tiye and the father of Tutankhamun, is almost certainly Akhnaton.

## Footnotes

1. Horemheb dismantled the Gem-pa-Aton and other Aton

temples and used the 'talatat' blocks as fill in pylons 2, 9 and 10 at Karnak. Ramesses II used additional blocks from the temples as fill in the pylons of the Luxor Temple. The colossi in the Gem-pa-Aton's court were knocked down and left in-situ.

2. The door to KV55 was sealed with Tutankhamun's name. There the mummies remained for about 200 years, until the tomb was rediscovered by workmen excavating the tomb of Ramesses IX nearby. By this time, Akhnaton was reviled as the 'heretic king.' Consequently, Queen Tiye's sarcophagus was hastily removed from his defiling presence, except for its surrounding gilded wooden shrine which would have had to be dismantled for removal. Akhnaton's likeness was chiseled off the shrine's carved relief. Moreover, the gold face mask was ripped from Akhnaton's sarcophagus and his identifying cartouche was removed from its hieroglyphic inscription, thereby consigning its occupant to oblivion.



*Photo by Hans Ollermann (wikipedia.org)*

*The desecrated royal coffin above is believed to have been what originally held the body of Akhnaton until it was found in a subsequent dynasty and desecrated as a deliberate act to erase Akhnaton from the afterlife. - found in Tomb KV55.*





*Valley of the Kings.*



*Sketch map of the East Valley of the Kings.*



*Close-up of an Egyptian alabaster canopic jar thought to depict a likeness of Kiya, from tomb KV55 - on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.*

Photo by Keith Schengili-Roberts (wikipedia.org)



*Valley of the Kings panorama.*

Photo by Nikola Smolenski (wikipedia.org)





# Humility, Dignity & Courage

by **Christian Bernard**  
Imperator Emeritus of AMORC

In this article, I shall deal with three qualities that Rosicrucians should constantly display as they journey “around the triangle”, namely, during the course of their evolution on the noble path of the Rosy Cross. Although there are many qualities to choose from, I have singled out the following three because of their importance: *humility*, *dignity* and *courage*.

As a virtue, humility is often misunderstood. Therefore, it is important that we try to define it clearly and precisely. Humility should not be difficult to acquire by any Rosicrucian who, by carefully studying the teachings that are offered to him, eventually realises how much there really is to learn. No matter what degree we may have reached, we realise that we still have a long way to go, supposing we have completely mastered the stages we have already gone through. It is a question we must solve for ourselves and in relation with ourselves. Humility must be practised in proportion to our advancement on the path that we follow together toward a common goal. We must be vigilant. At no time should we give the



impression that, compared to those in the lower degrees, we have reached a degree of evolution that gives us the right to assume a superior attitude.

As emphasised in the *Rosicrucian Code of Life*, it is essential that we constantly consider ourselves as perpetual students, and never as “evolved” beings, because such is a quality that we cannot attribute to ourselves, but one that can only be discerned by beings more evolved than us. Therefore, our responsibility is important not only toward others and ourselves, but also, and especially, toward our masters of the past; masters who, having reached that degree of evolution themselves, are in a position to evaluate our progress and to grant us the blessing of their satisfaction. Humility, within the framework of our Rosicrucian work. Humility also in our daily life amongst others, whether they be members of our great fraternity or not! Is it really that difficult to measure our utter insignificance in proportion to the magnitude of the Cosmic?

## True Humility

And who are we individually, face to face with ourselves, among all our human brothers and sisters in the world, wherever they may be? Individuality has never transcended multiplicity! For as long as we have been on this physical plane, individuality has never sanctioned superiority over others in any realm whatsoever! We are each just one link in a huge chain, and we must remember that. And we must be aware that we are coexisting with seekers, as well as with those who have not yet been attracted to the *Path of Light* and for whom we assume responsibility; for knowledge is gradually revealed to us and aids us to feel strongly that our constant duty, our daily task, is to try and help others before anything else. As a rule, we do not think enough about all that we owe to our environment and to those who compose it. Without them, what would we be? What would be the justification for our existence, and how could we perform the noblest task that may be assigned to a mystic, namely to serve?

At the very beginning of our affiliation with the Rosicrucian Order, in the early degrees, we are advised to do everything in our power to eliminate our own ego; in other words, the element which separates us from what is external to ourselves. The human ego cannot strengthen the bonds that unite us to others. On the contrary, it divides. It is at the root of our judgements, of

our negative criticisms, of our evaluation of ourselves in relation to others; this evaluation, of course, always being in our favour.

But how can we understand, how can we love, if we are at the mercy of our ego? Also, how can we assume that we are progressing on the path of impersonal knowledge if the result of our work has been merely an exaltation of our objective self? To be humble is to forget ourselves in our relations with others. It is to believe that we are, and shall remain, servants, whatever our work or our responsibilities may be, because we are here to serve others. It is in the process of serving others that we find ourselves and realise our inner nature, because we then allow the divine spark within to vibrate and attune with the divine spark that exists in every living being.

True humility is not feigned; it cannot be satisfied with words; it is dynamic to the point that anyone who comes near us can perceive it, without any mental restriction or other reservation. *Gentle and humble at heart!* This famous injunction constantly reminds us of our duty. But humility is especially a result of our thoughts, of our meditations, and of our study of eternal truths. Humility is an act of love, perhaps the greatest of all, as it enables us to understand others, to be with them, and to be available to comfort, encourage, and help at all times.

## Dignity

Humility has nothing to do with weakness. On the contrary, it is proof of courage, as it requires, at the beginning at least, an inner struggle with our objective self until, having the assurance of the Divine presence within, we feel humble in thought, speech and action. Humility is at the root of many other qualities or virtues, and especially so of the second quality I will now discuss, namely *dignity*.

In no way does having dignity mean that we should adopt a form of behaviour indicating that we feel superior to others in any way whatsoever and expressing disdain toward them. Dignity is respect for oneself *and* for others. It implies mastery over our speech, actions and behaviour. I do not mean by this that an antiquated or literary language should be adopted. Then we would run the risk of falling into the excess of Molière’s *Les Précieuses Ridicules*. However,



every word we utter must be right and correspond to the ethics of our time. In so doing, we are just as respectful of others as we are of ourselves. Assuredly, we can make mistakes in this respect, but realising that they are errors, we are able to correct them and not repeat them in the future.

To have dignity is to stop talking so much, saying far less. It is to avoid judging anyone negatively, even when all necessary details are to hand; for one idea triggers another, and before we know it, we are quickly led to destructive thoughts and words that are harmful not only to others, but to ourselves as well. How can we be at peace with ourselves if we listen to gossip?

To have dignity is to remain calm and silent in every circumstance and situation that could arouse our indignation. Let us remember that we are not perfect ourselves, and that nobody is, as long as we are on this human plane, limited by our objective self and its tendencies and reactions. What others are doing to us, we once did, or will do, for according to law, in our previous incarnations we must have been the victims of such elements of our human behaviour before having mastered them.

If we happen to find ourselves in such a situation that our reaction could be nothing but negative, let us wrap the mystical cloak of wisdom around us more closely and mentally detach ourselves for a few moments so as to regain our strength and not lose our dignity. Finally, let us *watch ourselves* and be careful not to think or act in a way that would be inconsistent with our highest ideals. Let us be worthy of our Order and its teachings, of the training

that we receive; and let us respect all that our tradition has transmitted to us and all that constitutes the Order and its égrégoré in their spiritual and material expression.

I could say much more about dignity, also about humility; but these two qualities must be the subject of our personal thoughts and meditations. It is obvious that if you apply yourself to a personal examination upon these important subjects, you will arrive at greater conclusions and decisions than those I have stated. But now, let us examine the last term of our trilogy, the third quality or virtue that we wish to analyse. Let us try to explain *courage*.

Courage is strength; it is not aggressiveness. We usually confuse courage with audacity in the restrictive sense of the word. Thus we speak of courage in connection with acts of war, with actions undertaken against others, or with the assertion of particular opinions which are nothing more when we stop to think of it than the expression of an inflated ego. Courage means confidence and firmness in relation to oneself. One must be courageous to make a just decision, to take the side of the weak against the strong, to defend high ideals, and, of course, to start upon a difficult path, service to one's fellowmen, for example, to share altruistic ideas and actions; or to start on the arduous path of reintegration and travel the royal road of knowledge as tradition calls it.

### Courageous Compassion

To be courageous is to show day after day, hour after hour, compassion toward creatures and things, and toward everything that exists. It must be the leading characteristic of the mystic and seeker who works on the Path of Light.



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**Let us be humble, have dignity and be courageous.  
In so doing, we will demonstrate fraternal love, show  
compassion, share with others, and never be alone!**

To be courageous is to progress into what we believe to be the *summum bonum*, the supreme good as we understand it, no matter what the obstacles may be. But in this respect courage must be accompanied by the humility and the dignity we have previously spoken of.

I certainly would not say that courage is devoid of danger. The courage I am referring to here is not the courage commonly referred to, which we have previously distinguished from aggressiveness. The danger of courage lies in its excess and the subsequent results. As an example, to have the courage of one's opinions may, if one is not careful, lead to intolerance and even to fanaticism. In this case, courage can only trigger a negative reaction from others, and its noble purpose is not being reached.

When it is well understood, courage implies prudence, even circumspection. In the final analysis though, would we agree with our definition of courage if we were not courageous enough to face the few aforementioned dangers which exist only because of excesses of one quality or another, excesses which always bring about imbalance? Here again, the mystical law of the golden mean must be carefully respected, without it becoming an excuse to support a lack of courage. This

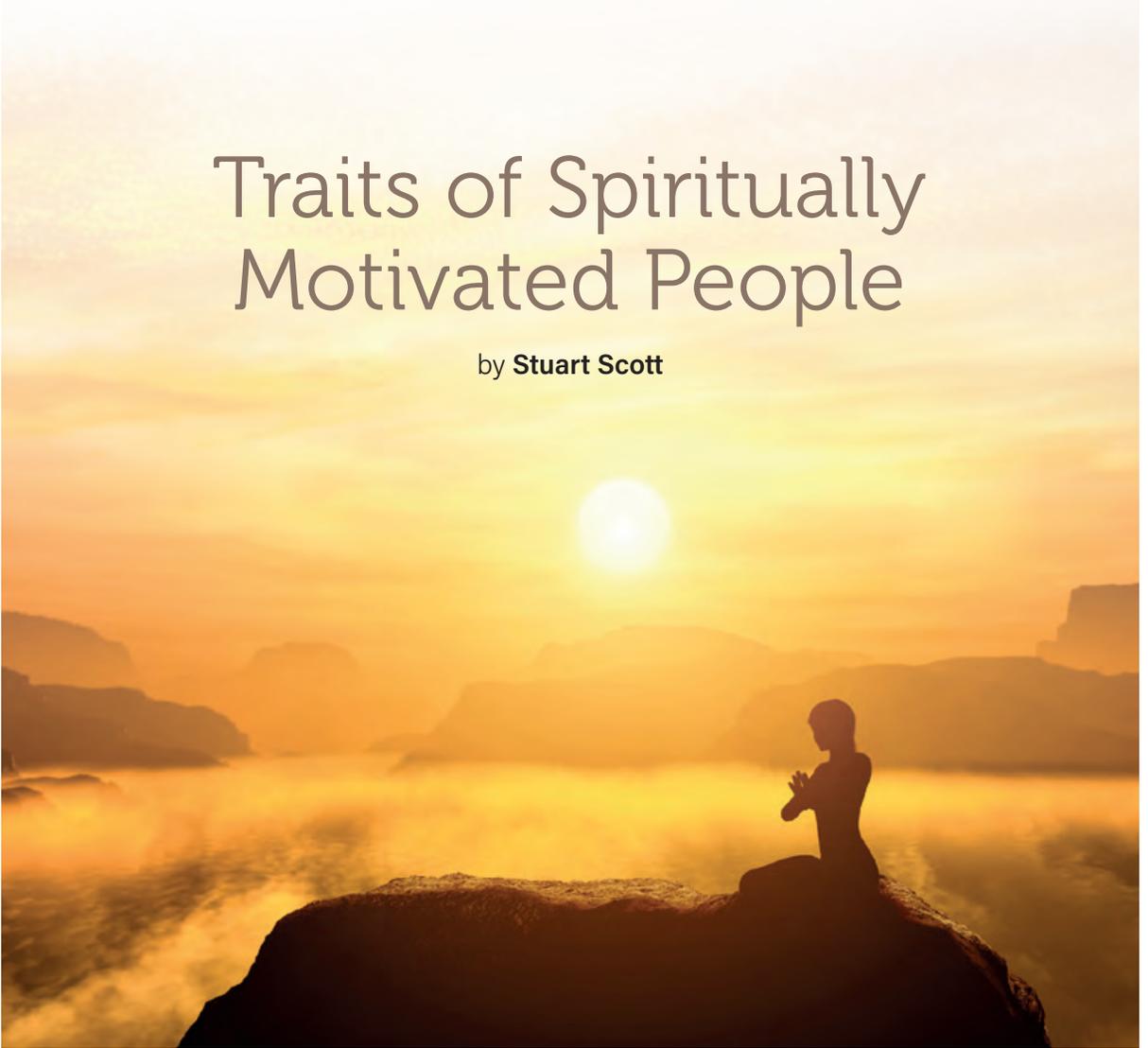
brings to my mind the morality of a little-known fable by La Fontaine, entitled *The Lion and the Hunter*. The fable ends thus: "*The true test of courage lies in our reaction to the danger that we encounter.*"

We should never shirk our responsibilities, and in this respect too, we must show courage. Whatever we do, let us do it well. Let us not defer till tomorrow what we may accomplish today. Let us be *humble*, have *dignity* and be *courageous*. In so doing, we will demonstrate fraternal love, show compassion, share with others, and never be alone! And we will be receptive to the injunctions of our real self. Thus we will accomplish the great work of the mystic, consisting of being an instrument for the masters to accomplish Cosmic will, which is always good and ceaselessly aspires toward the greatest good for the whole of humanity, as long as we are conscious of it and allow it to express itself through us. Let us learn to let go, to not allow ourselves to become overwhelmed by worldly circumstances and conditions. And let us above all, remember that deep within our being stands a silent but vigilant guardian, our spiritual conscience, which is the fundamental element of the divine spark within us.



# Traits of Spiritually Motivated People

by **Stuart Scott**



*“For mystics, what determines the worth of a human being is the willingness to serve others with one’s abilities, regardless of whether those abilities are intellectual or manual in nature. We all have talents and abilities that can contribute to the common good.”*

From ‘*Rosicrucian Reflections*’ by Christian Bernard

## 1. **The Spiritually motivated value other people’s time.**

The interval between the beginning and end of time will for most people be no more than 80 to 90 years. The spiritually motivated know therefore that the time they have to live and learn on this lovely planet is limited, severely so! They

therefore value their time and place the same value on the time that others experience. They know that all people have responsibilities, deadlines and commitments, and all of them are constrained by their allotted times. So, they go out of their way not to waste the times of others, they appreciate whatever time people spend with them, and they thank them for their time as well.



## 2. The Spiritually motivated give credit where it is due.

The Spiritually motivated don't take credit for things they didn't do, and always give credit to those who deserve it. This is not always easy in a competitive world, where the tendency can be to enhance or exaggerate one's contributions in order to improve one's reputation. However, spiritual motivated people are humble about their achievements, and always ready to praise others for the work they have done.

## 3. The Spiritually motivated are unique.

Those who tread a spiritual path become more aware of their inner world, and over time their self-awareness grows. With an enhanced self-awareness they become less entangled with the world and the group-thinking of the masses. They become closer to their authentic selves, and become unique in their thinking and way of being in the world.



## 4. The Spiritually motivated are always honest.

Walking a spiritual path means walking an ethical path. Bringing ethical thinking into everyday life is one of the characteristics of a spiritually motivated person. Honesty is a big part of that, and the person will endeavour to be honest at all times and in all situations. The more we meditate on honesty, the more we realise how difficult it is to be honest all the time. There is always the tendency to modify the truth, or to try to get out of a situation with a little bit of dishonesty. But facing the world with resolute honesty is a worthwhile and fruitful spiritual practice.

## 5. The Spiritually motivated never take advantage of others.

Along with honesty, not taking advantage of others is another key trait of the spiritually motivated; for such people love to build up others, help those in need and get them to where they need to be.

## 6. The Spiritually motivated do not argue over disagreements.

Disagreements and conflict are part of being human, and the way we deal with disagreements can say a lot about who we are inside. The spiritually motivated face disagreements and conflict with calm, respect and equanimity. They will not be drawn into arguments but rather will put their points across clearly and politely. This does not mean that they are push-overs who yield in any conflict. Instead, they are flexible in their approach to conflict resolution and seek solutions that work for the best for all involved.

## 7. The Spiritually motivated try to see the best in others.

Seeing the best in people means seeing them behind their outward appearances. While this can sometimes be hard to do, especially when we are presented with someone who displays unpleasant characteristics, when we look beneath the surface and make an empathic connection, we see a flawed and suffering person not too dissimilar to ourselves. This does not mean excusing the behaviour of others if it is destructive, but rather that we suspend judgement and realise that the outward manifestation stems from an inner suffering that needs compassion, not condemnation.



## 8. The Spiritually motivated know when something is bothering someone.

Following a spiritual path and having a spiritual practice can develop and enhance your intuitive faculties. The spiritually motivated will intuitively know if someone is feeling down and be able to sense another person's moods. Taking an empathic and compassionate stance, they will do what they can to support someone who is struggling.

## 9. The Spiritually motivated believe in other people.

As well as seeing the best in other people, spiritually motivated people will believe you at your word and always give you the benefit of the doubt. This does not mean they are naïve or gullible, but rather that in striving for their own truth, they seek truth in you too. Of course, if your truth is disproven they won't hesitate to respectfully call you on it!

## 10. The Spiritually motivated always apologise first.

Taking responsibility for their actions and admitting their mistakes is another characteristic that defines spiritually motivated people. They will be the first to apologise and will do what they can to make amends. This is both part of the ethical component of following a spiritual path, and an important spiritual practice that aids the diminishing of the ego and the enhancement of self-awareness.

## 11. The Spiritually motivated are humble.

Humility does not mean to lack self-worth or to be unaware of one's importance to others. Rather, it means to acknowledge who you are and your capabilities. Combined with this is a strong sense of self that does not need the ego to be bolstered up by proclaiming strengths and merits. A humble person does not diminish who they are, but never pretends to be more than they are, which in the final analysis is a small temporary being in the immense magnitude of the universe.

## 12. The Spiritually motivated do good when they can.

The spiritually motivated strive to do good in all situations. They examine their actions and place them on a measure

of skilful and unskilful actions. The skilful ones lead to doing good in the world. The unskilful ones do less good or even harm. Unskilful actions need to be viewed with compassion and in context, so you can learn from them and next time ensure that you act in a more skilful manner.

## 13. The Spiritually motivated are always kind to those in need.

Kindness is a characteristic of people with true spirituality. They try to act like a beacon on earth and brighten the lives of other people whenever they can. Giving kindness can go a long way and is always given without the need for recognition or reward. Unconditional kindness spreads kindness throughout the world.

If you are someone who is truly spiritual, thank you for being who you are and thank you for all that you do. You really do make a difference in society; please keep up the good work. You are different from many others, so be proud of yourself. If you are among those who possess true spirituality, be thankful for this achievement.





*The site of the Taliban-destroyed monumental Buddha statues of Bamyan.*

# Ancient Afghanistan

by Bill Anderson

An article in *The Times* of London 20 years ago described a country where warlords roamed the land. In that country, some of them obeyed the bizarre commands of an elusive foreign spiritual leader, while others killed and robbed for their own selfish ends. They seldom took prisoners, while those who survived were forced into slavery. Women were treated as chattels and not allowed out on their own, unless closely chaperoned and veiled. Men applied literal interpretations to the taboos and laws of a supposedly sacred though evidently savage text about what they should eat and wear and every other aspect of their lives.

It was a land of no arts, no letters, no refinement, no society, where innocent people lived in continual fear and

danger of violent death. In Thomas Hobbes' words, human life was "*solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short*" and their language was coarse by the standards of what had come before it. But by now, I'm sure you know that the article was about *Dark Age Britain*.

The article went on to relate how *Dari* (Persian) and *Pashtu*, the official languages of Afghanistan, are far older than English and have almost as long a history as Greek, a language stemming from Proto-Indo European, just as Dari and Pashtu are. The article ended by stating that, during the Dark Age of Britain, Afghan scholars and poets were speaking those two sophisticated languages when our illiterate ancestors were grunting with their pigs.





*Afghanistan, Bamyan province, Band-e Amir, Band-e Panir lake.*

My work brings me into daily contact with people from all over the world. It was in this way that I first met some people from Afghanistan, who had come to the UK in search of refuge. I will be the first to admit that my knowledge of Afghanistan was a bit hazy, though I knew it was a very beautiful country, with mountains, deserts and plains. I had heard of the statues of the Buddha at *Bamyan* and the turquoise lakes of *Band-e Amir*.

Unfortunately, the recent TV pictures from Afghanistan have made us all the more aware of the troubles afflicting it and other parts of the world with similar ills. The pictures we see on television give little hint of the glories of the past and of the importance of this country to the cultural and mystical life of the world. This article then is an attempt to redress the balance from the perspective of *‘deep’*, as opposed to *‘recent’* history.

Apart from the capital Kābul, the other main towns are *Kandahār* in the south, *Jelālābād* in the east, *Herāt* in the west and *Mazār-e Sharif* in the north, with the *Hindu Kush* mountains in the centre and northeast. *Nuristān*, *‘the Land of Light’*, northeast of Kābul is an unusual region of the country, set in a striking mountain region near the Indian border. It has forests where the Greek god Dionysus features in local legends. Here the people are said to be descended from the ancient Greeks and still look very European with their green eyes.

*“I will never forget your beautiful gardens. When I remember the summits of your beautiful mountains, I forget the greatness of the Delhi throne.”* Ahmad Shāh Durrāni (1747-1773), founder of the Afghan Empire, is considered by many Afghan historians to be the true founder of modern Afghanistan.

## Dawn of History

History places the first people in Afghanistan about 30,000 years ago. By the Bronze Age, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> millennia BCE, part of the great Indo-European family, the Indo-Iranians, entered the region and split into three branches. One continued south into India, one turned west and became the Medes and Persians, while the third group, the Eastern Iranian-speaking peoples, stayed in Central Asia and called their land *Aryana*. Their language was and still is distantly related to our own.

This region is mentioned in the *Avesta*, where it is described as a beautiful country full of warlike and brave people. The inhabitants of Afghanistan traded with the



*The statues of the Buddha at Bamyan. Images from ‘The Illustrated London News’, 1886. The statues were destroyed in 2001.*





*Lapis lazuli.*

Indus Valley civilisation, as well as with Mesopotamia and Egypt. Their main export was lapis lazuli. With its unique intense blue colour, lapis lazuli can be seen in the funerary mask of Tutankhamun, for example, and for over 6,000 years it has been exported from the mines in *Badakhshān* province in the north of Afghanistan. Apart from Sumer and Egypt, it was, in later times, traded throughout the East and into Europe. Although nowadays also mined in Siberia and Chile, the best is still produced in Afghanistan.

### Legacy of Zoroaster

The prophet Zoroaster, the founder of the Persian Zoroastrian religion, one of the great religions of the world, lived and preached in Afghanistan. In the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE, the Persians, who had been converted to Zoroastrianism, conquered Afghanistan, dividing it into five satrapies. The satrapy of *Bactria* had been a powerful kingdom before the Persians, under Cyrus the Great, conquered it. It was so important during the Achaemenid period that it was always governed by a member of the royal family. And it was the Bactrian satrap *Bessus* who murdered the last Persian King of

Kings, Darius III, in 331 BCE. Bessus was pursued by Alexander the Great into what is today, modern Afghanistan; and he proceeded to subdue, through fire and sword, all who dared cross his path.



*Alexander the Great.*

### Afghanistan and the Greek Colonies

Another great culture and philosophy came to Afghanistan when Alexander the Great conquered the Persian Empire and became the first western tourist. On his way he founded many Greek colonies, fortified cities, fortresses and towns on earlier native cities; most of them he called *Alexandria*: *Alexandria Areion*, the modern *Hérāt*; *Alexandria Prophisasia*, the modern *Farāh*; *Alexandria Arachoton*, the modern *Qandahār*. He also visited *Bactra*, the ancient city of *Balkh*, where he married his wife Roxane before continuing to *Zaranj*, *Ghazni*, *Kābul* and *Jelālābād* near the entrance to the Khyber Pass. He attempted to Hellenise the whole country. After his death in 323 BCE, Alexander's empire was divided between his generals: Egypt went to the Ptolemies, and Afghanistan became part of the Greek Seleucid Empire ruled from Babylon.

In about 304 BCE, most of present-day Afghanistan was ceded to the *Maurya* dynasty that ruled northern India. *Ashoka*, its most famous monarch, was famously converted to Buddhism. In 250 BCE, the Greek satraps of Bactria, rulers of the north of Afghanistan, conquered Kābul and the east as far as the Punjab. Their capital was at *Bactra* (or *Balkh*), and thus began the Greco-Bactrian period, when the Afghans were ruled by kings with names like *Diodotos*, *Euthydemus* and *Demetrios*. The ruling class was descended from the colonists settled by Alexander the Great, as well as subsequent settlers from other parts of the Greek world.



*Farvabar on the Zoroastrian temple.*





Map of the Greco-Bactrian at its maximum extent, circa 180 BCE.

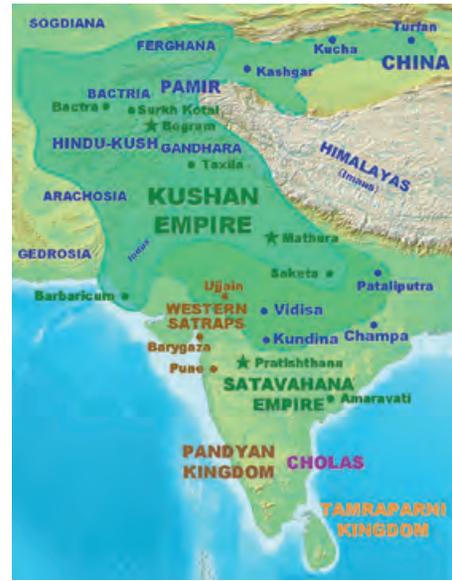
Among the greatest kings of this period were *Eucratides I Megasthenes (the Great)* and *Menander I Soter (the Saviour)*. Afghanistan was infused by the material and spiritual culture of Hellenism. Plato and the Greek philosophers were being discussed far from their original home. It is still possible to visit the ruins of a typical ancient Greek city now called *Ay Khanum*, near Balkh. If it was not for the magnificent coins they left behind, and their subtle influence upon ancient India, they would have disappeared into oblivion.

*Demetrius I*, one of their greatest kings, rebuilt *Taxila*, the future capital of *Gandhara* and the *Kushans*, which had been destroyed by *Ashoka*, and tried to make his kingdom a union of Greeks, Bactrians and Indians. He even went so far as to mint bilingual Greek-Sanskrit coins. He expanded deeper into India and welcomed Buddhists into his kingdom. *Taxila*, his capital, became a centre of Buddhism for centuries to come, and the resulting merger of Hellenism and Buddhism gave rise to the distinctive and beautiful Gandharan school of art and architecture, which was the first to portray the Buddha in human form. *Menander I Soter*, the son-in-law of *Demetrius I*, seems to have undergone



*Demetrius I* portrayed on a tetradrachm coin.

some sort of religious enlightenment similar to Ashoka's. In an ancient Indian Buddhist text, the *Milinda-panho*, *Milinda (Menander)* is said to have been converted to Buddhism. This seems unlikely, however, though he may have come to hold certain Buddhist sentiments, and his coins do contain both Greek and Buddhist imagery.



Kushan territories (full line) and maximum extent of Kushan control under Kanishka the Great.

## The Gandharan Experience

Around 135 BCE, five Central Asian nomadic tribes, known as the *Yuezhi* to the Chinese, conquered the Greco-Bactrian kingdom and founded what has become known as the *Kushan Empire*. It was a multi-lingual and multi-racial empire every bit as powerful as its contemporaries in Rome, Persia and China, but today it is largely anonymous. Its most famous ruler was king *Kanishka* (78-144 CE), the great patron of Mahayana



Gold coin of Kanishka I with a representation of the Buddha.





*An illustration in a manuscript of the Astasahasrikā Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra from Nālandā, depicting the bodhisattva Maitreya, an important figure in Mahāyāna.*

Pakistan.

He was said to have been a Zoroastrian before he became a Buddhist, of which he was a great patron, spending his resources on helping to spread Buddhism in the new form known as *Mahayana*, a more humanistic form than the simpler *Hinayana*. Here devotees would look towards an evolving cosmology of Bodhisattvas. Central to this new cosmology was the Buddha, who originally was a revered human being but ultimately, in Mahayana, became a saviour and a god.

It was during Kanishka's reign that Buddha emerged as a god for the first time. As a patron of Buddhism, he is noted for having convoked the fourth and final great Buddhist council in Kashmir that marked the beginnings of Mahayana Buddhism. At the council, authorised commentaries of the Buddhist canon were made. Huge shrines and monastic complexes were built near every major town. He was a tolerant king who honoured Zoroastrian, Greek and Indian deities as well as the Buddha. During his reign, there was a significant increase of trade with the Roman Empire. The Kushans were also great patrons of the arts and literature. Kushan merchants became immensely rich, and much of their wealth was spent on art to adorn Buddhist shrines and monasteries.

In the 1970s, golden treasures were found in Kushan graves and taken to the museum in Kābul. Unfortunately, during the civil war of the early 1990s, like so many other treasures, they disappeared. It was during Kushan times that the two great Buddha statues were built at Bamyan, though sadly, in 2001, these statues were blown up on the orders of the Taliban authorities. Buddhist pilgrims came from

Buddhism. His empire stretched from *Bukhara* in Uzbekistan through northern India to *Patna* on the Ganges and through Central Asia into part of present-day *Xinjiang* province in western China, with his capital at modern day Peshawar in

China and Khotan to visit the holy places of Afghanistan. Under Kanishka, a new form of art was produced, known as Gandharan, and the age of the imperial Kushans is considered one of the most creative periods in Asian history.

*If you would become a pilgrim on the path of love, the first condition is that you become as humble as dust and ashes. — Ansāri of Herāt*

Gandhara lay in the northwest of present-day Pakistan and eastern Afghanistan. Its style of art developed between the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE and the 7<sup>th</sup> century CE. This region had long been a crossroads of cultural influences. The Gandhara School which came into being here drew upon the anthropomorphic traditions of Greece and Rome, incorporating in its interpretations of Buddhist legends many motifs from Roman art, such as vine-scrolls, cherubs bearing garlands, tritons and centaurs. We have to remember that there were still Greek traditions from their colony-cities. These represented the Buddha with a youthful Apollo-like face, dressed in garments resembling togas.



*Greco-Buddhist statue of a standing Buddha, Gandhara. -- 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE --*

The sculptures were originally painted and gilded. Their craftsmen made a lasting contribution to Buddhist art where beautiful images of Buddha were developed in a Greco-Roman style, with graceful bodies and curly hair, reminiscent of Hellenistic sculpture, but also with Indian influences. Iconographic features of the Buddha, such as the monastic robe and *usnisha* on his head, the *uma* or third eye and the halo made their appearance at this time. Much of their vanished architecture, with its accompanying sculpture and painting, was intended to produce a distinctive atmosphere of mystery and transcendent





## MYSTIC OF AFGHANISTAN

*As long as you are busy with your own self,  
You will not be admitted to the way to God.*

*Once you are free of your own self,  
You will not be deprived of his regard.*

— *Abdullāh Ansāri of Herāt* —

The mystic, Khwāja (Master) Abdullāh Ansāri of Herāt 1006-1089, was one of the greatest Sufi mystics of Afghanistan. He was a poet, philosopher and mystic whose poems are an intimate dialogue between the soul and God. He wrote poetry and books in Dari-Persian and Arabic. They include titles such as *The Hundred Grounds*, *The Stations of the Wayfarers* and *The Intimate Invocations*. His fame was so great that he was honoured by the Caliph himself in distant Baghdad. Ansāri's burial place in Herāt is still a place of pilgrimage to this day.

opulence. Many scholars such as *Ashvaghosha*, a great poet and master of music who wrote a biography of the Buddha, adorned Kanishka's court. Also at the court was *Charaka*, a great physician who wrote a book on Ayurvedic medicine.

A major branch of the Silk Road passed through Afghanistan, passing luxury goods and ideas between Rome, India and China. The ancient city of Balkh was at the crossroads of this route. Indian pilgrims travelling the Silk Road introduced Buddhism to China via Afghanistan. At the Kushan summer capital at *Bagram*, now a huge airbase to the north of Kābul, excavations found painted glass from Alexandria; bronzes, porphyries and alabasters from Rome; ivories from India and lacquers from China. Buddhist Gandharan art provided the basis for the Buddhist art of China, Korea and Japan. The world's largest figures of the Buddha, 175 and 120 feet tall, were carved into the mountainside at Bamyān in the central mountains during the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries CE and stood until destroyed by the Tālibān in 2001.

In 241 CE, Afghanistan was conquered once again by the Persian Sassanid dynasty who, like their forebears, were Zoroastrians. Again, the satrapy was considered so important that members of the royal family were sent as governors. In the meantime, Hindu kingdoms were established at Kābul and Ghazni in the east.

O Lord, other men are afraid of thee  
But I, I am afraid of myself.  
From thee flows good alone,  
From me flows evil.  
Others fear what the morrow may bring;  
I am afraid of what happened yesterday.  
— Ansāri of Herāt

### The Changing Face of Spirituality

Islamic armies defeated the Sassanid Persians in 642 CE and then passed on to Afghanistan. By the mid-7<sup>th</sup> century, the Kushan Empire was in decline and had split into 27 feuding principalities collectively known as Tokharistan. Although Muslims conquered the land and it became part of the great eastern region known as Khorāsān, they found it difficult to hold on to, as the

Afghan cities often rose in revolt. Buddhism, which had such a strong hold on the country, subsequently influenced mystical sects and Islamic scholars in Afghanistan. For a long time after the advent of Islam, cities such as Balkh, Kandahar and Kābul itself still had large Buddhist populations. Local Muslim dynasties



*A 19<sup>th</sup> century artwork showing Ghazni's citadel and two minarets.*





# MYSTIC OF AFGHANISTAN

*From the un-manifest I came and pitched my tent in the forest of material existence, where I passed through mineral and vegetable kingdoms. Then my mental equipment carried me into the animal kingdom.*

*Having reached there I crossed beyond it. Then in the crystal clear shell of the human heart, I nursed the drop of self in a Pearl. And in association with good men, I wandered around the Prayer House.*

*And having experienced that, I crossed beyond it, and took the road that leads to Him. And I became a slave at His gate. Then the duality disappeared and I became absorbed in Him.*

— Hakim Jāmi of Herāt —

Hakim Jāmi of Herāt (1414-92) was from childhood considered a genius, and he knew it. This made the clergy and literati of his time uncomfortable. His writings and teachings made him so famous that many rulers sent him invitations to their courts. He was born in Herāt and, as a Sufi, cited as teachers in Sufi transmission such westerners as Plato, Hippocrates, Pythagoras and Hermes Trismegistus. The extract on the left is from his poem *Unity*.

became the norm, but early on they had rejected the rule of the Caliphs in far-away Baghdad.

Afghanistan entered a Golden Age, firstly under the Persian Sāmānid dynasty that ruled from Bukhara, then under the rule of one of the most brilliant generals of the Islamic world, Sultan Mahmud Ghaznawi (Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni), who ruled from 998-1030 CE. His huge Ghaznavid Empire's capital was at Ghazni, 100 miles south of Kābul. Arab historians likened the city to paradise, and it is still regarded as one of the two principal cultural centres, together with Herāt.

From here he conquered Afghanistan, Kashmir, the Punjab, Gujarat, and most of Iran. He looted Indian cities of their enormous wealth, which he used to turn Ghazni into one of the great centres of Islamic culture. It remained a splendid city for over 200 years, rivalling Baghdad itself. He patronised scholars, founded colleges, laid out gardens and built mosques, palaces and caravanserais. For all his destructiveness, he financed a court of a sophistication that is surprising in one whose father had been a pagan Turkish nomad. He set up a university and, it is said, employed 1,000 scholars and 400 poets, rewarding them with *'elephant-loads'* of gold.

Mahmud's example was followed by his nobles and courtiers, soon transforming the city into the most brilliant cultural centre in Central Asia. The famous medieval Persian poet Ferdowsi (935-1020) completed his epic *Shāhnāme* (Book of Kings) at Mahmud's court. This book is twice as long as the *Iliad* and is still regarded by Persians as their national epic. Also taken captive and brought to the court was the astronomer, historian, poet, geographer and walking encyclopaedia al-Biruni (973-1048), the friend of Avicenna. He knew the Earth was round 500 years before Columbus did and estimated the radius of the Earth correct to within 12 miles.

Then the greatest misfortune of the medieval world descended on Afghanistan. The Mongol armies of Genghis Khan swept through the country. They destroyed not only the towns but also the underground irrigation channels called *qanats*, upon which the prosperity of the country depended. After Genghis Khan's death in 1227, his empire collapsed and Afghanistan was divided into several small principalities. At the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, *Timur* (known as *Tamburlane* in the West), whom many considered worse than Genghis Khan, conquered the country. But his successors, the Timurids, were great patrons of learning and the arts and enriched their capital city of Herāt.



Ferdowsi

Image (Ferdowsi), adapted from: Wikimedia / Tasnim News Agency





*Timurid conqueror Bābur at Ghazni.*

Under their rule, from 1404-1507, the country enjoyed peace and prosperity. Herāt blossomed and became the political and cultural centre of the sub-continent.

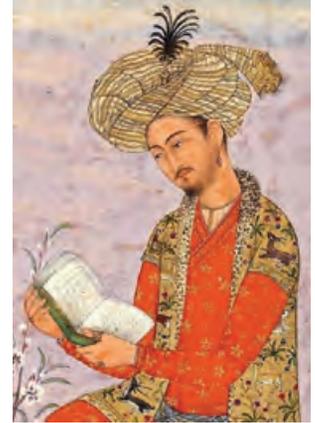
In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Turkish-speaking Uzbeks invaded Afghanistan, and the city of Herāt became the real centre of Timurid culture, where they could indulge their love of painting, poetry, architecture and gardens. Bābur (1483-1530), the great, great grandfather of Shah Jahān who built the Taj Mahal, was a descendant of Timur on his father's side and Genghis Khan on his mother's. He lost his own kingdom in Ferghana and Samarkand, and as the kingdom of Kābul became 'vacant' he moved there, and this city remained his base for the rest of his life. Kābul stands on a plain surrounded by rocky ridges, and here Bābur found pleasant gardens, well-watered by springs and canals. It was an international world in one city. You could hear as many as 12 languages on its streets and it was an important trading post on the routes from



*Genghis Khan*

India to Persia, Iraq and Turkey in the west.

From his capital at Kābul, he marched into India and became the founder of the magnificent Mughal Empire. He preferred his connection to the highly cultured courts of Timur and his successors. Bābur had a considerable talent for poetry, which he wrote in Turkish. His court at Kābul was outmatched only by the Timurid court at Herāt, which reached its peak of achievement at this time and which was the home of Bihzād, the incomparable painter of miniatures. During his reign Bābur was presented with the famous Koh-e Nur 'Mountain of Light' diamond that is now to be found on the crown of the late Queen Mother, amongst the British crown jewels in the Tower of London.



*Bābur*

He would have been horrified if he had known that the dynasty he founded in India would become known by a Persian term for *Mongol*, a name synonymous, even in his time, with barbarity. He cherished loyalty and excellence in any activity, but disliked excess, meanness, vanity, rudeness and narrowness of learning. His remarkable autobiography, the *Bāburnama*, still exists. After Bābur's death, his body was taken back to Kābul, the city he loved, for burial in a mausoleum in the famous Bāgh-e Bābur Shāh gardens, overlooking the city.

For the next 200 years Afghanistan was parcelled between the Persians and the Mughals. In 1747, at the very first *Loya Jirga*, when the various tribes united, they chose Ahmad Shāh Durrāni as the first Afghan king. He was the founder of the last great Afghan Empire. The most famous modern Afghan philosopher was Jamāluddin Afghāni from Asadabad. This famous intellectual and political activist was born in 1839. During his lifetime he travelled to Iran, Iraq, India, Egypt, Turkey, Russia, France and Britain. He died in 1897 in Istanbul, where the Sultan had received him. He dwelt on the positive role that religion has played



in the moral and spiritual progress of humankind. The Durrāni dynasty lasted until 1973. For most of this time Afghanistan found itself at the centre of the Great Game between the British and Russian Empires.

## Balkh

If there is one special place that exemplifies Afghanistan, it must be the ancient city of Balkh. Although now only a small provincial town, it has a glorious past. As the most ancient city of Afghanistan, it is known as the *mādar-e shahrhā* (mother of cities). Lying 20 kilometres northwest of Mazār-e Sharif, the reputed burial place of Ali, the fourth Caliph, who is regarded as the founder of Shi'ite Islam, Balkh was also the birthplace of Zoroastrianism, the place where Zoroaster first started to preach. And it was here, too, that he died.

In this ancient city there was originally a great shrine to Anāhitā, the water goddess, with her crown of stars, who was accepted into the Zoroastrian universe and was equated with the Roman goddess Venus. Her temple was a place of pilgrimage, attracting thousands of devotees at a time. Once considered the most important city in Central Asia, its resplendence and fame were held in high esteem, its riches always attracting the attention of numerous conquerors. At one time it stood on the banks of the great river Oxus (the modern Amu Darya), but now the river has retreated several miles to the north. In ancient times it was a well-watered land famous for its gold, rubies and lapis lazuli. Alexander the Great chose it as his base in Bactria and married Roxane there. The Greek satraps of Bactria (the Greco-Bactrians) became independent as the Seleucid Empire weakened and they made Balkh their capital. Under the Kushans, when Buddhism was practised throughout Afghanistan, many holy Buddhist temples graced the city.

Zoroaster was not the only great mystic to have lived here. The city was also home to *Rābi'a Balkhi* (Rabia of Balkh), a beautiful princess who lived at the court of the Sāmānids. She was Afghanistan's earliest and first female Sufi mystic poet, and very talented she was. Her poems are about nature, love and beauty. In a story similar to that of *Romeo and Juliet*, it is said that after the murder of the man she loved, she committed suicide and, as the story goes, wrote her final poem in her own blood as she lay dying. Balkh was the home of the famous Persian noble Barmakid family,



## MYSTIC OF AFGHANISTAN

*Love becomes perfect only when it transcends itself,  
becoming One with its object, producing Unity of Being.*

— Hakim Sanāi of Ghazni —

Hakim Sanāi of Ghazni, (died 1131) another Sufi master, whom Rumi acknowledged as an inspiring author, was one of the most significant poets in the history of Islamic mysticism. He was one of the three great mystical mathnawi writers in Persian, the others being Attār and Rumi (Mevlana). Sanāi was the earliest Afghan teacher to use the love motif in Sufism. He wrote *“The Walled Garden of Truth”* and *“The Parliament of Birds”* which is an allegory of the human quest for higher enlightenment.

*“Knowledge is good, it leads towards God. A learned person is considered God's chosen one; yet over-intellectualism is bad. To acquire knowledge for the sake of dignity and power is a waste of time and labour.”*



*Depiction of Zoroaster in an alchemy manuscript published in Germany in the late 17<sup>th</sup> / early 18<sup>th</sup> century.*





*Rumi gathers Sufi mystics.*

hereditary custodians of the magnificent Nobahār (New Monastery, the famous Buddhist shrine there), which was a position of great prestige. Pilgrims flocked to this temple from the Iranian lands and beyond. During the early Islamic period, the Barmakids became Muslims and joined the Abbasid revolution against the Umayyad Caliphs in Damascus.

Later descendants of the family symbolised the opulence and culture of the Golden Age of Baghdad, and its members play a colourful role in the stories of the *Arabian Nights*. They were renowned for their fairness and generosity, and science and literature flourished under their policy of honouring, praising and rewarding scholars, writers and poets. The father of the Persian philosopher Avicenna came from Balkh before moving to Bukhara. Balkh was also the birthplace of Maulana Jalāluddīn Balkhī (1207-1273), better known as Rumi or Mevlana, the great mystic who later fled to Turkey before the advancing Mongol hordes. He wrote...

*The intellectual quest though fine as pearl or coral, is not the spiritual search. That spiritual search is on another level. Spiritual wine is a different substance.*

In 1220, the Mongols devastated Balkh, though later,

under the Timurids, it flourished again. After that it fell into gradual decline, and today it has been eclipsed by the nearby provincial capital of Mazār-e Sharif. Somehow, the story of this city is a perfect illustration of the country's history and impact on the world.

## AFGHANISTAN Enchantment of the World

At his inauguration as Interim President in Kābul on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2001, Hamid Karzai spoke the following words:

*In this critical time, when our country is watching our actions, let us come together and be brothers and sisters. Let us be good to each other and be compassionate and share our grief. Let us forget the sad past.*

He was of course referring to the recent past of his country, and then times changed. Education and culture flourished again in that ancient country. But once again the Tālibān have returned to power and the country is again in a precarious position. But Afghans are survivors they will re-build, as they have done so often in their past. Time is not linear, it is cyclical, and I hope their time of greatness will one day return.

They are a people inaccurately portrayed as savage,

**"Let us be good to each other and be compassionate and share our grief. Let us forget the sad past."**

religious zealots. Instead, I have seen members of the Afghan diaspora as a people of prototypical human dignity. In their adversity, they remain stoic, restrained and dignified. They are friendly and hospitable, their hospitality is legendary, and they would do anything for a guest. If they are poor, they will still give you the best they have. They remind me so much of the Scots in that regard. Both are highland peoples and they are distantly related to each other.

These, our distant cousins who have fled to our

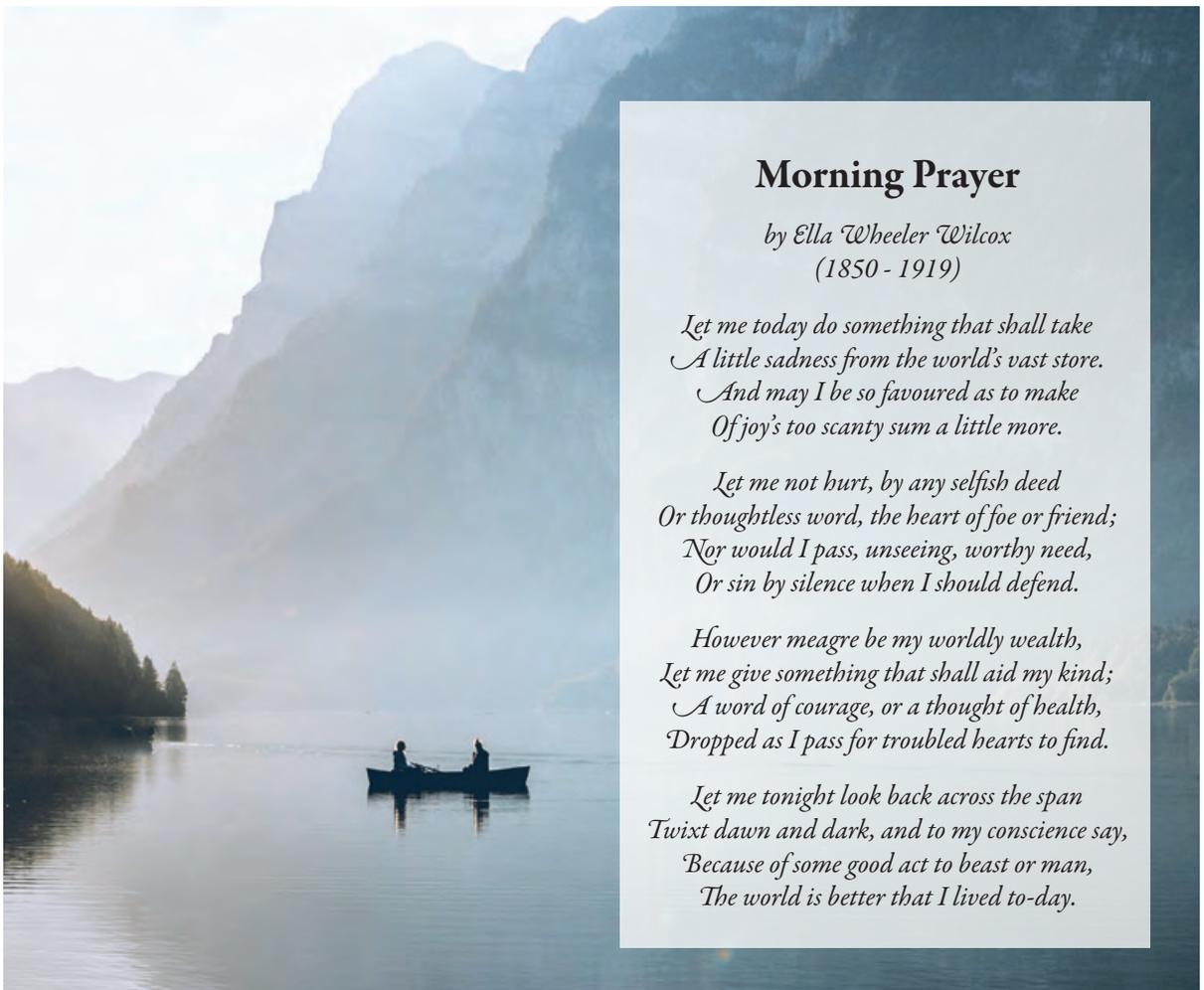


shores, have so much to offer their new homes, and we are fortunate to have them among us. Religion is an intimate part of their life, not just something to do on a Sunday or a Friday. And in this we can see the ideals of the Rosicrucian. They are proud of their country, having never been colonised by any European power, and have a profound attachment to freedom. Respect is very important to them, as can be seen when they shake your hand with both of theirs and place their right hand over their heart.

If there is one thing we are taught, it is not to judge by appearances. In the past, seekers of wisdom turned to Afghanistan which has been a natural crossroads for as long as history itself. And they turned to the councils of its Sufi mystics. Afghanistan was several times the spiritual heartland of Asia, the nexus of converging streams of mystical knowledge: Zoroastrian, Greek, Hindu, Buddhist and Islamic. As

the circle turns again, who knows what the future may hold for this beautiful though brutalised country?

I walked to the edge of the plateau and looked down over the plain that stretched from its base, across an expanse of mud-coloured land sweltering beneath bands of summer haze. The light, too, had been purified by the height. Just then, the sun breached the east and the light poured like a liquid flame over the slope. I watched it creep up the hillside on my right and saw the grey rock turn to purple and the plain beyond it transformed from the colour of dust to gold, and the air was suddenly fragrant with the energy of the new day, as if the earth itself were drawing a life-giving breath. I had never known a sunrise quite so beautiful. [From 'An Unexpected Light - Travels in Afghanistan' by Jason Elliot.]



## Morning Prayer

by Ella Wheeler Wilcox  
(1850 - 1919)

*Let me today do something that shall take  
A little sadness from the world's vast store.  
And may I be so favoured as to make  
Of joy's too scanty sum a little more.*

*Let me not hurt, by any selfish deed  
Or thoughtless word, the heart of foe or friend;  
Nor would I pass, unseeing, worthy need,  
Or sin by silence when I should defend.*

*However meagre be my worldly wealth,  
Let me give something that shall aid my kind;  
A word of courage, or a thought of health,  
Dropped as I pass for troubled hearts to find.*

*Let me tonight look back across the span  
Twixt dawn and dark, and to my conscience say,  
Because of some good act to beast or man,  
The world is better that I lived to-day.*

# Aspects of Silence

by **Sven Johansson**  
Grand Master of AMORC



**T**he word *'silence'* has probably more subtleties and meanings than most of us are aware of. Of course we all know a few of the nuances of meaning of this and other related words, but usually we think of just one of them: *'no sound.'* Silence comes from the Latin root *silere* meaning to be silent, quiet, noiseless, not speaking, being verbally inactive, vocally at rest, ceasing to speak, sing, etc. And from *silere* we get, via Old French, our familiar English word *silence*, though sadly devoid of most of the subtlety of meaning it originally possessed.

The concept of silence, and of course the word *silere*, far predates the language of the Romans, and can be traced to a word in ancient Phoenician where it meant not only quietness, but also things like stillness, tranquillity, serenity, peace, being content, reconciled and more, indeed much more than merely refraining from making sounds. From that ancient Northwest Semitic word it is believed a similar sounding word found its way into Aramaic, Hebrew and eventually Arabic, and is today known as *Shalom* in Hebrew and *Salaam* in Arabic, meaning *'peace'* or more specifically, the blessing: *'peace be upon you.'*



Over the millennia, the original word has altered in pronunciation from language to language, and small nuances of meaning have been added and taken away from it. By the time the word entered the English language, its meaning had already long ago changed from its original intended form to what we commonly attribute to it today, namely, the absence of sound. In the following article, I will discuss three types of silence and end off with a fourth type, seldom used, but more than the other three can be perceived as silence in its ancient, original meaning of quietness, stillness, tranquillity, serenity, peace and even the very threshold of the Abyss of Eternity.

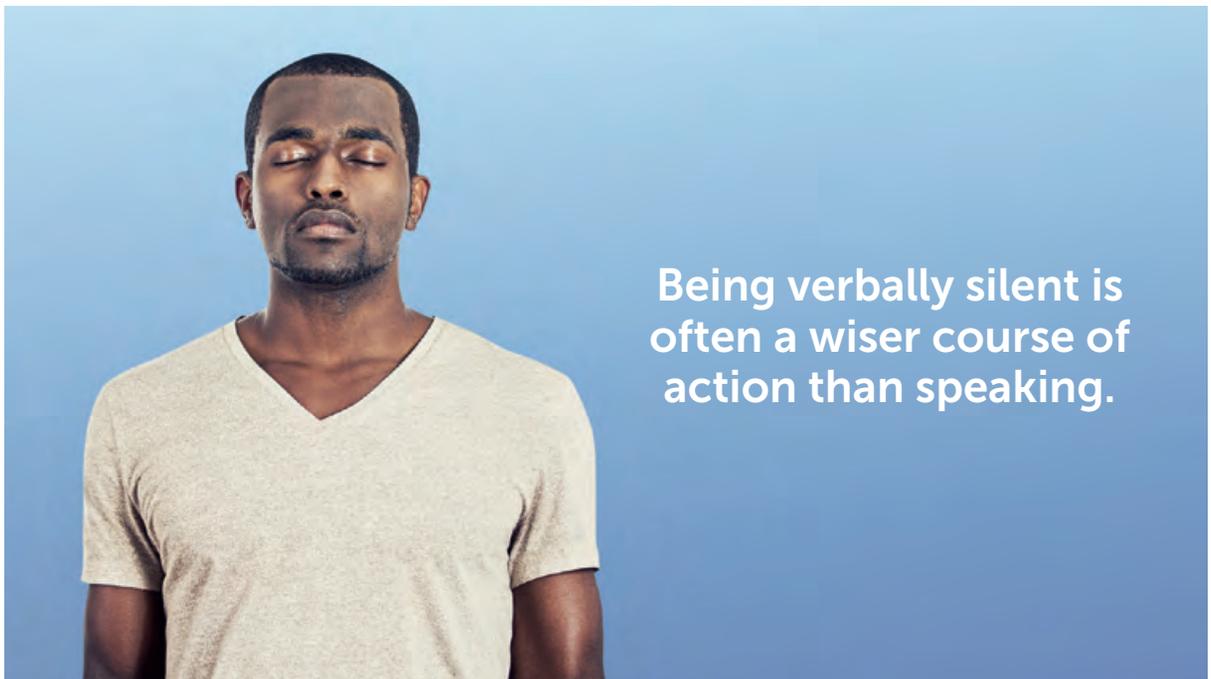
## SILENCE OF THE TONGUE

I'll begin with verbal silence. Quite apart from trying to avoid loud, aggressive people and environments, some people wisely try to control their own input into those environments; and that includes restricting the amount of talking they do. That's not to say we need to be meek and mild in all circumstances, but it does mean it is good to remember that being verbally silent is often a wiser course of action than speaking. Of course we needn't avoid speaking altogether, merely exercise careful control over our words and speak only when the circumstances require it. Being able to speak well when necessary and to be silent when it is better to say nothing, that is the ideal way of

conserving and even building up our precious reserves of Vital Life Force. But it is of course not the easiest of things to do, especially when issues we feel passionately about are at stake.

Knowing when not to speak is important and, if you think back a bit over your life, I'm sure you'll agree that speaking in anger and saying things you didn't really mean, was one of the first issues you recognised as a stumbling block to your inner development. We all need to be inwardly restrained from speaking at times when nothing good can come from what we're so eager to say. It's a delicate and refined form of verbal control, knowing when to speak, how to say it best and for greatest benefit and, of course, knowing when to be silent.

For some, especially the gregarious, friendly types, it is often hard to remain silent when silence would accomplish more than talking. No matter how good our verbal intentions are, there are still times when silence would accomplish more than talking. On the flip-side of the coin though, how do we learn to say what needs to be said when just a few supportive words could be of immense, even life-altering benefit for someone? That is the delicate balance needed: knowing when to speak and how to say it for the greater good and knowing when to remain silent.





Deliberate, well-thought-out control of our words and how we say them, combined with attunement with the wisdom and experience of our deeper self, are of course the only way forward. It is a true art and comes ultimately only from deep attunement with our soul. Proficiency does not come easily and it demands we deliberately be aware at all times what we're doing and what we really wish the outcome to be so we can exercise the required control the instant it is needed. Usually, there is no advance warning and our control has to be like a subconscious reflex action, fully automatic and under the direction of our deeper, more mature, more accomplished, *'inner self.'*

## The delicate balance needed is knowing when to speak and how to say it for the greater good.

A good place to begin is to resolve deliberately, though only after careful consideration, to do our best to be as alert as possible always. It is a deliberate, sensitive and refined form of manipulation of awareness, far superior to any of the extremely harmful drugs some people take nowadays to get a boost to their cognitive alertness. It goes much further than this and ultimately remains under our full control. Being conscious of what we're doing or

saying at the present moment, what led us to the present moment and, crucially, knowing what we're about to say, is paramount.

When fighter pilots train to become aerial masters of combat, an expression of overriding importance drummed into them is *'situational awareness.'* As mystics, we are training to enhance our situational awareness in the arena of our inner lives, and it behoves us therefore to train ourselves assiduously to be constantly alert to our own motivations, our own thoughts. And that of course spills over into control of our words, knowing when to be silent, when to speak and what to say when we need to speak.

### Saying Nothing vs Speaking Up

We can probably all recall instances when we babbled on when it would have been better to say nothing; and other times when it would have been far better to speak up..., but we remained silent! Most of us respect a person who always seems to say the right thing at just the right time and, furthermore, says it with precision and few words. The ability to speak one's mind intelligently when there is a need to and to remain silent when talking would be counter productive, is a trait most worthy of development.

As with all valuable things in life, it is, however, a very difficult thing to accomplish but one that most assuredly eventually has to be mastered. Most of the time, what we say or fail to say, is affected more by



how our egos have reacted to a situation than by pure reason or intuition. And frequently, we leave things unsaid simply because we're too afraid to hurt or offend someone, even though we know it would be better for certain things to be said and for the person to be temporarily shocked at our frankness than to remain silent and for no possible good to come from our interaction with that person. The truth hurts at times, but in some cases that is not a good enough reason to remain silent, especially when a few well-placed comments could have an enormous positive bearing on the lives of many.

A fundamental rule relating to the question whether or not to speak, is to be intelligently informed about what we're about to say. Making our statements on matters with precision and clarity, and avoiding mere waffle and idle chit-chat, is fundamental to our decision whether to remain silent or to speak. Remember how harmful loose and unformed talk can be because of the unquestioning nature in which so many individuals accept information. If inaccurate statements are made, or worse still, if deliberate lies are said, who among the many listeners would bother to investigate further? The sad fact is that very few would, and that is why we all, though especially the media, have such great responsibility to report accurately and without embellishment what we

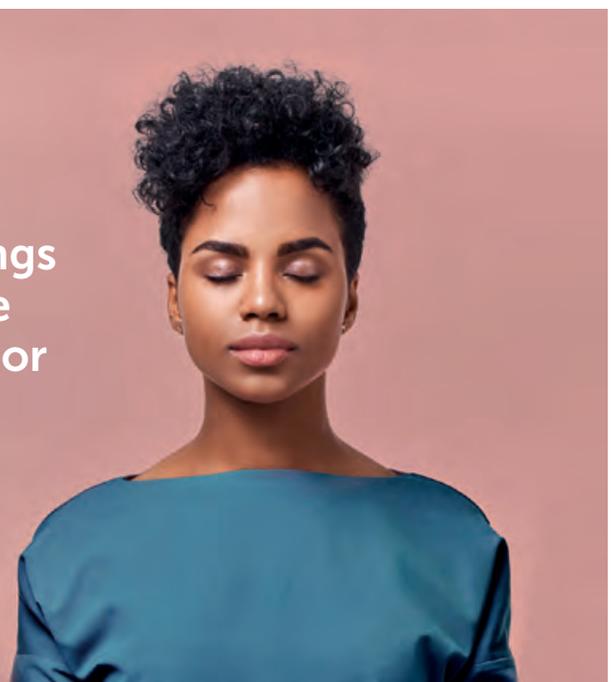
believe to be the truth. Sadly, the internet is awash with both deliberate and innocent though sloppy falsehoods, and many lives each year are harmed by this.

Summing up: it all comes down to a point of judgement in the use of our speech, thinking before expressing our opinions in words, and of always being *situationally aware* of what we've just said and what we feel right about saying next. Above all though, and the one thing which will always cause us to say the right thing at the right time, is to say what we have to say with *kindness*, always! It is an aspect of universal love, and is sure to bring out in us the most beautiful verbal expressions we are capable of.

## SILENCE OF THE MIND

The second form of silence is more personal, for it involves silence or rather, stillness, of the mind, denoting a refined control of our mental faculties. Controlling our thoughts is not the same as suppressing them, but it does mean channelling them into the most important things we need to think about. Silence of the mind involves exercising a basic control over the idle wanderings of our thoughts. We've often heard the expression '*thoughts are things*.' It means that thoughts have certain potentialities and that '*wrong thinking*' and

Frequently we leave things  
unsaid simply because  
we're too afraid to hurt or  
offend someone.



'right thinking' have definite effects upon our lives and immediate environment which in turn lead to physical consequences. That is not only a Rosicrucian principle, it is accepted by all serious systems of thought.

If thoughts really are 'things', then they are important primarily because they have value, just as rare metals and stones have value. Would it not be wise therefore to use our thoughts carefully and not waste them? After all, the number of thoughts we will have during our lifetime is limited, and idle thinking or daydreaming *without purpose* is an offence to the self and a failure to exercise silence of the mind. Daydreaming is fine, provided there is a clear purpose to it. But if we allow ourselves to do nothing but idly daydream without purpose and purely as a result of a lack of discipline, we are wasting the life force that animates us. And we are wasting our limited, precious time and efforts with thoughts that should, at the very least, be constructive, creative and possible of being brought to successful fruition of something good and beneficial for as many people as possible.

It may be enjoyable to idly daydream about how great it would be to be wealthy, or to accomplish important things in life; or worse still, how we could have altered history if we had lived in a different era with the knowledge we have today. However, merely daydreaming and doing nothing of a practical nature to implement our thoughts, is not exercising good judgement. What is needed is a deliberate directing of our thoughts, throwing out idle speculation and daydreams about what could never happen in the real world and replacing them with thoughts specifically intended to bring about a better state of being.

Clearly, it would be far better for us in quiet moments to try and direct our thoughts towards such qualities and ideas as will bring us happiness and contentment, than to idly speculate upon how great life would be if we were suddenly to inherit a fortune. Having a lot of money suddenly thrust upon us would be no guarantee of gaining happiness or inner peace. But preparing ourselves for an elevated mode of existence through the disciplined and channelled form of thinking practised by mystics...

this brings us not only happiness but a supreme sense of fulfilment as well.

Let us therefore *control our speech* and accomplish it by, first and foremost, *controlling our thoughts*. Silence in both cases is often the preferred route, though such silence has meaning only if there is purpose and intent behind it.

## SILENCE OF THE WILL

And then there is silence or stillness of the will. Society generally considers self-control and the development of will-power to be important personality traits and certainly there is great merit in this. For only when intelligent people constructively exercise their will-power can society have well-planned and clearly defined directions to follow. One of the better by-products of silence of the will is the ability to direct oneself towards the development of a worthwhile moral character..., moral that is, in the context of our societal and spiritual norms.

Silence of the will is the basis of all control of behaviour and comes before both control of our thoughts and control of our speech. So, while there may be short-term benefits to the wholesale gratification of our desires, the long-term

consequences for society as a whole, and indeed ourselves in particular, are harmful. Without a healthy restraint of some of our deeper urges, we run the risk of impinging upon the freedoms of others and indeed of entirely halting our own evolution. Being ruled by an incessant need to gratify every urge we have, no

matter how trivial, is an indication of how far we have to go in attaining mastery over our lives.

Physical desires or urges have their proper place in nature and the perpetuation of every species. But for creatures like humans, who generally have well-developed abilities to think, reason and plan for the future, the unthinking physical urges of the body should never become the dominant purpose of life itself. Silence of the will therefore implies control of the cravings of the physical senses and relegating them to their proper place in the overall scheme of our deeper evolution. Silence of the will is more than merely controlling our thoughts; it means, most

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thoughts.





importantly, controlling our emotions and the so-called *'natural inclinations.'* These all precede the intellect which in turn precedes speech and action.

Food and drink are essential to the maintenance of life. But while most of us enjoy good food and drink when taken in moderation and at their proper time, devoting our attention and effort solely to the gratification of this one physical appetite has serious long-term consequences; not only because of the obesity it eventually causes but because of the damage it does to our ability to control our destiny. All urges are directly linked to chemical and hormonal secretions within the body. And while we accept that some of these imbalances are beyond our power to correct, we should do everything possible to employ *silence of the will* to affect our imbalances and to bring them under control. So, by silencing, or at least muting the will in such cases, we are placing our physical desires in their proper perspective. Almost always, those inclinations are mere wants rather than true needs and muting or silencing the will in such cases enables us to fully comprehend and accept that the excessive gratification of our wants and desires is not worthy of our mystical aspirations.

An important aspect of silence of the will is the development of *emotional control*. Absolute free reign of the emotions, namely, allowing ourselves to act and react purely as we feel and as our emotions happen to be at the moment, is harmful to our further ability to develop. Every time we allow ourselves to act in this way, we make it just that bit harder to control our lives and considerable effort becomes necessary to undo the inner damage which our unbridled emotional behaviour has caused.

## SILENCE OF THE SELF

To sum up..., I have mentioned three forms of silence: *Silence of the Tongue* which depends on *Silence of the Mind* which depends on *Silence of the Will*. All three are important, and many techniques for accomplishing them have been devised over the millennia, many times over, but especially by Rosicrucians. But above and far beyond all these stands *Silence of the Self*, the sort of silence we all strive for when we seek true meditation and attunement with the God of our understanding. Silence of the Self leads to an opening up of the main channel of communication between our outer, mundane self and the infinite sanctity of the Source of all that is. It is by far the hardest to accomplish, yet we can get there eventually if we accept that small steps must at times be taken in order to reach our final destination.

Begin therefore by regularly and deliberately *silencing the tongue* when there is no need to speak..., *silencing the mind* when there is a need to control your thoughts..., and *silencing the will* when there is a need to control your instinctual emotions and urges. Stepping up from the mundane level of these three areas of control to the level implicit in the final step of *Silence of the Self* is impossible to accomplish in a short time, and probably impossible to accomplish even in a single lifetime. But the simple act of just thinking about *silence* as not merely being the property of *'no sound'* but, more importantly, conveying for us the qualities of *quietness, stillness, tranquillity, serenity* and *peace*, is a good first step to take. And thinking of silence in these terms is a sure way of leading us to the path upon which we will eventually arrive at..., *Silence of the Self*.





# Life and the Journey into Self

by Lynn Hodgkinson

There comes a time in the lives of many people when they feel the right moment has come to *'change gear'*, to stop for a moment and think about a new direction. This point in a person's life often prompts us to begin gently on the slopes of meditation or other contemplative methods and, eventually, it may lead us to the portals of a mystical or spiritual tradition.

The essence of any esoteric tradition worth its salt may be summarised as follows: *any sincere quest for the understanding of Self, journeys from the outside and travels inward.* The clamour of the physical world demands that we seek answers *'out there'*, that we assign blame for our misfortunes to something or someone other than ourselves and, that we can only be complete if we attract approval from those around us or, on the other end of a social media conversation. If we truly desire to scale the limitless heights of our inner landscape, the vast *'universe within'*, and discover our oneness with the Whole, we must get the full measure of the person who is operating in the world and



responding to its events. Who are you? We can't hope to understand or navigate the 'outer' until we have thoroughly grasped the 'inner' and begun to know ourselves.

When you look into a mirror, what do you see? You are looking at the embodiment of all the natural and universal laws which govern your entire existence. As you come to know yourself, you become acquainted with more than your individual entity, for you are a Cosmos.

## Character

It has been said that any journey begins with the first step; so begin with your character, the outward impression you make on others. Character is constantly becoming, thanks to the influences acting upon us on our path through life. It also seems to be the outer aspect of something deeper within us. It gives shape and expression to the personal ideal or standard which animates us. Yet this ideal or standard is always changing, even imperceptibly, as each day passes.

*Character is the conscious code of thought and practice..., emotion and action..., which the school of personality has established for one and which the outward traits emulate as an ideal. -- from an old lesson in the Rosicrucian archives.*

Personal evolution is about learning to analyse and assess which traits are right, and which need to be modified or abandoned, and that requires a closer look at the Personality which sets the inner standard and is the force which lies behind the outer expression of our character.

## Personality

Personality may be revealed or veiled. It is the subtle quality of the inner person that may only reveal itself at certain times. People sometimes surprise us. The question is: does personality change too? Or, as we evolve, is our 'inner school' simply choosing to select a different kind of standard with which to express itself?

Meditating on our personal journey through life, and our responses to it, can throw up some revealing new knowledge about ourselves. As our reactions to events and people around us evolve, we can perhaps sense that something is changing within us. In this way, the outer world is important for our evolution, though it is not the summum bonum of our existence.

Life is the tool and catalyst for inner growth. Every person we meet, every emotion we feel, every decision we make is simply the outer manifestation of an inner process. Learning to recognise patterns and cycles in our journey through life can help us to navigate the distracting storms or the darkness of the valleys. The theosophical writer, Mabel Collins, wrote:

*...the entire true meaning of earthly life consists only in the mutual contact between personalities and in the efforts of growth. Those things which are called events and circumstances and which are regarded as the real contents of life – are in reality only the conditions which make these contacts and this growth possible. -- from 'The Story of the Year: A Record of Feasts and Ceremonies' published by George Redway 1895*

## Mysticism and Science

The deeper, immaterial levels of ourselves are elusive to the objective world and to our objective thinking. Science leads us to the brink of realisation but stops just when we try to lift the veil in our wonderment and awe. Therefore, a new method of research and discovery is required. This is the moment when a person's mystical journey of exploration and discovery begins. It is here that the path begins to divide between mysticism and those areas of science which resist recognising anything which lies beyond the visible plane.

**The deeper, immaterial levels of ourselves are elusive to the objective world and to our objective thinking.**

Here in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, times are changing. The pioneering spirits of science are now increasingly recognising the existence of often unseen yet indisputable causes behind most of the effects we encounter in the world. However, as long as we continue to limit our exploration to the physical plane, our journey of discovery is impeded. We cannot rely purely on our objective senses to discover the immaterial. We must turn to our unseen but ever-present helper: *Consciousness*.





## Consciousness and the Unity of All Things

Both the material and the immaterial worlds have one thing in common: they both inherently possess the quality of natural and universal laws. This can also be described as *'the unity of all things.'* The same laws apply in the physical world as in the non-physical dynamics of the way in which we think, speak and act. Universal laws exist and act within everything, within each of us. If we once more look into the mirror, we are conscious of the entirety of the laws that express themselves through us each and every day. We can witness the all-pervading permanence of all that is, was and will be, no matter how many times its outer form changes.

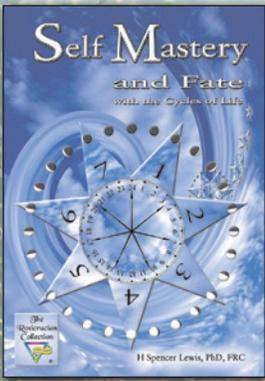
The universe, through its actions, expresses

**The universe, through its actions, expresses order and intelligence.**

order and intelligence, and we can learn how to tap into this higher aspect of ourselves. We can make contact with it and give expression to its wisdom. The Rosicrucian meditation techniques and exercises provide us with the map and the compass. Our discoveries in our inner space can then be reflected in our dealings with life and the world around us. In this way, we are not driven by the world, nor tossed about by its tumult: the dynamics of our life emanate from within and are governed by the deeper, wiser, higher self. Moment by moment we are extending our inner keyboard. That is the magic and glory of our human existence.

*Man is a microcosm, or a little world, because he is an extract from all the stars and planets of the whole firmament, from the earth and the elements; and so he is their quintessence. -- Paracelsus.*





## Self Mastery and Fate with the Cycles of Life

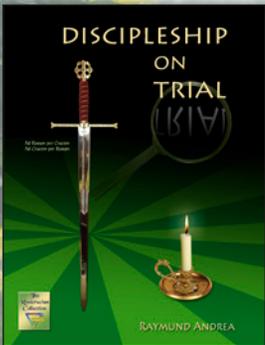
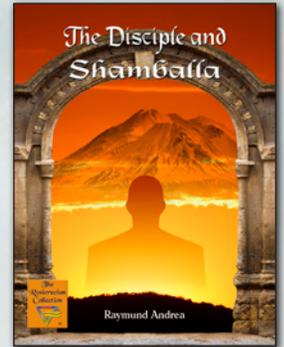
— by *H. Spencer Lewis* -- 160 pages / softback

THE SYSTEM outlined in this book is probably the closest you will get to a rational divinatory system based on self evident truths rather than belief in an immovable 'fate' from which there is no escape. Lewis' book gives a system of accurate prediction of tendencies in life, based on a 'system-of-seven' unrelated to Astrology, Tarot, I-Ching or any other system of divination. Free will and personal choice is the central thread running through this widely read and respected book.

## The Disciple and Shamballa

— by *Raymund Andrea* -- 118 pages / softback

THE SPIRITUAL realm of Shamballa as defined by Andrea, is beyond most human understanding and some of the masters even have not fully attained it. Yet, Shamballa must eventually be striven for and reached by all who seek the holy existence of union with God. Through nearness to Shamballa, the humble soul overcomes what Andrea calls the 'Nemesis of Karma' and draws upon Shamballic sources of infinite creative power to accomplish a remarkable transformation.



## Discipleship on Trial

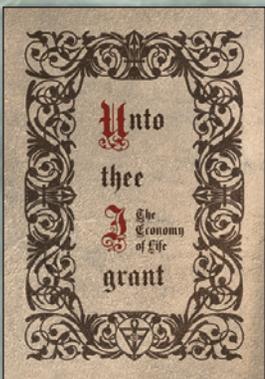
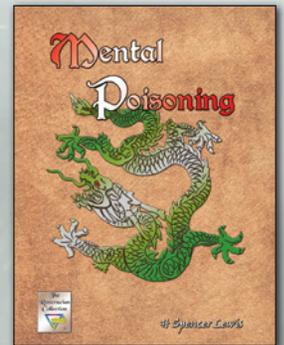
— by *Raymund Andrea* -- 148 pages / softback

WHILE THE old world during the Second World War was rapidly changing its values and perspectives, the whole concept of discipleship was being left behind and failed to adapt to the practical world of necessities. No longer could spiritual and esoteric orders remain within the confines of their cosy parlours, safe behind their outdated traditions and theoretical musings. A time for radical transformation had arrived but few embraced it.

## Mental Poisoning

— by *H. Spencer Lewis* -- 124 pages / softback

THE THOUGHTS we hold determine our mental and physical health. Irrational thoughts harm us much more than we know and the consequences are always harmful for us. The greatest thing we could do for ourselves is to banish forever all belief in malevolent supernatural causes to our various mental and physical ailments...; for what you think, that veritably you will become!



## Unto Thee I Grant the Economy of Life

— 160 pages / hardback

THIS EXTRAORDINARY book first came to light in England in 1751, being a translation from Tibetan of a series of lessons and wise sayings purportedly used by generations of Lamas. Open the book at any page and you will find words of wisdom to inspire you throughout the day. The moral and spiritual topics covered are dealt with in the uniquely practical and earthy manner of a Buddhist philosopher: few in words, but with an abundance of meaning.

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