

— ROSICRUCIAN —
BEACON



June 2022, Vol 31, No. 3



Find your Deeper Self



IN THE depths of your being resides your deeper Self, an aspect of your being which breathes, in calm reflection, the very rhythm of the universe. It is in touch with all things and communicates with all that matters for life on Earth. It seeks to instruct and guide its human ward how to live a good life and does so with care for its wellbeing. And above all, it does so with love and compassion for all life expressions on Earth.

Your Self knows why you are here and what you are meant to accomplish. It knows what your chances are of attaining the goals you have set for yourself, and whether they are beyond your reach or fully attainable. And it assists you to reach those goals with care and attention to the smallest details.

This deeper part of you is a veritable slumbering genius, eager to help you express your hidden talents with greater refinement and sophistication than you have ever considered possible. And the most productive thing we can ever do is to find and communicate with this Self.

For millennia, seekers of universal truths have known of the existence of a kernel of perfection lying dormant in every person, manifesting supreme confidence, calmness, maturity and wisdom. This deeper Self is called by Rosicrucians the 'Master Within', for it has, in abundance, qualities of refinement, high purpose and spiritual maturity we would expect only of the most accomplished of people.

You can discover how to access this high level of achievement and embark upon the definitive, true direction of your life simply by learning how to contact and regularly commune with your deeper Self. If you are searching for a way of accomplishing the most fulfilling and rewarding things in life, in a fair and ethical way, you are encouraged to learn from the ineffable wisdom of that inner perfection.

To find out more about the Rosicrucian Order and how it can help you achieve your most treasured goals, visit our website or contact us for a free copy of our introductory booklet "The Mastery of Life."

membership@amorc.org.uk
<https://www.amorc.org.uk>



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A.M.O.R.C.®

Greenwood Gate, Blackhill,
Crowborough TN6 1XE
UNITED KINGDOM

Tel: +44-1892-653197
Email: info@amorc.org.uk
Web: www.amorc.org.uk

EDITOR
Bill Anderson

Design and Layout
Cloud White

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Cover spread

Goleudy Twr Mawr - decommissioned
lighthouse on Ynys Llanddwyn island on
Anglesey, North Wales.





TRANSITION

by **Christian Bernard**
Imperator Emeritus of AMORC

People are sometimes surprised to discover that Rosicrucians refer to death as a *'transition.'* For them, the word *transition* designates the *'great passage'*, the *'Great Initiation'*, or more precisely the *'passage through the threshold of the Great Initiation.'*

In the teachings of the *Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis*, the mind is constantly presented with appropriate terminologies which progressively, beyond the mental level, eventually reach the soul personality, namely, our deeper being.

As commonly used, the word *'death'* alludes to a severance, a cut, a complete



breaking off, an end. While this may relate to physical reality, it is not an accurate description of what occurs on other levels of our being. As mystics we should not only consider the body as a temple sheltering the soul, but also see it as a very useful tool, essential for the evolution of the soul. When the time comes for the soul to shed its material form, it does so in order to reach a new state of being in which it slowly becomes aware of itself. From that moment on, the physical body inevitably follows the process of returning to the dust from which it originated.

If we were made up of physical bodies and nothing more, then we could certainly speak of death and a complete end. However, what really matters is the soul-personality which journeys through time in order to evolve itself to ever higher forms of expression. At transition, this soul-personality leaves a dwelling from which it has profited well and prepares to occupy a *'new home.'* To use a common analogy, it could be said that the soul is simply preparing itself for a *'change of address'*, and this change implies that there is a transfer of *'something'* between the two residences. The soul takes from its previous dwelling what is most dear and useful while leaving behind all that is superfluous and which will no longer be necessary in its new location.

This change of dwelling implies crossing a threshold, which reminds me of a moving ceremony that Rosicrucians know quite well but which I cannot elaborate upon in this article since many readers of this magazine will not be members of the Rosicrucian Order. A part of the ritual is symbolical of the great initiation, namely, *'transition.'* At the time of this transition, we are indeed on the threshold of what we call the *'Master's Temple.'* We are preparing to enter what is objectively unknown to us, and are about to begin learning something new. What we receive will be in proportion to what we are able to give, serve and love.

At the time of transition, the soul-personality is admitted into the *'Temple of the Invisible.'* Symbolically, there is an antechamber to this Temple, and it is in this very antechamber where we wait and adapt ourselves, and learn to be born again into a different and higher state. Eventually we proceed to the threshold chamber where we balance the good we have done against the errors and misdeeds we have committed. From a Rosicrucian perspective, this period, which is similar to the usual mental introspection we are all familiar with, allows us to engage in a form of reflection based upon the complete truth about ourselves, for we are no longer limited by the imperfections of our physical senses.

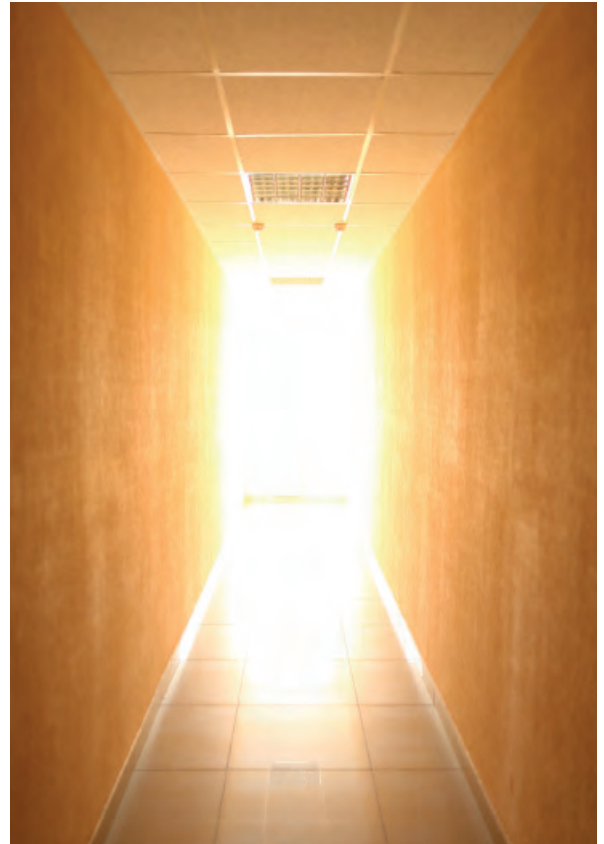


At that time, we know that what we are experiencing is the unvarnished truth about ourselves, and we can no longer fool ourselves with false reasoning. The consequences of our human experiences are intensely perceived by the soul-personality, though thankfully, this period is relatively short-lived. Then we enter the Temple itself and are, according to a traditional expression, *'elevated.'*

After we have completed the period of adaptation in the spiritual antechamber and balanced our soul in the threshold chamber, much as the Egyptians understood and interpreted it in their *'Book of the Dead'*, we assess our progress and, depending on the results, make resolutions and plan our future. The soul-personality is fully conscious of the goal it must reach, and with memories of its distant past and of its various experiences on earth, and even maybe in other worlds, it takes the decisions that need to be taken.

Because of the intense desire to reach its goal however, these resolutions often go beyond human possibilities. However, the mission of one whom we could symbolically call the *'Master of the Temple of Reflection'* consists in bringing these resolutions back to a reasonable and bearable level for our fragile human nature. The cosmic sphere in which the soul was elevated through transition is therefore a place of preparation where the soul sets up the itinerary for its next incarnation. To echo the observations of many wise men and women of the past, and according to Rosicrucian tradition, an average of 144 years elapse between two incarnations. The period of rest varies, depending on the duration of life on earth, though other factors can also influence the interval.

We should always remember that oblivion does not exist for the soul-personality. Those it left behind in the world remain forever a part of it, which explains why there is never any real separation. This can be difficult for our intellect to understand as it is accustomed to splitting up and dividing, whereas the soul, which forgets nothing, includes everything and everyone throughout its journeys through its countless human temples. Of course when the moment of death arrives, the body looks back nostalgically at itself and this is when fear of the unknown and for what the soul-personality will meet on its path, appears above all. The departure is distressing for family and friends, for human hearts



suffer and are deeply affected by such separations. Yet, although we may be overcome with sadness, we should always remember that those who have physically left us have not actually parted from us. If anything, they are even closer to us, for we will dwell in them and they in us forever. Although our eyes cannot see them and our ears cannot hear them, they are with us always. It is often said that we need to give a *'goodbye kiss'* to something or other. But with regard to the transition of loved-ones, this does not mean that we should ever forget them, but simply that we should accept something that cannot be changed.

Let us be aware of the briefness of life and truly live the present moment. Let us thank God every day for being fortunate in so many respects, although we no longer see or appreciate the true worth of what we have. Let us always remember to raise our hearts through thanksgiving and gratitude, so that when our time is up and we must leave this world, we have complete peace of mind and know Peace Profound, even if just for a few moments, before everything begins again.





Window of Understanding

by **Loanne Miller**

One day, while looking through my dining room window, a small object lying in the grass caught my attention. It appeared to be a small animal; in fact, I was sure it was an animal. However, after moving a little closer to the window to get a better look, I discovered the object was only a piece of crumpled paper that had blown in from somewhere. As I withdrew my focus I noticed an imperfection in the windowpane which I had never noticed before and realised that looking at the object through the flawed glass had distorted my view enough to lead me to believe in the existence of something which had no actual existence in the form I perceived it.

Reflecting on this I compared the window of the dining room to my *'window of understanding'*, the understanding of life and the experiences of which it consists. We can move along with seeming little difficulty in perception and understanding until suddenly, just like looking through a flawed window, something which should be quite clear is distorted.

With no warning, our vision of perception is lacking and our understanding of the situation is blurred to the point that the solution we seek seems impossible. Try as we may, the obstacle looms between us and clarity. More effort put into concentrating upon the situation has no effect toward clarification so long as we continue to view the situation through this flaw; or worse perhaps, when the solution is based on a viewpoint which is distorted. But eventually, if we move a little and see the facts from another angle, the perception clears and the problem can be solved.

We should always be aware of the possibility of flaws creeping into our understanding. They are not always easy to recognise as such and appear so suddenly one is taken by surprise. At the same time we should also realise that others may occasionally be viewing a situation through their own imperfect window, and we should be patient with their understanding. Let them discover their error and correct their view.



Refinement of the Human Spirit

by Connie James



Are you aware of the scope of your consciousness? Do you think there's a possibility there could be more of you in the world than you realise? Is there some kind of mystical bond between us and all other things in nature? I'll discuss this idea in the hope of revealing something of the sophistication and refinement of the human spirit when allowed to blossom, something that often goes unnoticed.

It has been said that we experience two universes, one inside, the other outside of our being. The inner one, referred to by Plato as the *'microcosm'*, is the most intimate part of us, yet unbelievably, it is entirely unknown to most people, even many who consider themselves seekers of spiritual revelation and who believe they know all the *'theory'* behind spiritual discovery. The outer universe, the one which enters our being through



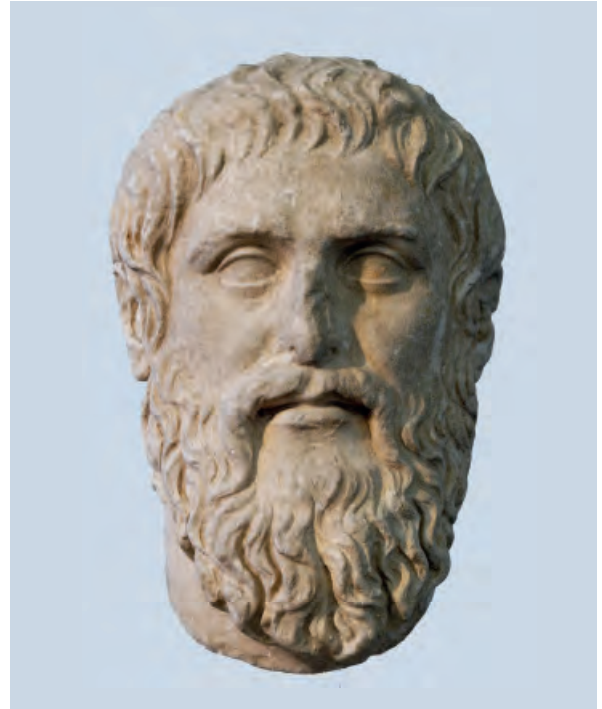
our receptor senses, is one we think we know well. To a large extent though, it has in fact been entirely hidden from us by a dense wall of unnecessary and superfluous words, descriptions and irrational intellectual models built up through the centuries, and torn down at regular intervals and then re-built into new, improved, more inclusive forms. At no point have we known it all, and our understanding of this *'world on the outside'* constantly changes.

We have carefully affixed labels to everything around us from the vascular system of a starfish to the twilight region between night and day that races around the globe at 1,000 miles per hour with definite biological effects on the living organisms it overshadows. But in broad terms, although we have the ability to manipulate the labels into neat categories and ordered systems of hierarchy, how much real understanding do we possess, even after centuries of refinement of our understanding? What deeper meaning lies behind all this magnificence? Indeed does there even exist a meaning in any objective sense? What interaction, what connection is there between all these physical *'things'*?

In simpler times we interacted and communicated with nature with far less true understanding of what is going on than we do today.

In simpler times we interacted and communicated with nature with far less true understanding of what is going on than we do today. But I'm convinced we were as happy with our world-views then as we are with our most modern scientific world-views today. What is paramount always is the satisfaction that our explanations of physical reality give us as to the veracity of our beliefs and our interpretations of physical reality.

Sir Julian Huxley wrote of *"...Man's vast untapped possibilities."* Among these, psychic powers are perhaps foremost among the powers that have already been proven to exist but for which science has few answers. That is not the same as saying that all science rejects the occurrence of psychic phenomena, merely that it has no better way of explaining it than we do. The potential power of humans to sometimes find ways, beyond all reasonable odds to succeed, is remarkable. A young man is today elevated from riding a bicycle to driving a car..., a big initiation. But years later he is initiated again when he flies a plane by himself for the first time. And then he experiences another initiation as he blasts into space to do groundbreaking research in near orbit



Plato (428?-348? BCE)

around the Earth. These are outer developments, clear to see and quite attainable by almost everyone.

But what of the development of the human inner, metaphysical and intuitive powers? In this regard I would like to briefly mention a few great men taken at random, who faced physical obstacles in their lives and overcame them, yet also became aware of much deeper inner attributes in the human consciousness which left imprints in their consciousness like footprints in the sand saying *"Follow me and I'll show you the most precious thing in the universe."* Now who could turn down an offer like that? Their thoughts have for centuries served as keys for others to use in opening previously closed doors of perception and understanding. So, here are a few of my favourites.

PLATO

Plato is not the earliest Greek philosopher we should be looking at, though an arbitrary and earliest point in time for our enquiry does need to be established, and it may as well be with Plato, disciple of the great Socrates and who had as his foremost pupil Aristotle.

There is far more to these three philosophers than



words alone can say, and the number of books and online articles on them is legion. Read them, for they form the very foundation of all Western thought, even the attitudes and moral values we hold today. As a contemporary philosopher once said: *“European [thought] consists of nothing more than a series of footnotes to Plato.”* Here now follow are a few words from this old master philosopher:-

Truth is its own reward.

The first and the best victory is to conquer self.

He who commits injustice is ever made more wretched than he who suffers it.

The penalty good men pay for indifference to public affairs is to be ruled by evil men.

Wise men talk because they have something to say; fools, because they have to say something.

We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark; the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light.

Marcus Aurelius
(121-180 CE)



MARCUS AURELIUS

Probably the greatest of all Roman Emperors was the Stoic philosopher *Marcus Aurelius* (121-180 CE) who ruled at the pinnacle of Roman cultural sophistication. There are many earlier, more well known and documented philosophers who outshine in literary excellence this warrior who spent most of his time as emperor engaged in interminable battles to keep the Roman empire from falling apart. But Marcus Aurelius appeals to us through his humility and simplicity of life, despite his immense power as Emperor of the world's greatest empire.

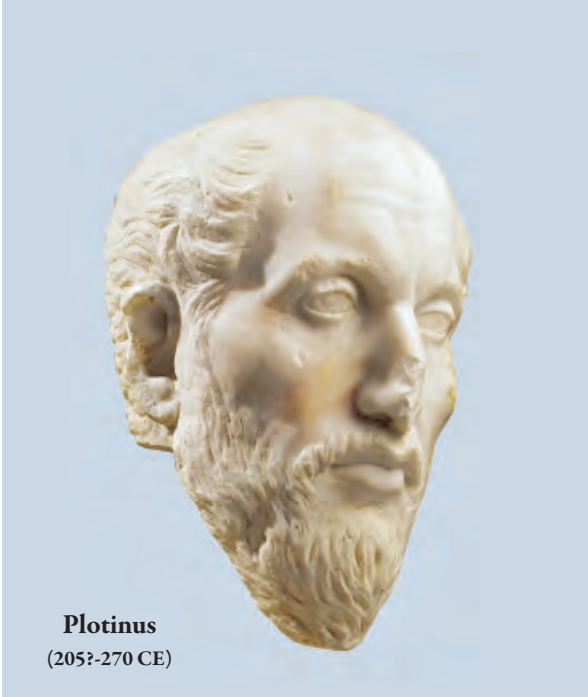
Stoicism was originally derived from Middle Eastern wisdom and was established about 300 years before the life of Christ. It is deep, extremely so, and influenced early Christianity through its high sense of moral rectitude.

Stoic theory held that the creative source of all being and within all things, was 'Mind.'

Stoic theory held that the creative source of all being and within all things, was *'Mind.'* The term *'Fire Mind'* was often used in this regard, for the creative source of *'fire'*, or the *'Vital Life Force'* as Rosicrucians term it, was an omnipresent force throughout the universe. Humans manifesting the highest form of this *'fire'* belonged to a single universal brother and sisterhood of both perception and understanding, and brought to the world the great spiritual leaders and founders of religions. With ever-expanding consciousness, this *'fire'* acts as a sort of inquisitor or interrogator seeking out the truth in all matters, even the sometimes dark truths about our own blemished lives.

Marcus Aurelius described the world order of Stoicism as a unity made up of multiplicity: *"...all being is one, all law is one and all truth is one."* How modern and inclusive such a statement is! All people had within themselves, he said, something higher and more godlike than *"...mere instincts which move your emotions and twitch you like a puppet."* He admonished himself to seek to know to what use he was putting the powers of his soul and asked himself: *"...how stands it with that part of me that men call the master...?"* There can be no doubt that Marcus Aurelius caught a glimpse of the deeper side of human nature and found as well his true place in the universe.





Plotinus
(205?-270 CE)

PLOTINUS

A little less than a century after Aurelius, *Plotinus*, (205?-270 CE) reached a spiritual height of consciousness seldom reached in human history. Although not widely read today, he realised the extent of his potentiality to such a degree as to achieve not only once but several times what he described as the soul's mystical return to the One. He was not a Christian, yet both the moral theology and cosmological basis of the Christian church right up to the late Middle Ages were profoundly influenced by this 'pagan' philosopher.

He said that while we can't *know* the One which is beyond thought itself, we can possess it or become conscious of it. At the highest level of the soul, we enter the world of Mind. The philosophy of Plotinus is given in his one great work, the *Enneads*, which stands as a testament to his immense mental range. And from the Enneads we have...

All people, he said, could 'borrow' some of the power of this Mind force as easily as they breathed the air which was free for all living beings to partake of. And he urged his readers to try and see the refinement of their deeper selves before it was too late and their lives were nearing the end. Having said that, he wrote not for an audience but for himself. His only 'book', a collection of personal admonishments and reflections, was appropriately titled 'To Myself', though in its modern form it is called 'The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius.' And what simple beauty lies in his incisive observations. Here are a few samples:-

Some enter into life as fragments of the One, bound to that which is external to themselves: they are victims of a sort of fascination, and are hardly, or not at all, themselves: but others mastering all this..., straining, so to speak, by the head towards the Higher, to what is outside even the Soul..., reserve still the nobility and the ancient privilege of the Soul's essential being.

He who lives in harmony with himself, lives in harmony with the universe.

Your life is what your thoughts make it.

Remember that very little is needed to make a happy life.

It is not death that a man should fear, but he should fear never beginning to live.

How much more grievous are the consequences of anger than the causes of it.

Reject your sense of injury and the injury itself disappears.

Accept the things to which fate binds you, and love the people with whom fate brings you together, but do so with all your heart.

At the highest level of the soul, we enter the world of Mind.

Eunapius wrote that Plotinus was born in *Lycó* which could have been the modern Asyut in Upper Egypt, or the deltaic Lycopolis of Lower Egypt. This has led to speculation that Plotinus may have been a native Egyptian or an Egyptian of Roman or Greek descent. He took up the study of philosophy at the age of 27, around the year 232 CE, and travelled to Alexandria to study. He was however dissatisfied with every teacher he encountered until an acquaintance suggested he listen to the teachings of *Ammonius Saccas*. Upon hearing an Ammonius lecture, he declared to his friend, "this was the man I was looking for", and began studying intently under his tutelage.

Later in life, Plotinus began teaching in his own right. He taught there is a supreme, totally transcendent 'One', containing no division, multiplicity or distinction,



beyond all categories of being and non-being. His *One* "... cannot be any existing thing", nor can it be merely the sum of all things. But it "is prior to all existents." He identified his *One* with the Classical Greek concept of *Good* and the principle of *Beauty*, something we can easily relate to as the concepts of 'God' for 'the Good' and 'universal symmetry' for the concept of 'Beauty.'

The *One*, being beyond all attributes including being and non-being, is the source of the world, but not through any act of creation, wilful or otherwise, since activity cannot be ascribed to the unchangeable, immutable *One*. Plotinus argued that the 'multiple' cannot exist without the 'simple.' The 'less perfect' must of necessity 'emanate' or issue forth, from the 'perfect' or 'more perfect.' All 'creation' therefore emanates from the *One* in succeeding stages of lesser and lesser perfection. These stages are not temporally isolated, but occur throughout time as a constant process. No initial Creation then, but a constant and eternal process of new creation in process. Here are a few quotes from his writings:-

Withdraw into yourself and look.

I am striving to give back the Divine in myself to the Divine in the All.

This All is universal power, of infinite extent and infinite in potency, a god so great that all his parts are infinite. Name any place, and he is already there.

To make the existence and coherent structure of this Universe depend upon automatic activity and upon chance, is against all good sense.

When we look outside of that on which we depend, we ignore our unity. Looking outward we see many faces. Look inward and all is one head. If a man could but be turned about, he would see at once God and himself and the All.

WILLIAM BLAKE

From Egypt we go to Britain and *William Blake* (1757-1827) who was an English painter, poet and printmaker. Largely unrecognised during his lifetime, he is now considered a seminal figure in the history of the poetry and visual arts of the Romantic Age. While Blake is often thought of more as an English artist than as a philosopher, this is an error. He wrote extensively in a mystical manner

that is difficult to understand in places and therefore turns some readers away. Most people however are familiar with his breathtakingly beautiful lines...

To see a world in a grain of sand, and a heaven in a wild flower, hold infinity in the palm of your hand and eternity in an hour.

Although considered mad by his contemporaries for his idiosyncratic views, he was held in high regard by later critics for his expressiveness and creativity, and for the philosophical and mystical undercurrents within his work. He claimed to have had visions throughout his life. They were often associated with beautiful religious themes and imagery, and may have inspired him further with spiritual works and pursuits.

It was Blake who also said that if only we would clean the doors of our perception, everything would be seen in its true infinity. Surely someone capable of conceiving thoughts such as these must have been close to knowing something of their true nature as well as their relationship to their world? Here are a few of his memorable sayings:-

A truth that's told with bad intent, beats all the lies you can invent.

A fool sees not the same tree that a wise man sees.

Love seeketh not itself to please, nor for itself hath any care, but for another gives its ease, and builds a Heaven in Hell's despair.

The hours of folly are measured by the clock, but of wisdom no clock can measure.

God appears and god is light to those poor souls who dwell in night; but does a human form display to those who dwell in realms of day.

VON GOETHE

From Germany rises the towering figure of the poet philosopher, *Johann Wolfgang von Goethe* (1749-1832). All his life this man sought to understand human nature. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote of him that his failures were simply preparations for his victories in life that he drew his strength from nature with which he lived in complete communion.





William Blake
(1757 - 1827)



Johann von Goethe
(1749 - 1832)

His later spiritual perspective evolved among pantheism (heavily influenced by Spinoza), humanism and various elements of Western esotericism, as seen most vividly in Part II of *Faust*. According to Nietzsche, Goethe had “...a kind of almost joyous and trusting fatalism” that has “...faith that only in the totality everything redeems itself and appears good and justified.”

The scope of Goethe’s realisation of human potentiality is shown in the diversified fields of thought seen in his works, ranging from the world-famous *Faust* to his diaries, novels, journals and thoughts on physics in the ‘*Theory of Colours*.’ He looked for eternal laws in even the most trivial things and saw that all things were a part of one vast, infinite design. He described this thought in *Faust* in the line: “...How each the Whole its substance gives, each in the other works and lives.” He joins the previously mentioned thinkers in a conception of ‘one Mind’ as he writes, also in *Faust*: “If by the Spirit I am truly taught then thus: In the Beginning was the Thought.”

Here are some quotes from his writings:-

One always has time if one will apply it well.

We are never deceived; we deceive ourselves.

Kindness is the golden chain by which society is bound together.

Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough; we must do.

Freedom and life are earned by those alone who conquer them each day anew.

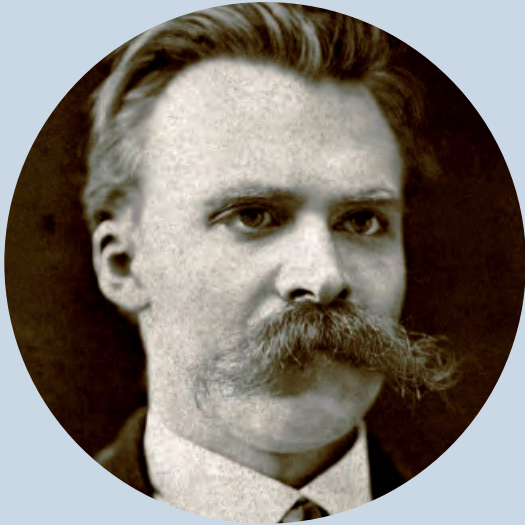
None are more hopelessly enslaved than those who falsely believe they are free.

Treat people as if they were what they ought to be, and you help them to become what they are capable of being.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

Also from Germany came the strange, tormented genius of *Friedrich Nietzsche* (1844-1900), who walked close in history behind the great Goethe. Nietzsche dreamed and wrote of a superman who appears to be not so much a revelation of humanity manifesting a knowledge and control over the things of his world, but rather





Friedrich Nietzsche
(1844 - 1900)



Ralph Waldo Emerson
(1803 - 1882)

an enlargement of nationalistic and material qualities. Because of his evocative style and often outrageous claims, his philosophy generates passionate reactions. To this day his works remain controversial due primarily to misinterpretations of his work.

One of the key tenets of his philosophy is *'life-affirmation'* which embraces the realities of the world in which we live over the idea of a world beyond. It further champions the creative powers of the individual to strive beyond social, cultural and moral contexts. Yet, regardless of how near he came to the true nature of humankind, Nietzsche takes his place among the other seekers of the hidden things if simply because of his expanded thought and manner of breaking down many of the barriers erected by society.

He was bitter towards most men whom he spoke of as rope-makers who *"...drag out their threads and always walk backwards."* And his personal philosophy clearly brought him no happiness. But he contributed to critical enquiry more than anyone before him in modern times. He once wrote that he had crawled into the very heart of life and that he was able to perceive that *"...there are a thousand paths that have never been walked."* He also realised the necessity of overcoming the things of the senses as expressed in his line: *"You*

must climb over yourself, upward until even the stars are under you." Whatever path or paths he traversed, he sadly never found the right one just for him. Yet he still left rare insights into the human condition that only those paths could bring him. Here are a few of his sayings:-

He who will not obey himself will be commanded.
That is the nature of living creatures.

Insanity in individuals is something rare. But in groups, parties, nations and epochs it is the rule.

The advantage of a bad memory is one enjoys several times the same good things for the first time.

Whatever is done for love always occurs beyond good and evil.

He who has a why to live, can bear almost any how.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

The American, *Ralph Waldo Emerson* (1803-1882), was an essayist, lecturer and poet, who led the Transcendentalist movement of the mid-19th Century.



He is listed in almanacs as a 'poet-essayist', but this falls far short of his stature among philosophers and thinkers. A careful study of his voluminous writings will reveal an amazing tapestry of humankind's relationship with the universe.

Emerson was familiar with Eastern thought and this is apparent in his work. His realisation of the unity of all things was expressed in the line: "*A leaf, a drop, a crystal, a moment of time, is related to the whole and partakes of the perfection of the whole!*" - from *Nature*. Humanity's relation to Nature was described at one time when he wrote that humanity first shares the life from which all things exist, then later sees them as only things in Nature and forgets that he once shared their cause.

He was well aware that the senses, while giving us a representation of something, do not reveal what in truth the things are in themselves. What profound beauty lies in the following words from '*Over-Soul*:'

The heart in thee is the heart of all; one blood rolls un-interruptedly in endless circulation through all men, as the water of the globe is all one sea.

And continuing with the unlimited potentiality of the human mind we have...

Before the immense possibilities of man, all mere experience, all past biography however spotless and sainted, shrinks away.

Emerson wrote on a number of subjects, never espousing fixed philosophical tenets, but developing certain ideas such as individuality, freedom, the ability for humankind to realise almost anything, and the relationship between the soul and the surrounding world. His '*nature*' was more philosophical than naturalistic: "*Philosophically considered, the universe is composed of Nature and the Soul.*" He is one of several figures who "...took a more pantheist approach by rejecting views of God as separate from the world." Here are a few of his sayings:-

What lies behind you and what lies in front of you pales in comparison to what lies inside of you.

The only way to have a friend is to be one.

Every minute you remain angry, you give up sixty minutes of peace of mind.

Our greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising up every time we fail.

Never lose an opportunity of seeing anything beautiful, for beauty is God's handwriting.

Bad times have a scientific value. There are occasions a good learner would not miss.

What is a weed? A plant whose virtues have never been discovered.

You can never do a kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late.

Space does not permit of the inclusion of many other people who also caught some glimpse of the majestic place in life of the human being. Others are great men such as *Giordano Bruno, Paracelsus, Berkeley, Swedenborg, Whitman* and many others. Please search for them, read their works and glean the kernels of wisdom they left behind.

Reaching Understanding

The question may well be asked, at this point: "*How do we reach an understanding of the ideas we have just mentioned? How do we come to realise something of our inner potentialities?*" Daily periods of meditation are of the utmost importance as well as achieving a control over the activity of the mind so it can be concentrated upon any desired thought for at least short periods of time.

Moral purity of mind is essential for the development and utilisation of the inner, spiritual forces. We must further try to live in a state of '*receptive awareness*' in which we are ready to seize upon either an inner intuition or the most minute outer revelation of a universal law or an eternal truth when it presents itself to us.

Finally, let us try to fully open our psychic sense, so we can see the true splendour of our surroundings and realise our place in the order of things. Then we will discover for the first time the incredible refinement of humankind.



The Power of a Smile

When we see the news lately, it's all so depressing: wars, hunger, disease, suicide bombers, corruption, there seems no end to the misery. It's no wonder psychiatric waiting rooms are so full of people suffering from depression.

Well, they should be empty. We've been given free will to either accept our lot in life and make the best of it, or let it detrimentally influence us to such a degree that we spiral into despair. There is a third option though, and that is to consciously try and improve things. In the *Rosicrucian Code of Life* we're urged to give thanks every morning for the new day, for the return of consciousness and the opportunity to continue the mission of our lives.

So let's begin with gratitude by recognising the beauty around us. Beauty in nature may be the easiest to observe, but with a bit of thought you will realise there is beauty in everything. Take a good look at a straw hat for instance. First there was the grass seed coming to full maturity as grass or reeds. Then the stems were cut, dried, and finally woven into an intricate pattern to make the hat. One can see beauty in every step of this process.

And when we see all this beauty, isn't it just right to pass some of it on to others? But how? By smiling of course! We should have a warm smile for everyone we meet during the day, for surely a smile is the most beautiful expression of one's being? Wherever you are, smile at everyone, in a kind and friendly way and see how often this kindness is returned. By doing this regularly, you won't even have to think about it anymore; you will smile automatically and it will come from the goodness of your heart.

If you haven't smiled today, give it a try. It could be the start of something good.



by Dini Jacobs
(1931 - 2015)





The Ancient Egyptian Game of Senet & the Afterlife

by Paul Goodall

The Ancient Egyptian game of Senet was invented more than 5,000 years ago, yet its structure and gameplay would not be out of place with modern equivalents. Although it appears to have been conceived as a secular pastime, it eventually developed into a religious artefact pertaining to the passage of the human soul, the 'Ba', through the Netherworld, as part of an evolving religious worldview. This was facilitated by the superimposition of Egyptian beliefs onto the game board itself and the specific moves within the game. By the 18th Dynasty, around 1580 BCE, the game had become a direct metaphor for the Underworld with some of its squares representing major gods and events in the Afterlife.

The oldest pictorial representation of the game so far is seen in the 3rd Dynasty tomb of *Hesy-re* (c.2686 BCE), an overseer of the pharaoh *Djoser*, who ordered the building of the famous stepped pyramid at *Saqqara*. Images have also been found on the walls of tombs belonging to Prince *Rahotep* at *Meidum* (4th Dynasty) and the Nomarch, *Kheni*, a district governor, at *el-Hawawish* (6th Dynasty). Boards that resemble the Senet game are also found in Predynastic and 1st Dynasty tombs at Abydos and Saqqara dating around 3500-3100 BCE. Senet was very popular and the varieties of boards found indicate that its gameplay was not just reserved for the elite of society. It survived for an incredible 3,000 years until its eventual disappearance, along with its rules of play, during the rise of the Christian era.



Senet as a Bridge to the Afterlife

In short, Senet, a two-player game, involved the moving of five to seven pieces for each opponent along its board of 30 squares in a snakelike or a reverse S-shaped route determined through the casting of four specially fashioned double-sided throwing sticks. The object of the game was to clear the board of your pieces before your opponent, in a similar manner to the modern snakes-and-ladders. The meaning of the ancient Egyptian word 'senet' was 'passing' and directly related to how the two players' pieces interacted with each other in the original secular game. In terms of the religious and mystical association mentioned above, the movement of the pieces had connotations with the passage of time spent in traversing the Underworld and this is particularly reflected in the description of several critical squares that had to be negotiated by the players.

This development of the game from a purely secular pastime to one bearing a greater mystical






significance is reflected in its pictorial history where earlier representations show two human players in contrast to that of later single-player games depicted in the necropolis against an implied invisible opponent, which may well have been the soul of the deceased. This is especially true in 18th Dynasty artwork around 1580 BCE onwards.

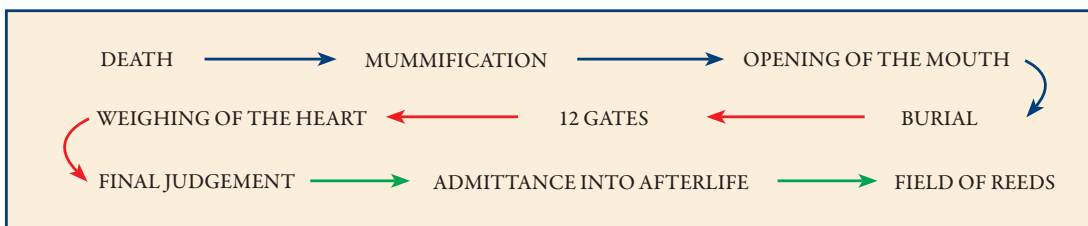
The value of Senet to the modern Rosicrucian mystic lies in its metaphorical aspects. Understanding the moves and the thrust of the game might allow our modern minds to develop more than a superficial understanding of the core religious beliefs that the Egyptians had concerning the 'afterlife.' The strategic moves of the players reflect, in this context, the manoeuvres and tactics employed by the gods (Egyptian *netchers*) to test the soul of the deceased as it makes its passage through the Netherworld.

On the purely physical plane, death for the ancient Egyptian was an ever present event, being much more anticipated than it is today, and, as the game over the centuries evolved into a more religious artefact, the

In the diagram of the game board immediately below, the squares (artificially numbered here) were decorated in various ways throughout the game's history. This example shows the contents of only those squares that have meaningful consequences for the player.

In the bottom panel is a simplified schematic diagram of the journey taken by the soul of the deceased through the Netherworld. The reverse S-shaped route, while graphically aesthetic and designed to save space, is unconnected to the Senet board, but reflects the serpentine route actually taken by each player.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
20	19	18	17	16	15 	14	13	12	11
21	22	23	24	25	26 	27 	28 	29 	30





The *Weighing of the Heart* and *Judgement* scene on the *Book of the Dead* papyrus specially made for *Hunefer*, a Royal Scribe of the 19th Dynasty, c.1310 BCE. To the left we see the jackal-headed *Anubis* escorting the deceased into the judgement chamber. Before them the kneeling *Anubis* assists the Ibis headed *Thoth* who supervises the weighing of the heart (symbolising one's conscience) against the feather of *Maat* representing truth, right order and uprightness.

Below the scales waits *Ammet* the 'Devourer of Souls', in the form of a hippopotomus with a crocodile head. Following a successful weighing, the falcon-headed god *Horus* brings *Hunefer* before *Osiris*, god of the underworld, on the right. Osiris is seated on his 'throne of the waters', holding the royal sceptre and flail, while behind him stand his sister/consort *Isis* and *Nephthys*, the sister/consort of *Seth*, the brother and murderer of Osiris. Before Osiris stands a lotus in full bloom on which the four 'Gods of the Cardinal Directions' stand. Above hovers the winged *Wedjat*, the 'Eye of Horus' (an agent of action) holding the feather of Maat and a *Shen* ring, symbolising eternal authority.

playing of it may have worked on the imagination enticing the player to think he might even influence the inevitable judgement of his soul in the Afterlife. This facet of the game is supported, not just through an analysis of surviving game boards with their inscribed or painted hieroglyphs, but also translations from tombs describing the passage of the spirit of the deceased through various stages of the Netherworld as if on the Senet game board itself. In the early 6th Dynasty there are some scenes that depict the deceased playing against a living person which appears to demonstrate that the game had developed into a means of communication between both realms. The following quote puts it succinctly:

The fact that the game became a conduit of such communication indicates that it had acquired its own inherent religious meaning apart from any iconographic context in which it occurred. It was no longer merely a secular game played during a religious occasion, but was imbued with its own intrinsic religious significance.¹

The Journey of the Soul in the Afterlife

The concept of an Afterlife, a realm that existed beyond the earthly plane, was indeed central to ancient Egyptian culture. It was perceived as an extension or natural continuation of one's earthly life. In early Egyptian history it was believed that commoners did not have the privilege



A New Kingdom Senet board, c.1550-1295 BCE. (Image adapted from <http://www.cynningstan.com/post/1056/games-around-the-world-ancient-egypt>).



of becoming part of the heavenly realm; only the Pharaoh (being divine) would become part of the cosmic cycle of existence. Eventually, there was a universal hope that the ordinary Egyptian might continue their existence after death in the mythical *'Field of Reeds'* as a reflection of their earthly lives. John Taylor, a curator at the British Museum has this to say:

The burials of poor people were usually similar to those of the rich in their main features, but with less expense – the body would be preserved in a crude manner and wrapped in cloth, and a few gifts would be put into the grave (food, drink, a few simple trinkets). So, as far as we can tell, they expected to go to the same kind of afterlife as the wealthy, but they would have to manage without the help of the Book of the Dead and all the rich trappings of a high-status burial. How you behaved during your life was important.²

The standard texts describing the Netherworld and the post-mortem journey were the *'Pyramid Texts'* of the Old Kingdom (2686-2160 BCE) intended for the Pharaoh, and the later *'Coffin Texts'*, an adaption of the mortuary themes from the Pyramid Texts, which were created for commoners to assist them on their passage through the Netherworld. One other major text which developed from the Pyramid and

Coffin texts was the *'Book of Coming Forth into the Day'*, which in modern times has acquired the name *The Book of the Dead*, a name used by modern Egyptologists because the papyri found had been placed on the bodies of the dead. These texts followed the same theme, giving knowledge, advice and power (through the use of spells) to the deceased, or more correctly the *'ba'* (soul), to safely negotiate the journey.



Egyptian Book of the Dead.

Painted on a coffin fragment (c. 747–656 BCE)

Spell 79: attaching the soul to the body.

Spell 80: preventing incoherent speech.

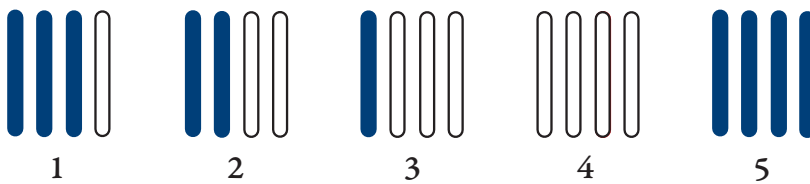
Adapted from – Wikimedia / alanscottwalker

THE GAMEPLAY

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30

The board consists of 30 squares and is negotiated along a serpentine route from 1-30. The seven pawns for each player are lined up initially along the first 14 squares (or 10 if playing with five pawns each) in an alternating fashion, as shown.

The starting point is number 15, the *'House of Rebirth.'* The object of the game is to move all of one's pieces off the gaming board before the opposing player by casting four double-sided throwing sticks to determine how many moves one has in each turn.



THE THROWING STICKS AND MOVE VALUES

Depending on what is facing up on each stick the player will have a certain number of moves to make.



Following ritual mummification, which was meant to ensure that the soul could reunite with the body after passing through the Netherworld, the embalmed corpse was placed into the tomb and the journey began. It should be said that this process of mummification was available for anyone who could afford it. However, it was believed that those who did not have the means to pay for this process could still enjoy the afterlife, though with greater emphasis on having lived a moral life than reciting the correct spells for a successful transition. The essential premise of Egyptian belief concerning the afterlife, (though the narrative varies) was that the spirit of the deceased would join the sun god *Ra* on his solar bark as it set in the western horizon and be accompanied by him on a nocturnal journey through the 12 subterranean chambers or gates, one for each of the 12 hours of night, that made up the Netherworld, eventually uniting and rising with the sun god at dawn.

This exalted state allowed the deceased to comprehend life from the standpoint of Ra's paradigmatic journey. This outcome would certainly be the preserve of the Pharaoh who was perceived as having divine

attributes and a privileged position. For the commoner the expectation was a continuation of life in the Egyptian equivalent of heaven called '*Aaru*' or the '*Field of Reeds*'. This was a perfect place to exist where there would be an abundant supply of food through fishing, hunting and farming along the River Nile.

The Netherworld journey itself was fraught with danger, the deceased having to negotiate a way through twelve gates guarded by demons; the protective spells and advice, as written in the funerary texts, were important here to facilitate a safe passage. This stage was followed by the weighing of the heart (the *Ib*) against the feather of *Maat* (truth, right order). Failure at this point meant that the heart was eaten by the demon Ammit. Once again, the advice of the '*Book of the Dead*' enabled a safe outcome.

Following this harrowing event the deceased was eventually led into the *Hall of Judgement* to argue his case before *Osiris*, the chief god of the underworld and the principle deity of regeneration and rebirth. The deceased would then be assessed before being admitted into the '*Field of Reeds*' for eternal rest.

From the tomb of the artisan *Sennedjem* who worked on the 19th Dynasty tombs of *Rameses II* and *Seti I*:

In this scene, which is found on the upper portion of the inner side of the door, we see Sennedjem playing Senet with his wife at his side. He is depicted playing an invisible adversary which might be his own soul or *Osiris*. A rich variety of offerings are placed on a pedestal opposite.

Playing Senet Against an Invisible Opponent.

Below the illustration are 11 columns of hieroglyphs (shown only partially). Columns 7-11 read:

"Whoever knows this book on Earth, or if it is written on his coffin, he shall go out into the day in any form that he wishes, and step back in again to his residence unobstructed. Bread and beer shall be given to him and a great portion of meat from the offering altar of Osiris. He shall enter safely into the Field of Reeds, and barley and emmer shall be given to him there. He shall know how to command like he did on Earth, and he shall realise each wish, like the nine gods of the Netherworld."

(Translation and image source: http://www.osirisnet.net/tombes/artisans/sennedjem1/e_sennedjem1_02.htm).



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11





Senet gaming board inscribed for Amenhotep III with separate sliding drawer, ca. 1390-1353 BCE.

Image: Wikimedia / Brooklyn Museum / Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund.

The Senet Ritual

This is, of course, a vastly simplified description of the whole rite of passage through the Netherworld in order to attain immortality in the afterlife, but there is enough here to allow us to see how the game of Senet came to be so closely associated with Egyptian burial rituals. It has already been mentioned that Senet could act as a bridge between the realms of the living and the dead. The evidence comes from Coffin Texts such as the following example in relation to the deceased:

*Let him sing, let him dance, and let him receive ornaments. Let him play senet with those who are on earth. It is his voice which is heard, [although] he is not seen. Let him go to his house, that he might visit his children forever and ever.*³

In another tomb text from that of the 19th Dynasty artisan Sennedjem we read:

Beginning of the recollections and memories, the going out and, again, descending into the realm of the deceased. To be transfigured in the beautiful West, to change by day, to assume any form which he (the deceased) wishes, to sit in the booth and play the board game. Going forth as a living Ba like Osiris, the servant of the place of truth, Sennedjem

*and his sister [wife], the mistress of the house, Inyeferti, justified.*⁴

A formal Senet gaming ritual had developed whereby the passage of the soul (the *ba*) could be influenced by the living and the dead in order for it to survive the journey through the Netherworld and also allow the *ba* to move freely between the realms of the living and the dead, thereby ensuring the deceased's immortality. By the 20th Dynasty the Senet game board had become a projection of the Netherworld itself, recreating the journey of the sun god *Ra* in his solar bark between sunset and sunrise. One player took on the role of Ra and the other was an unnamed spiritual enemy. The winning of this particular ritual game facilitated the safe passage of the *ba* and union with *Ra*, and also ensuring the spiritual life of the player before actual death.

Although the secular playing of Senet was undoubtedly an enjoyable pastime, the ritual game allowed the Egyptian, in his mind and during his own lifetime, to have some measure of control over his personal future in the Afterlife. This sounds fanciful in today's world but the ancient Egyptian mode of consciousness did not function in the same manner as that of Western society today. There was a pervasive awareness of a different kind of reality that existed after death, and one that interacted with the physical, translating itself in many areas of ancient



Egyptian culture through its religion, daily and ritual practices, and architecture. Objects themselves were seen to be imbued with inherent power and this is true of the Senet game and its board. Indeed, the amuletic power of a Senet board may have been enough that merely depositing one in a tomb would ensure a successful outcome and eternity in the Afterlife.

Endnotes

1. Piccione, Peter A., 'The Egyptian Game of Senet and the Migration of the Soul' in *Board Games in Perspective: Proceedings of the Colloquium on Board Games of the Ancient World*, British Museum Publications, 2007, p.59.
2. Taylor, John, <http://blog.britishmuseum.org/2010/09/22/what-is-a-book-of-the-dead/> (retrieved April 2015).
3. Coffin Text 405, 12th Dynasty: quoted in Piccione, op.cit., p. 59.

4. Quote at: http://www.osirisnet.net/tombes/artisans/sennedjem1/e_sennedjem1_02.htm (retrieved April 2015).

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The Rules of Playing Senet

It is important to note that no formal description of the rules of senet on either papyri or tomb walls has ever been found. The detailed description therefore for how to play the game is conjecture. There are two workable versions extant: those of R.C. Bell which are more intricate and those of Timothy Kendall. The rules below belong to Kendall because they are much simpler.

At the beginning of the game, the seven pawns per player alternate in position along the first 14 squares. The pawns move according to the throw of four sticks or later, one or two knucklebones. When using the sticks, the points seemed to have been counted from one to five, so it will be one point for each side without a mark and five points if the four marked sides were present together. When a pawn reaches a square already occupied by an opponent pawn, they have to exchange their positions.

The special squares have the following effects:

- 15 **House of Rebirth:** Starting square and the return square for the pawns reaching square number 27.
- 26 **House of Happiness:** A mandatory square which cannot be passed until each pawn has landed on it.
- 27 **House of Water:** Landing on this square a pawn has to restart from square 15. This square can also be reached by pawns located on squares 28 to 30 which have to move back when their throws did not allow them to exit the board. They also have to restart from square 15.
- 28 **House of the Three Truths:** A pawn may only leave when a 3 is thrown.



Light of the World

by Leanne Grimshaw

At this particular period in the evolution of humanity, we stand at a crossroads. Can the majority of people lift themselves out of the mire and face the Light of their own potential Divinity? Those who have some awareness of what is happening feel the need to guide a rapidly changing world situation into positive, constructive channels.

We long to help, and one sure way of doing so is by working on our own understanding, our own realities. We can open up any part of the mind that has been shut off, its growth stifled, and allow the light of day to shine in. To initiate such a transformation takes courage, but once the process has begun, its benefits become apparent.

Help may be sought when the going gets tough and our newly flexed spiritual muscles are not yet developed and strong. "*Ask and you will receive...*" is as true today as it ever was. Help will always come from within, from the *Inner Self*. Help may also come from individuals who are attuned and

capable of imparting the kind of assistance needed, at the very time it is needed. And there are of course others who will give well-meaning advice and sympathy. But if we look for compassion which marks the true servant and student on the Path, the exchange will not be one of simply giving and receiving, but a sharing of the *Light of the Inner Self*.

How does self-transformation help humankind in its hour of need? Progress, if it is to be lasting and worthwhile, must come through constructive evolution. By building steadily on firm foundations, namely, attuning with the wisdom within, we ensure that the Light we shine is pure and unsullied, an inspiration to those who are drawn to us, and with whom we come in contact. Often we may be unaware that someone has been touched by it, yet the contact has been made, the Light is shared and must be shared ever wider, for that is the law. Therefore be assured that the Light from that one 'candle' that is you, can expand to form a chain of Light that illuminates the whole world.



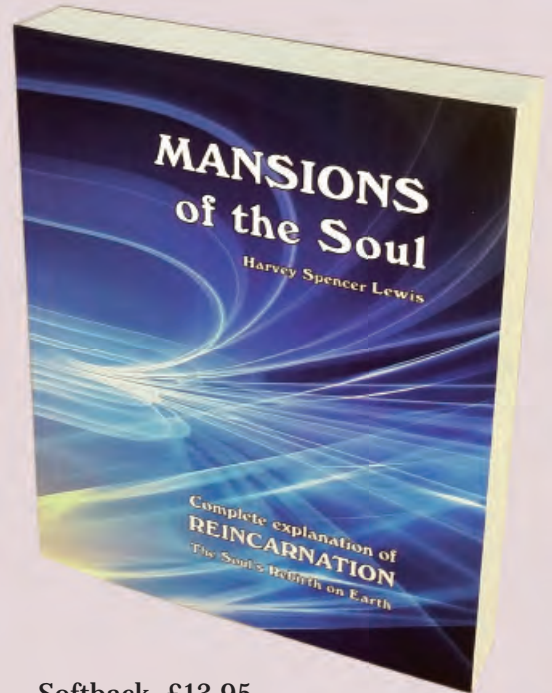
Book Review

Mansions of the Soul

by Harvey Spencer Lewis



...the substance of Dr Lewis' work happily co-exists with modern genetic studies.



Softback, £13.95
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Available from www.amorc.org.uk/collection

One of the most perplexing questions countless people have grappled with over the millennia is whether or not any part of a living person somehow, in some unknown form, survives death. We're so used to our privileged status of having life, consciousness and free will that when we encounter death at a funeral or as a witness to a fatal accident, its mystery and finality impresses itself upon us with great force and urgency.

Understandably, for some people the experience is deeply traumatic and they are left emotionally scarred for months or even years afterwards. For others it is a sobering wake-up realisation that we have no guarantee we will see tomorrow. But for others, and probably most of us who read this magazine, it spurs us on to deep reflection on what may happen after death and whether or not we, or at least a sort of scaled-down version of us, is fundamentally immortal, wholly independent of the life we experience on Earth, and something that will continue expressing itself in some form *'elsewhere'*, in forms we cannot conceive of in our present cognitive state.

The Essentials

Because Dr Lewis wrote this book primarily from a Western spiritual perspective, he finds it convenient to divide his attention between the Jewish and Christian religions, and addresses religious viewpoints in chapters 11 and 12. Each religion has its ideas about the qualities of what is generally called the *'soul.'* In Judaism the soul is believed



to be dual in nature: one part is an *'active intervention'*, by God, for He *"...breathed into [Adam's] nostrils the breath of life..."* (Genesis 2:7); the other part is referred to as the *'vital spirit'* or the *'Soul of God'* through which God inspires, guides and protects *'His children.'*

Dr Lewis believes that this has led to the confusion responsible for the emergence of the spiritualist movement of the 19th and 20th Centuries. Christians see the soul as the *"ultimate internal principle by which we think, feel and will, and by which our bodies are animated."* These two religions, Judaism and Christianity, have been identified with the universal concept of a person's soul as possessing not only the *'vitalising essence'* of *'vital spirit'* but is, more than anything else, associated with the very source of consciousness, mind, volition and voluntary control.

The author compares these ideas with those of the Rosicrucian Order as expressed through mystical revelation. He reminds us that all matter, regardless how inanimate it may appear to be, is quite literally *brimming with life*, though seldom of the sort that we would identify as *life*. The big difference between *'mere life'* and the sort of life expression exhibited by humans and various other creatures of relatively complex and sophisticated levels of cognition, is that the latter possess qualities of *objective consciousness* far greater than all other life expressions on Earth.

Dr Lewis refers to *'Spirit'* or *'vital spirit'* and an energy permeating everything and being the source and controlling corpus of laws which maintaining the expression of physical matter. But it is not the same as the soul. He refers to the soul as the *Divine Consciousness* or *Infinite Mind* as expressed through the human being and says that it is the primary means by which humans connect with each other while incarnated on Earth, but also continuing those links in the so-called *'spiritual realm.'* This connectedness of everything through a common source, the *Divine Consciousness*, has immense ramifications that he urges the reader to ponder over deeply.

In chapter five, Dr Lewis says...

The Soul consciousness, added to the physical consciousness in the body of man during incarnation here on earth, gives man his character or personality.

This is a key point and one that is ultimately bound up with the subject of *Karma*, which is often also referred to by Rosicrucians as the *Law of Compensation*. Lewis then presents three reasons to support reincarnation. First, the Soul must have earthly experiences; second, the human body must to have spiritual knowledge and illumination; and third, the human outer personality must eventually be brought to a state of perfection commensurate to the human bodies it has *'inhabited'* over many incarnations.

Personality

Dr Lewis begins by asking what character is and what constitutes personality. The following is how he distinguishes them: The *character*, composed of one's ethical and moral principles, is ephemeral and changes easily. The *personality* however, is subtly different from one's character. As Dr Lewis shows by illustration, we tend to disguise our *true personality* by adopting different behavioural traits in our character. Someone, he says, whom we know by profession is a banker, may exhibit the typical characteristics of a banker through his mannerisms, style of clothing, even his businesslike conversation. When we think of him, we think the word *'banker.'* But in the evening we may be surprised to find him engaged in a pastime we wouldn't have thought him to be associated with, such as carpentry, music, amateur dramatics and so forth. Our personality is in fact drawn to those things in life with which we have a natural affinity, and is the result of, a function of, our evolving expression of a unique personality by our soul.

It is the *"...tendency of the inner self to build up a personality progressively toward a higher degree of perfection rather than toward a lower one"* Dr Lewis says when he speaks of those who appear to have less developed moral integrity than others. This progressive development of the personality is inexorable, as it is associated with the Divine Consciousness. Conscience is a factor involved here and amounts to the *"voice of the inner self or personality challenging the conduct of the outer self"*, namely the well-known *'still, small voice of conscience.'*

Dr Lewis begins his discussion of the survival of the soul's personality expression after death (also referred to as *'transition'* by Rosicrucians) by looking at



Conscience amounts to the “voice of the inner self challenging the conduct of the outer self.”

the two opposing claims concerning this subject: that of theology and that of material science. Both seem to put humans at the mercy of fate and relieve them of responsibility for their birth. From a theological point of view we come up against the doctrine of *predestination* where some people are predestined to reach ‘*everlasting life*’ while others can sadly only look forward to ‘*everlasting death*.’ This has given rise to the introduction of a Satanic character to shift accountability for all human weaknesses and evils into a being called ‘*Satan*.’ Dr Lewis seeks out the flaws in these arguments and shows that they are not tenable.

Karma and Personal Evolution

The soul has a continuity of experience throughout successive incarnations that moulds and perfects the *mind* and *memory* of the soul personality, thereby giving it greater comprehension and power. It is free to choose how it wishes to handle the ‘*debts and credits*’ it has acquired through its many-layered cycle of evolution. This brings into play the *Law of Karma* or *Compensation*. Dr Lewis shows how Karma is the ultimate driving force behind the doctrine of reincarnation. He says...

We discover in reincarnation and Karma the only rational and acceptable explanation and cause for the seeming injustice of the inequalities of life.

Succinctly, the author says that the inequalities in life are Karmic and are accordingly adjustable. Each person is responsible for his or her own fate. Dr

Lewis effectively condemns the erroneous assumption that we exist for one incarnation only since the law of Karma cannot operate for just one specific period of earthly existence; it cannot enforce the compensation that every human life needs to engage in from one incarnation to the next. We are an aggregation of our past personalities, drawing upon the lessons and experiences of the past and...

...we express them as fundamental elements of our present character, while at the same time learning, through lessons and experiences, new principles and new elements out of which we decorate and modify, shade, blemish or improve the beauty of our character.

The Over-Soul

The book progressively implies that there is but one Soul existing throughout the universe and pervading all space and that this Soul has the consciousness and divine essence of the ultimate source of all existence, commonly referred to as God in most religions. It also demonstrates that individual souls of humans are not separate and independent souls, but are *undivided segments* of a single *Universal Soul*. Furthermore, there is a continuous association or contact between individual Souls and the consciousness of God that constitutes the *Vital Life Force*.

Dr Lewis uses the word *Over-Soul* to describe this arrangement, inferring that “*God is within [us] rather than without.*” He thus identifies with many of the



sacred writings of the past and particularly those of a Christian nature.

He continues to enlighten us through a discussion on the role of the *psychic body* that resides within the physical body. In order to allow the reader a clearer understanding of the relationship of these elements that constitute our make-up, he provides a schematic diagram. It illustrates the influx of the *Over-Soul* into the body and the resultant association of the soul, body, aura, ego, mind, memory and personality. He also uses other supplementary diagrams to enlarge on this subject.

Conclusion

The title of the book *'Mansions of the Soul'* alludes to the words of the master Jesus (in John 14:2) *"In my Father's house are many mansions"* and goes on to note that there are traditionally 12 divisions or mansions, with each containing any number of *psychic bodies* at any given time, and not necessarily beyond a person's life-span. Dr Lewis likens these *'houses'* to 12 chambers in a great temple. In Dr Lewis' mansions exist various personalities awaiting reincarnation and meanwhile, during that wait, they *"... receive knowledge and Divine benedictions which purge them of their errors for which they have made repentance"*, thereby becoming more evolved and prepared for their new incarnation. When they return to earth, they must work out their Karmic debt by living a life of adjustment.

This book was first published 92 years ago and while it has gone through many editions, scientific knowledge regarding the nature of life has advanced immensely. Genetic research has linked our DNA and their gene expressions with personality traits, and for good reason. It would appear that in any incarnation, we are predisposed toward certain behavioural and personality traits, depending on our genetic structure, namely, our DNA. But that does detract from the substance of Dr Lewis' work which happily co-exists with modern genetic studies.

The *Divine Consciousness*, or put in other words..., the *Divine Corpus of Laws* that permeates all matter in the universe..., is the same consciousness that resides in the DNA which, through numerous gene expressions, results in the magnificent diversity of consciousness we find in all living creatures, though in particularly sophisticated forms in human beings.

Mansions of the Soul

by *Harvey Spencer Lewis*

The soul comes forth from its eternal abode with its consciousness and personality unimpaired by the changes in the mortal body from which it was freed at death. It is not composed of dissimilar elements or temporary associates. It is one entity, uncomposed, uncreated and undivided. It is the very antithesis of the physical body in every characteristic. Whatever may distinguish the physical body is a negative expression of the Soul's positive character.

The soul possesses, as a heritage from the Infinite Consciousness and mind 'in the beginning', a *Mind* and *Memory*, constituting a continuity of experience which is eternal. It is this consciousness of self, this Mind and Memory, which we characterise as our *Personality* which grows and is moulded into greater comprehension and power through the various cycles of evolution. Into the physical body comes the soul with its personality, its perfect memory of all past experiences and its acquired penalties and rewards earned through the Law of Compensation.

It is still free to choose, free to decide, free to submit or to rebuke the urges that come from its memory of past experiences or the whisperings of the world without. Nevertheless, it has debits and credits to its record from the past and these it cannot avoid. Whatever it may decide to do, it must contend with the *Law of Compensation* in attempting to carry out its decisions. The debt to be paid will be demanded by the *Law of Karma* at the moment that is most propitious. Ever and anon, the silent adjuster of the Law stands by and with a nod of its head permits the peoples' decisions to come to an issue, or fail.

H. Spencer Lewis
The Temple of Alden,
San Jose, California.
September 15, 1930.



I am Music

by Allan C Inman

The following edited passage was used as a welcome message at the 1976 AGM of the *National Foundation for the Advancement of Music* held in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. Its author is the obscure *Allan C Inman* dating from the 1920s.

I am Music, most ancient of the arts. I am more than ancient, I am eternal. Even before life commenced upon Earth, I was here in the winds and the waves. When the first trees and flowers and grasses appeared, I was among them. And when Homo Sapiens came, I at once became the most delicate, most subtle, and most powerful medium for the expression of emotions.

When people were little better than beasts, I influenced them for their good. In all ages I have inspired them with hope, kindled their love, given a voice to their joys, cheered them on to valorous deeds, and soothed them in times of despair.

I have played a great part in the drama of Life, whose end and purpose is the complete perfection of human nature. Through my influence, human nature has been uplifted, sweetened and refined. With the aid of humans, I have become a Fine Art.

From Tubalcain to Thomas Edison, a long line of the brightest minds have devoted themselves to the perfection of instruments through which you may utilise my powers and enjoy my charms. I have myriads of voices and instruments. I am in the hearts of all people and on their tongues, in all lands and among all nations. The ignorant and unlettered know me not less than the rich and learned.

For I speak to all people, in a language that all will understand. Even the deaf hear me, if they but listen to the voices of their own souls. I am the food of love. I have taught gentleness and peace to all, and have led them onward to heroic deeds.

I comfort the lonely, I harmonise the discord of crowds, I am the necessary luxury of all people.

I Am Music!



Seven stringed viola d'amore, chiefly in the baroque period.





The Silver Cord

by Shirley Elsby



One of the downsides of extreme old age is that many people face a long and difficult journey to the end of their terrestrial life. Having once been vibrant, inquisitive, busy, perhaps full of joy, perhaps the movers and shakers of their generation, the unfortunate ones find themselves trapped by painful, degenerative illnesses and disabilities. Their eyesight and hearing may diminish, their mobility seize at the joints and their organs turn against them in producing pain instead of pleasure.

One of the most common maladies is the painful, restrictive stiffness of arthritis, leaving bones seizing up like rusty taps, leaving people struggling to complete the most



basic tasks. For some, the end of life is a miserable journey involving the loss of the senses and faculties which provided the means by which life is enjoyed. Help is needed to wash and dress, perhaps to eat and drink or deal with personal hygiene.

Parts of the body give up, leaving the person subject to indignities which make them cringe, and leave them, perhaps, unable to continue living in their own precious home and make their own individual choices. Life becomes an ever diminishing circle, the scope of each day smaller and smaller, less and less enthralling, less and less appealing. A long, lingering death is a sad path to tread. Over the years a number of people have confided in me that being in such conditions, perhaps ravaged by cancer,

left straining for breath by treacherous lung conditions or afflicted with other painful and deadly conditions, they are ready, now, to depart. They have squared things with their families, said whatever needed saying, arranged whatever needed arranging.

They have finished fighting too, and though they have no choice for the moment to continue taking oxygen in and out, they have made it known that they are ready to move on; they would welcome slipping into the final sleep. Although it may horrify the relatives trying to bolster their spirits with a daily diet of pep talks and positivism, having lost virtually everything which gave them their *joie de vivre*, they long to step away from their mortal remains and see what comes next. The following poem is about the very final part of such a journey.

The Silver Cord

Tug! Tug and jiggle.
Work it, work the trappings so!
Now yank! Yank the root and wiggle.
Ease it, squeeze it, don't let go!

This body does not suit me,
It's a prison, not a shrine.
Its strength ebbs out entirely!
It's a husk, it does not shine.

Oh silver cord which binds me,
I beg you, set me free.
I'm a spirit, not a relic,
Let me go and let me be!

I am bird chip-chipping shell
To breathe the joy of open space.
I am milk tooth easing loose
To let another take my place.
I am crystal taking shape
From rock and water, fed by air.
I am sapling stretching sunward,
My unborn leaves to bear.

This body is so tight and seized.
It rules my days with pain.
Its supple frame is now diseased
And every move a strain.

It served me well for many years
So sturdy, strong and willing.
But now its light fast disappears,
It's ready for the killing!

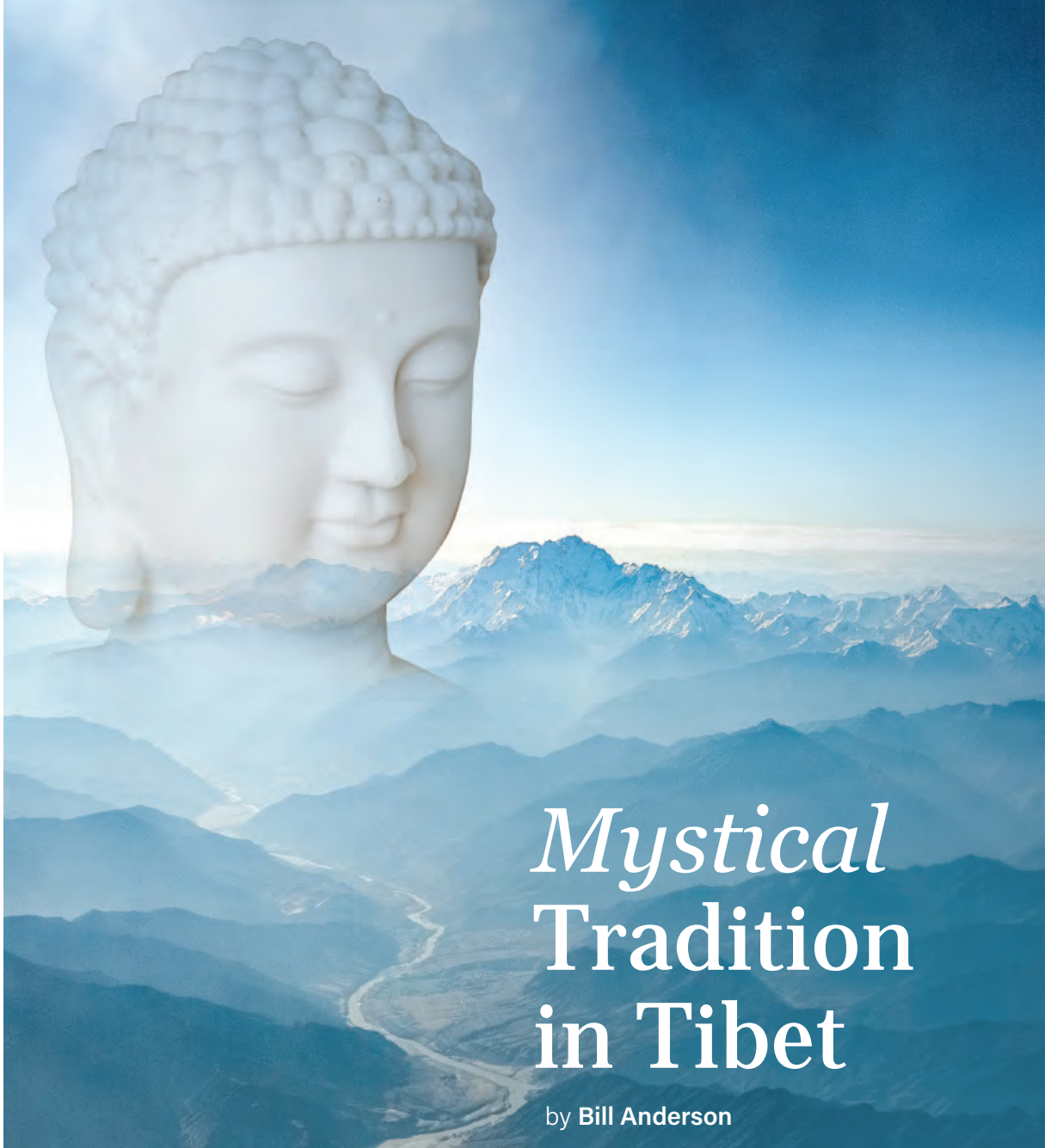
Sweet silver cord which binds me,
Loose your hold and let me soar!
Ghostly tendon that entwines me,
Let me roam the planes once more!

Oh prise! Prise and niggle.
Grasp hard and lever from beneath.
Rip, rip! Tear and squiggle,
Sever now the cord's flesh sheath.
Yes, yes, it's really time!
The cord breaks loose and pings me free.
It's done, I'm in a spiral climb,
No body now, just me!

I am sound escaping scales
To soar on high, quite unrestrained.
I am wind traversing dales
Liberated, unconstrained.
I am lazy perfume drifting
To delight a passer-by.
I am love, I am a soul,

And I am free. Yes, that am I!





Mystical Tradition in Tibet

by Bill Anderson

Tibet, the very name conjures up visions of robe-clad monks going about their daily business, while in a chamber far in the distance can be heard the deep sonorous sounds of chanting. We see rows of monks of all ages seated in a dark, smoke-filled temple murmuring prayers as they progress through their prayer beads one by one, hoping to move inch by inch closer to their ultimate liberation.

But we also see a bustling little city like Lhasa with well stocked Chinese shops and Tibetan peasants in rags roaming the streets like so many third world scenes we

have seen before. Does the Western image of a nation filled with robe-clad men of wisdom portray reality or wishful thinking? We can't be sure can we, for Tibet has been an occupied nation for much of its recent history, and very little verifiable information ever leaves this mountain land. It is almost certain though that most of what we in the West would consider the spiritual part of Tibet to be, is now sadly in the past.

Long isolated by the world's highest mountain ranges, a dominant feature of Tibet are the Kunlun, a wide range of mountain peaks stretching from West to East across the





The Kunlun mountains.

entire Tibetan plateau. This old theocracy has long been thought of as a land of mystery, and it remains so even today. Despite over half a century of brutal suppression and ethnic cleansing of its original inhabitants, the Tibetan religion and traditions still cling on in isolated communities, and the Tibetan sense of national identity runs as deep as ever in the hearts of Tibetans, whether in Tibet itself or in its worldwide diaspora. Having suffered the vicissitudes of several foreign invasions in the past, the most recent one beginning in the late 1940s, Tibet still remains in Western eyes a beacon of spiritual practise and attainment, harking back to a time of almost superhuman spiritual achievement.

Much of the moral rectitude and spiritual depth that people perceive Tibet to possess comes from early 20th Century authors who portrayed the country as one possessing the most refined spiritual theocracy in the world. The present Dalai Lama though, has undoubtedly done more than most people alive today, in bringing the plight of the Tibetan people to the eyes and moral conscience of the world. Through years of strict observance of non-violence and a deep love of the country of his birth, he has shown how people can live lives of kindness and compassion despite generations of foreign occupation and state-sponsored vilification. How accurate the picture of the Tibet we have today has ever been is open to question of course; but what is certain is that this sparsely populated land has inspired in the minds of seekers the world over, spiritual quests that have brought untold happiness and serenity in this life, and hopes for a positive and beautiful future for all humankind.

The former country of Tibet now forms the Chinese autonomous region of Xizang Zizhiqu, though Tibetans in small communities are also found in the neighbouring Chinese provinces of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan, and in several fragile communities in northern India, Sikkim, Nepal and Bhutan. And that is not counting the western diaspora of exiled native Tibetans, and the large following of Tibetan Buddhism in the West which has emerged in recent decades.

Tibetan Language

Modern humans have lived in Tibet as far back as the Neolithic period, and almost certainly, the first hominins out of Africa, some 1.7 million years ago, the long extinct Homo Erectus, would have called it home. We can't tell who the first modern humans were, but their deep ancient ancestors were almost certainly Neanderthals or the even more ancient Denisovans. But if we restrict ourselves to the era of modern human migrations out of Africa into Asia between 50 to 70 thousand years ago, there is little reason to doubt that modern day Tibetans are anything but the direct descendants of these early pioneers. If so, and considering the huge population changes that have taken place all over the world in recent millennia, then the Tibetans are among the most ancient of all human populations outside of Africa.



The Dalai Lama.



The Tibetans call themselves the *Bod-pa*, meaning ‘people living in the Bod [region]’, and their language is of the Tibeto-Burman family. Burmese is believed to be the closest language to Tibetan, possibly, though not proven by any means, due to migrations of Tibetans into Southeast Asia around or before the time of the Buddha (6th to 5th Centuries BCE). Grouping these two languages together with other related languages spoken in the Himalayas, as well as in the highlands of Southeast Asia and the Sino-Tibetan frontier regions, linguists have concluded that all these languages originated from an ancient Tibeto-Burman language, possibly older even than the language group which arrived on the Indian sub-continent with the arrival of the Vedic tradition some four to five thousand years ago. Tibetan is also spoken in parts of Nepal, India and Bhutan and is also used by some Mongolians in order to study Buddhism.

There are several different Tibetan dialects, and due to differences in pronunciation and vocabulary it can be difficult for people from different regions to understand each other. However, greater social interaction among Tibetans from previous regions in recent times has led to the development of a modern standard Tibetan language, in contrast to various other traditional dialects which are much closer to classical Tibetan. Written Tibetan was devised in the 7th Century CE by Thonmi Sambhota (or Thon-mi bsam-bho-ta), the senior minister of the famous Tibetan ruler King Songtsän Gampo or Srong-btsan sgam-po (c. 569-649).

It was believed that the king was a manifestation of the Buddhist Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, of whom the Dalai Lamas are similarly believed to have been manifestations. Thonmi Sambhota was one of 15 scholars sent to India by the king to compile Tibetan scripts so that Buddhist literature could be translated into Tibetan. He developed the Tibetan language based on the Sanskrit characters of the Devanagari script, which is used for many Indian languages. He also compiled grammar texts which are still the primary source for studies in Tibetan grammar.

Since its introduction, the writing system has barely changed, although the spoken language has evolved considerably. As a result, written and spoken Tibetan are quite different. Spoken Tibetan is tonal to an extent and also nasal, like French or Portuguese. More controversial, and considerably less popular, is the theory that the Tibeto-Burman family is itself part of a larger language family,



A Tibetan Bon gathering taken in the early part of the 20th Century.

called Sino-Tibetan, and that through it, the Tibetan and Burmese languages are distant cousins of Chinese.

Bon

As early as the 7th Century CE, some Tibetans were calling themselves *Bod*, which is believed to be derived from the word *Bon* or *Bön*, which refers to a shamanistic or animist religion followed by many Tibetans at that time. Prior to the Tibetan diaspora, Bon existed within a web of ancient indigenous animism, Hinduism, sympathetic magic, Buddhism, folk religion, shamanism, Vajrayana, asceticism and mysticism complexes prevalent throughout the Himalaya, freely intermingling throughout the inner Asian region.

The scholarly history of Bon is difficult to clearly ascertain because the earliest surviving documents referring to the religion date to the 9th and 10th Centuries CE, well after Buddhists began the suppression of indigenous beliefs and practices. Moreover, the word Bon is used to describe three distinct traditions:

1. The pre-Buddhist religious practices of Tibetans and the Tibetic peoples of Nepal that are *“imperfectly reconstructed yet essentially different from Buddhism”* and were focused on the person of a divine king.
2. A syncretic religion that arose in Tibet and Nepal during the 10th and 11th Centuries, with strong shamanistic and animistic traditions. This shamanic indigenous religion is not Buddhism but



is sometimes regarded by scholars as a substrate form of Buddhism.

3. A set of popular beliefs in which local shamans try to heal people using ideas sometimes ascribed to *Bon*. Shamans may divine deities' wishes, have supernatural struggles with deities, or become possessed by deities. These shamanic practices are common in the Tibeto-Burman speaking ethnic groups.

Bon teachings feature '*Nine Vehicles*' which are pathway-teaching categories with the distinct characteristics of view, practice and result. Medicine, astrology and divination are in the lower vehicles, then follow sutra and tantra at a higher level, and finally *Dzogchen* or '*great perfection*' being the highest level. Traditionally, the Nine Vehicles are taught in three versions known as the Central, Northern and Southern 'treasures'.



Bon was the original religion of Tibet and Zhangzhung which was taught there by various Buddhas, including Tonpa Shenrab (above).

After Buddhism was introduced to Tibet in the 7th Century, there was often fierce competition between the two traditions. Over time, Bon lost influence and was marginalised by the Tibetan political elite. Among the important aims of *Bon* are cultivating the heart and mind with compassionate activity to benefit others. According to the Bonpas themselves, the Bon religion has gone through three distinct phases: Animistic Bon, Eternal Bon and New Bon.



Tibetan Shaman.

The first phase was grounded in animistic and shamanistic practices and corresponds to the general characterisation of Bon as described by western scholars. Initiation rituals and rites closely correlate to the indigenous shamanic traditions of Siberia. Many Bonpo shamans were members of a clan-guild, and were both male and female. A shamanic aspirant was often visited and possessed by an ancestral shaman and/or one or more of any number of entities such as gods, elementals, demons, and spirits. The possession typically resulted in a divine madness and a temporary retreat into the wilderness, where the shaman lived like an animal and experienced visions of his own death at the hands of spirits. After recently possessed shamans returned from exile they were taught by senior practitioners and members of the clan-guild how to exert power over the spirits that visited them, as well as how properly to intone certain mantras which were believed to possess great power.

In Bon, the five elemental processes of *earth*, *water*, *fire*, *air* and *space* are the essential elements of all phenomena, the most subtle manifestations of which are known as the 'five pure lights'. Physical properties are assigned to the elements: earth is solidity, water is cohesion, fire is temperature, air is motion, and space is the spatial dimension that accommodates the other four active elements. In addition, the elements are correlated to different emotions, temperaments, directions, colours, tastes, body types, illnesses, thinking styles and character.





5 Elements Goddess.

From the five elements emerge the five faculties of sensory perception, the five fields of sensual experience, the five negative emotions, the five wisdoms, and the five extensions of the body. They are the five primary *pranas* or vital energies, and are the constituents of every physical, sensual, mental and spiritual phenomenon.

Buddhism

Especially interesting to seekers of spiritual insight is the knowledge that Tibet has guarded an ancient mystical tradition for hundreds of years, and that her four Tulkus or Great Lamas, each the leader of a particular sect or school, continue to guard it to this day. The mystical tradition per se does not belong exclusively to any one of these schools, but to those students or mystics of any of the schools who have themselves advanced on the spiritual Path.

Religion is extremely important to the Tibetans and has a strong influence over all aspects of their lives. Bon, the ancient religion of Tibet, has been almost entirely eclipsed by Tibetan Buddhism, a distinctive form of *Mahayana* and *Vajrayana*, which was introduced into Tibet from the Sanskrit Buddhist tradition of

northern India. Tibetan Buddhism is practised not only in Tibet but also in Mongolia, parts of northern India, in the Russian Federation republics of Buryat, Tuva and Kalmykia, and in a few parts of China. During China's Cultural Revolution, nearly all of Tibet's monasteries were ransacked and destroyed by the Red Guards, and their lamas executed or marched off into 're-education camps' where many died. Under strict control by the Chinese government, a few of these old monasteries have been allowed to be rebuilt since the mid 1990s, and greater religious freedom has been granted, although severely limited in expression by Western standards. Although monks are returning to monasteries across Tibet, and monastic education has resumed, control over the number that are allowed to enter monastic life, as well as what may be taught, is an ever present restriction.

Tibetan Buddhism has four main traditions (the suffix *pa* is comparable to 'er' in English):

1. *Gelug(pa), Way of Virtue*: also known casually as Yellow Hat, whose spiritual head is the Ganden Tripa and whose temporal head is the Dalai Lama. Successive Dalai Lamas ruled Tibet from the mid-17th to mid-20th Centuries. This order was founded in the 14th to 15th Centuries by Je Tsongkhapa, based on the foundations of the Kadampa tradition. Tsongkhapa was renowned for both his scholasticism and his virtue. The Dalai Lama belongs to the Gelugpa school, and is regarded as the embodiment of the Bodhisattva of Compassion.
2. *Kagyupa), Oral Lineage*: this contains one major subsect and one minor subsect. The first, the Dagpo Kagyu, encompasses those Kagyu schools that trace back to Gampopa. In turn, the Dagpo Kagyu consists of four major sub-sects: the Karma Kagyu, headed by a Karmapa, the Tsalpa Kagyu, the Barom Kagyu, and Pagtru Kagyu. The once-obscure Shangpa Kagyu, which was famously represented by the 20th Century teacher Kalu Rinpoche, traces its history back to the Indian master Niguma, sister of Kagyu lineage holder Naropa. This is an oral tradition which is very much concerned with the experiential dimension of meditation. Its most famous exponent was Milarepa, an 11th Century mystic.



3. *Nyingma(pa), The Ancient Ones*: this is the oldest, the original order founded by Padmasambhava.
4. *Sakya(pa), Grey Earth*: headed by the Sakya Trizin, founded by Khon Konchog Gyalpo, a disciple of the great translator Drokmi Lotsawa. Sakya Pandita 1182–1251 CE was the great grandson of Khon Konchog Gyalpo. This school emphasises scholarship.

The Buddhist mystical tradition entered the Land of Tibet as early as 787 CE when the Indian master Padmasambhava introduced Buddhism into the country and, on invitation of the Tibetan king, performed the consecration ceremony for the first Buddhist monastery there. The 'Old Sect', or Nyingmapas, descends directly from the Nepalese monk Śāntarakṣita, who was the first abbot of that early monastery. He had been abbot of the famous Nalanda University in India. He founded the



19th Century Tibetan Thangka depicting Padmasambhava.



Painted thangka of Milarepa (1052-1135),
Late 19th-early 20th Century, Bhutan.

philosophical school known as *Yogacara-Svatantrika-Madhyamaka*, which united the *Madhyamaka* tradition of Nagarjuna,

Padmasambhava (lit. *Lotus-Born*), also known as the Second Buddha, was a sage guru from Oddiyana, in the modern-day Swat Valley of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in Pakistan. Padmasambhava is said to have transmitted *Vajrayana* Buddhism to Tibet, Bhutan and neighbouring countries. In those lands, he is better known as Guru Rinpoche (lit. *Precious Guru*). From his *Yoga of Knowing the Mind* comes the following:-

In its true state, mind is naked, immaculate; not made of anything, being of the Voidness; clear, vacuous, without duality, transparent; timeless, uncompounded, unimpeded, colourless; not realisable as a separate thing, but as the unity of all things, yet not composed of them; homogeneous, and transcendent over differentiation.

But it was in the 11th Century, contemporary with the Norman conquest of England, that the Tibetan master Marpa (1012-1097) made a pilgrimage over the Himalayas and brought back with him the *Secret*





Marpa Chokyi Lodro.

'Doctrine' of the masters of India, which henceforth was to be preserved in Tibet.

Kagyupa

The ancient mystical fraternity which descends through Marpa is known as the *'School of the Oral Transmission'* because the secret or esoteric teachings of this school have always been passed down exclusively by word of mouth from master to initiate. The Master Marpa's chief successor was the renowned Tibetan mystic *Jetsun Milarepa*.

Milarepa (c.1052-1135) began his career by becoming engaged in the practice of sorcery, for Tibet in the old days was a haunt of so-called 'black magicians' or Bonpo shamen. Having committed innumerable acts of harm, one day Milarepa was overcome with a deep sense of remorse. Repenting of his evil deeds, he then set out in search of a spiritual master capable of guiding him on the path of redemption. So, at 38 years of age, he found Marpa and was accepted on probation. For six long years Marpa caused Milarepa to undergo rigorous acts of penance, and only after the successful completion of this probationary period, was Milarepa initiated by Marpa into the mystical path of Marpa's school. Milarepa became an adept in the control and application of psychic energy, which made it possible for him to live, clad only in a single white cotton robe, at high altitudes in the

Himalayas, even during the freezing cold nights of the Tibetan winter.

Following Milarepa's spiritual enlightenment, people from all over the East, including Burma, Thailand, India and Tibet itself, made pilgrimages to listen to the mystic songs through which he expounded his teachings. He shied away however from public attention and refused to allow a personality cult to develop around him. Instead, the more Milarepa's fame spread throughout the East, the more he retreated into the isolation of the mountains, concentrating his efforts on teaching his 21 chief disciples. He explained the doctrine of reincarnation in this way:-

From beginningless time in the past until now, we have all taken a myriad of bodily forms in our past incarnations, comparable only to the total sum of grains of sand in the great Universe. And so all the sentient beings in the Six Realms are either my mother or my father.

The next head of the Kagyupa fraternity was Master Gampopa Sonam Rinchen (1079-1153), otherwise known as Dagpo Lhaje or Om-Rah-Mah¹, who was believed to be a reincarnation of an earlier Indian mystic. Gampopa devoted his energies to building the monastic and academic establishments of the fraternity and his four main disciples in turn founded the four chief branches of the Kagyupa which survive to this day.



Sekhar Gutog (sras mkhar dgu thog) monastery in Lhodrag near the Bhutan border founded by Milarepa in the 11th Century.



The Mystic Tradition

During the 11th and 12th Centuries, the Kagyupa (Marpa's 'school of oral transmission') became *the* official Tibetan exponent of the Tibetan mystical tradition, and was known as the 'White School' or 'White Tradition' in Tibet. The Master Kunzi Choskyi Nangwa enlarged upon the significance of the word '*oral*' in the name of the Kagyupa school by relating it to a similar sounding Tibetan word meaning '*white*', and the Kagyupa has since then been known as the 'White School of Tibet', or dKar-lugs.

But dKar-lugs (the White Tradition) is not related exclusively to the Kagyupa school. In 1400 CE the great Lama Je Tsongkhapa (1357–1419) of Koko Nor, the reformer of esoteric as well as exoteric Buddhism, founded a new religious order, the Gelugpa or '*Virtuous Ones*', which with time began to displace in part all the earlier sects and schools of Tibet, including the Kagyupa and dKar-lugs. He once told a story:

A certain merchant had an only son. One day while playing, the boy fell into a cesspit. The boy's mother and kinsfolk were deeply distressed and cried out with grief, but none of them entered the cesspit to help rescue the boy. Upon learning of his son's predicament, the boy's father climbed into the cesspit and brought him out.

The boy is a metaphor for all sentient beings. The boy's mother and kinsfolk are those who, upon seeing sentient beings falling into the cyclical flow, are distressed and cry out with grief, but are incapable of bringing the beings out. And the merchant father is a metaphor for the Bodhisattva². Je Tsongkhapa's nephew,

Gyalwa Gendün Drup (1391–1474) was installed in 1439 as the first Dalai Lama of the new order, and in 1445 he founded the great monastery of Tashilhunpo at Shigatse, which later became the seat of the Panchen Lamas. Under the fourth of these Dalai Lamas, the Gelugpa vigorously struggled for political and religious supremacy in Tibet. Patronised by a powerful Mongolian minister, several of the older establishments throughout the land were forcibly incorporated into the reform movement.

The Dalai Lamas

There was at this time an exceptionally enlightened sage in the Gelugpa Order whose name was Lozang Chöskyi Gyaltsan (1570-1662). In recognition of his great learning and saintly manner of life, Lozang Chöskyi Gyaltsan was elected in his 31st year to the Grand Abbotship of Tashilhunpo Monastery. In 1622 he initiated the young Ngawang Lobsang Gyatso as the fifth Dalai Lama who in 1640 steered the Gelugpa Order into a position of supreme temporal power throughout Tibet. All Dalai Lamas since then have been the spiritual heads of the Tibetan government.

The saintly Gyaltsan did not, like his protégé, concern himself with temporal affairs. Instead he devoted his life to uniting and reforming the ancient Tibetan mystical tradition in line with the principles of the great Je Tsongkhapa, founder of the Gelugpa Order, the 'Virtuous Ones'. When the ninth Karmapa Lama, Wangchuk Dorje, died in 1603, many great masters and adepts of the East turned to Gyaltsan for guidance. The following year he was officially given the title of 'Precious Lord Protector' (Gyalgän Rinpoche) for both the Buddhist faith in Tibet, and the much older ancient mystical (Bon) tradition of Tibet. He also received the name 'Precious Gem of Learning' or Panchen Rinpoche, the name by which he is most commonly remembered.

Root Text

The newly enthroned Panchen Rinpoche then issued his famous 'Root Text' bringing into harmony the ancient Kagyupa mystical tradition with the Gelugpa reform. This text, the Precious Gelug/Kagyupa Mahamudra Root Text, is still used as the chief guideline among students of the Tibetan mystical tradition.



Tashilhunpo Monastery - The Main Chanting Hall.





Shigatse

From that time forth, successive reincarnations of the Panchen Lama of Tashilhunpo Monastery near Shigatse have been viewed by the Tibetan people as the highest embodiments of saintliness in the Land of Snow. The Panchen Lama is to this day referred to as the chief official (Maha-chöhan) of the brotherhood of mystic adepts. In fact there is a written prophecy, acknowledged by all the schools of Tibet, that a future incarnation of the Panchen Rinpoche will appear as the Kalki Avatara, (the *'White-Horse Saviour'*) at the end of the present age. In a much earlier incarnation, it is said, he was Manjusirikirti, the mystic king of the ancient land of Shamballa, and consequently he is at the present time the Grand Master of the esoteric initiatory school of the 'Great Wheel of Time', a doctrine said to have originally derived from Shamballa.

The eighth Panchen Rinpoche is reportedly the Grand Lama who oversaw the religious training



Helena Petrovna Blavatsky

of the remarkable Russian woman Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891). The ninth died while in China, and it is not surprising therefore that the tenth, born in 1938 but forced to take up residence in Beijing following the Chinese invasion of Tibet, held the nominal role of spiritual head of all Buddhists throughout

Tibet. There is currently discord over who exactly is the eleventh.

Subsequent to the Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1959, necessitating the flight of the Dalai Lama's government to India, the people and religious leaders of Tibet suffered a long period of intense persecution, mass killings and forced labour in so-called *'re-education camps'* in China. Not only was the Panchen Rinpoche imprisoned for many years under the most appalling conditions imaginable, but virtually all of the leading masters and officials were brutally executed. In recent years however, the Chinese government's attitude has mellowed from its former harsh and inflexible standards, and several monasteries have been rebuilt, and Tibetan religious expression is again tolerated, though not encouraged.

The Tibetan mystical tradition has survived for 1,200 years. A vigorous and ancient people, the Tibetans are more determined than ever to see that this tradition and their religion continue to survive. What the future holds for Tibet is of course not known, but one can only hope that the deep spiritual tradition of this ancient land will one day blossom forth again in full glory, and bring to its people the practical and theoretical teachings of Tibetan Buddhism back into mainstream use.

Footnotes

1. *Om-Rab-Mab*, one of the names of the Tibetan Master *Gampopa Sonam Rinchen* (1079-1153), forms part of one of the group of mantras or vowel sounds still used by members of the Rosicrucian Order.
2. A *Bodhisattva* in Tibetan Buddhism is an 'enlightened being', one of the four 'sublime states' a human can achieve.

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A Life that Matters

by Richard Wiles



Ready or not, some day it will all come to an end. There will be no more sunrises, no minutes, hours or days. All the things you collected, whether treasured or forgotten, will pass to someone else.

- Your wealth, fame and temporal power will shrivel to irrelevance. It will not matter what you owned or what you were owed.
- Your grudges, resentments, frustrations, and jealousies will finally disappear. And so will your hopes, ambitions, plans, and to-do lists; they will all expire.
- The wins and losses that once seemed so important will fade away. It won't matter where you came from, or on what side of the street you lived.
- And it won't matter whether you were beautiful or brilliant. Even your gender and colour will be irrelevant.

So what will matter? How will the value of your days be measured?

- What will matter is not what you bought, but what you built.
Not what you got, but what you gave.
- What will matter is not your success, but your significance.
Not what you learned, but what you taught.
- What will matter is every act of integrity, compassion, courage or sacrifice that enriched, empowered or encouraged others to emulate your example.
- What will matter is not your competence, but your character, not how many people you knew, but how many will feel a lasting loss when you are gone.
- What will matter are not your memories, but the memories that live in those who loved you.
- What will matter is how long you will be remembered, by whom and for what.

~~~~~  
Living a life that matters doesn't happen by accident.  
It's not a matter of circumstance but of choice.

**Choose to live a Life that Matters!**





by **George F Buletza**

# Healing the Whole Person

**T**here is a tendency in the world, with its standards of good and bad, right and wrong, for many people to think that they know the only way to health and wellbeing. Attitudes that permit us to say, *“I’m right, you’re wrong”* have been with us a long time and are pretty hard to lose.

Wise physicians as far back as ancient Greece and even earlier in ancient Egypt, noted that such attitudes could affect the way we perceive our world, our relationships, our hopes for the future and, ultimately, our health and wellbeing. This attitude formed the basis for one of the three stages of human growth and evolution portrayed in the mysteries of Isis of ancient Egypt, later on in the classical period of Greece, and much later on in

the alchemical traditions of medieval Europe.

## **The Three Stages of Human Growth**

During the course of the year, statues of Isis were draped with robes of certain colours that were used to represent the three stages of personal growth. To ancient priests and physicians, the first stage was the colour red and denoted vitality, energy, new life and childlike innocence. This was a dream-like phase, partially unconscious and accepting of nature, but fully participating in her bounties and blessings. It is a stage where we are new to everything, where we need protection from many things due to our inexperience, and where we naïvely expect life to take care of us without giving anything in return.



The second stage of personal growth was characterised in the mysteries by the colour pair black and white. These colours represented duality, good and bad, right and wrong, likes and dislikes. In broad terms it was a phase of choice being presented and taken. Such judgmental thinking leads to expectations about how the world ought to be and how we or others need to behave. From a plethora of alternatives characterised by the colours black and white, choices are made. There is a need to focus clearly on the realities resulting from these choices. The realities sought are of course the bountiful gifts that life creates for us if given half a chance.



*Statues of Isis were draped with robes of certain colours.*

The third stage, represented by gold, is the stage of wisdom, reintegration and wholeness. In the gold stage of human growth an overwhelming compassion drives everything that we do. The Rosicrucian studies point out that our growth and transformation does not occur by being hermits or avoiding integration with other human beings. Transmutation occurs through the tests and trials of life, through our interaction with others. The alchemist's work is with personal realities, with what he or she believes to be true about the world. This subtle shift in outlook, in attitude, in consciousness, suggests that, rather than our shaping life to meet our expectations, we can choose to be transformed by life and by the relationships and experiences we attract to us.

## Developing Healing Relationships

In the ancient world, emphasis was given to the phases and cycles of life as normal processes of nature. These followed each other in ordered sequence and each contributed to the unfoldment of future phases. With regard to healing, this rule also applies.

In terms of a healing situation, the first phase, represented by the colour red, the healer-patient relationship is like a parent-child relationship. In the black-and-white phase, for instance, patients may begin to take personal responsibility rather than expecting a parent-figure to solve their problems. Patients begin participating in the healing process by following the advice of a qualified healer, watching diet, exercise, breathing and

thinking, as well as actively visualising and sincerely wishing for a positive outcome. By participating in their own healing processes, patients come to realise the awesome healing potential already within themselves.

Speaking in the present now, patients in the black/white phase start taking charge of the outcome of their health or eventual demise, and assume far greater responsibility than before. But this has the tendency of cutting out opportunities for developing healing relationships that bring them out of themselves and the many old, narrow and patently false solutions that may have been adopted in ignorance. Such people run the risk of missing opportunities to integrate with other

people who may evoke new ways of doing things and a broader view of the world of healing. If their visualisations, meditations, exercises and other self-healing techniques do not appear to work, they deem

**In the ancient world, emphasis was given to the phases and cycles of life as normal processes of nature.**

themselves unworthy failures. As former Emperor of the Rosicrucian Order, Dr H Spencer Lewis called it, a form of '*mental poisoning*', not one of self-healing.

For the healer, the black/white phase, filled with opportunity that it undoubtedly is, can also lead to unhappiness and the so-called 'dark night of the soul'. Regardless of healing style, whether medical or metaphysical, healers have a personal need to fulfil their reality, to confirm with confidence their belief in their healing abilities. When unsuccessful, they may become despondent and conclude they are poor healers, not cut out for the profession. Or they may try and bolster their belief and confidence in their abilities through one or more of the following strategies, saying to themselves:



1. *"I will master this problem, if I just try harder, read another book, attend another lecture, take another course. Next time it will turn out all right."*
2. We may decide it's the patient's fault. *"My therapy is fine; if only they followed my instructions, everything would be okay."*
3. *"This is not the kind of illness or patient we need to deal with in the future. This is not our specialty or area of expertise."*
4. We can comfort the patient and ourselves by deciding that the very best is being done and that progress is being made, even if we can't see it yet.



Whether healer or patient, we tend to think that strategies like these help us compete in a black-and-white world. They inflate the outer personality, the ego, and encourage us to believe that we are in control of our lives and problems. Yet even if we are convinced of our control, if we still have the courage to go inward with an open, questioning mind, we may discover that we still secretly fear we are not really in control, that maybe we are not really *'good'* healers. We get by, but only just. We make mistakes and feel the guilt of failure.

**Gold is the stage of wisdom, reintegration, and wholeness. The idea of a separate healer and patient loses meaning in the gold phase.**

Caught in the extremes of dualistic thinking, neither healer nor patient is immune from fear, superstition and ignorance; burnout, despair and degenerating health are all the legacy of dualistic thinking. The black-and-white stage represented death in the ancient mysteries; and death in turn represented putrefaction and separation in alchemy. Almost every culture uses black or white, or a combination of both, to represent death. Yet the colours of death also symbolise the potential for rebirth and transformation to the third stage of life, represented by gold.

## The Stage of Wisdom, Reintegration

Gold is the stage of wisdom, reintegration, and wholeness. The idea of a separate healer and patient loses meaning in the gold phase. When, as healers, we deal with patients, we gain insights into our own lives. Friends' needs are our needs, friends' tears our tears, friends' healing our healing. In this gold stage there is no separation between patient and healer, and an overwhelming compassion drives all that one does.

We are one humanity with common needs and problems, and even common transformations. Healings and transformations occur through relationships. We may decide to practise the art of healing consciously, but this is done without the compulsion to act out the role of healer or patient. Each time we enter into a healing relationship with others we do not know what the precise outcome will be. We do not know in just what way our persona can be beneficially transformed. In the gold stage, entering into a healing relationship is an adventure. It is a quest that leads to ever-greater self-discovery and deeper appreciation for the love that unites all.

When a person is ill, that person is vulnerable. Illness cracks our habitual defence mechanisms. When our unquestioned realities and beliefs are no longer effective, we can decide to replace them with realities that more accurately mirror our inner intentions. Upon discarding irrelevant defences we may also be surprised to discover that we can experience greater freedom, spontaneity, and creativity.



If we are willing to let our defences down, to look deeply within at our own nature, then we can come to realise the commonality, the unity, and the love that always existed but that we didn't notice before. We may be surprised by our own transformations made as a result of seeing what is true in this mirror of self. We may discover at an inner psychic level that there are no coincidences, that we and those attracted to us are co-healers, co-creators, on an extraordinary adventure we call life.

To embark on this extraordinary adventure, a trust in the inner power of healing and transformation is essential. Creative openness, integrity, firmness, and compassion follow from genuine confidence or intense trust. With genuine confidence we find that no one in a relationship is less than, or more than, he or she actually is. Instead of being lost in sympathetic responses to symptoms, we interact with compassion and integrity, creatively transforming into what we actually are.

**With trust, illness can be an opportunity, a threshold to greater health and the golden state of life we call wisdom.**

With trust, illness can be an opportunity, a threshold to greater health and the golden state of life we call wisdom. With experience we come to realise that genuine confidence comes only when we are willing to face our own fears. Crossing this threshold results in greater physical, emotional, and mental wholeness. Rather than being the dualistic opposite of illness, health can become a celebration and appreciation of life. Life is our friend. Life is the provider of the conditions and opportunities that evoke the evolution of the open mind.

Growth, transformation and evolution can apply and be incorporated into any therapeutic modality, whether traditional or non-traditional. We can choose to follow allopathic medicine, homeopathy, chiropractic, acupuncture, touch, nutrition or any of a host of other approaches to healing and still realise that life is a shared adventure wherein we all are evolving.



# ZOROASTER

Ancient discoverer  
of light and dark

by Nahid Aryanpour



**Z**oroaster<sup>1</sup>, also known as Zarathustra, was one of the great avatars of the pre-Christian era. He is referred to as a *Saoshyant*, the one who brings about the final renovation of the world. In the Avestan language<sup>2</sup> Saoshyant means *'the one who brings benefit'*, but also *'the bringer [revealer] of light.'*

Zoroaster's birthplace is uncertain, though it is widely believed that he was born in the eastern part of the Iranian Plateau, perhaps in Bactria in modern-day Afghanistan but also perhaps in the Zagros mountains of modern-day Iran. Some sources claim he lived during the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE, roughly contemporaneous with the second intermediate period of Egypt or a few centuries before it<sup>3</sup>. Others believe he lived during the 7<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> Century BCE<sup>4</sup>, at roughly the time as Solon, the great Athenian statesman and poet. And yet others believe that, if he lived at all, it would have been far back in pre-history, possibly as far as 6,000 BCE<sup>5</sup>.



There is no agreement as to when Zoroaster lived, nor even where he lived, but it is likely that what he taught was not so much an entirely new religion but more a reformation of an existing belief system with a few radically new concepts added to it. Just as Jesus is portrayed in the New Testament as a reformer of an old religion, Judaism, Zoroaster may have been a reformer of a much older, possibly Vedic, religion with roots stretching far back into pre-history.

There has been speculation that he lived and wrote around the same time as Akhenaton or Moses, but this is almost certainly incorrect, for it is based only on the single thread of commonality between the three religions emanating from them, namely monotheism. But if Zoroaster lived centuries before Akhenaton, it is not inconceivable that his teachings eventually found their way into the Egyptian court of Akhenaton's father Amenhotep III or centuries earlier, just as the highest expression of the Supreme Deity of the early Vedic tradition, spoken of as *Om*, found its way into the Egyptian pantheon as *Am*, with *Amn* (the [masculine] Am or Amun) being the specific two or three-foot high graven expression of that supreme deity located in Thebes. Cross-fertilisation of religious beliefs over thousands of miles no doubt happened to an extent then, just as it does to a much greater extent today.



*Behistun: Darius triumphing over his enemies beneath the Zoroastrian symbol.*

### Zoroastrianism and the Three Abrahamic Religions

Zoroaster's life may be shrouded in mystery, but there is nothing mysterious about the noble principles he bequeathed us. They show the way to a truthful and constructive life, and are clearly an ancient prototype of Akhenaton's belief system, of Judaism, of Christianity and of Islam. Central to Zoroastrianism are the concepts of *light* and *dark*. It is of course not the only concept of a binary pair of opposites to have emerged in the human mind, but probably the oldest by far.

Day and night must have been deeply ingrained in the daily lives of our early hominid ancestors long before



*Zagros Mountains, Iran.*



*Akhenaton*



fully formed human beings emerged. They are certainly the most clearly manifested pair of opposites in nature, and most creatures know what a vast difference there is between them. The light of day and the dark of night were transformed into the *light of goodness*, the *Abura Mazda* or *Ormazd* (*illuminating wisdom*), and the *darkness of evil*, the *Angra Mainyu* or *Ahriman* (*destructive or dark spirit*).

Zoroaster (Zardusht in Middle and Modern Persian) was in every way an ordinary man, upset by the suffering and injustice he saw around him. Much to the alarm of his wife and relatives, he went off into the wilderness one day in search of answers. Sounds familiar doesn't it? Moses, Jesus, Mohammed all did the same. One day while sitting before a cave entrance, Zoroaster pondered over whether his ascetic life was worth the struggle and that maybe he should give it all up and return home. Soon the sun sank behind the distant hills and darkness crept into the valley below. As he watched this happening, he realised for the first time that, just as external life was divided into the light of day and the darkness of night, so too the world of thought was divided into the light of good and the darkness of evil. And evil thoughts, the darkness of evil or Ahriman, were the cause of all human suffering.

This may seem trivial and obvious to a 21<sup>st</sup> Century mind, but we must remember that many basic principles we take entirely for granted today were once thought of for the first time by a single individual, and prior to when no one had ever thought of it. There has been a first time for everything we can think of, and undoubtedly there was also a first time for the



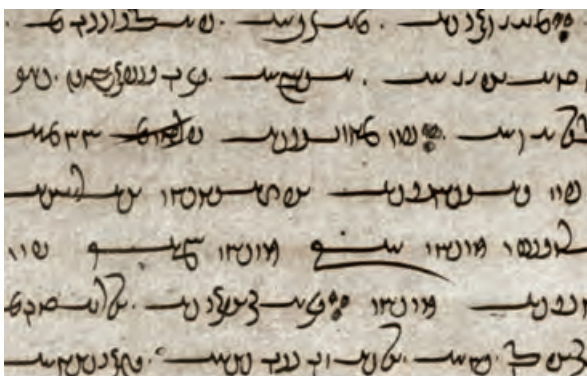
*Image of Zoroaster, the founder of the Zoroastrianism at the Zoroastrian fire temple at Yazd.*

emergence of the concept of good and evil and its association with light and darkness.

## Good Thoughts, Words and Deeds

Following this revelation, Zoroaster returned to his home to begin teaching all who would listen about goodness and the need to pursue it at all costs. He was probably the greatest and most radical of religious leaders of his time, as well as for centuries after his death. To an extent, his legacy survives in the doctrines of the three Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Zoroaster's teachings form a sacred triangle with the three main points occurring again and again in mantric form as *Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds*, or in Avestan as *Humata, Hukhta, Hvareshta*.

Let's look at the first point: *Good Thoughts*. In



*Manuscript portion of the Zend Avesta, the Zoroastrian scripture (Bodleian MS J2).*





Zoroastrian sacred literature, it is written:

Your character is built by your thoughts. As you think so will you become.

Zoroaster stressed that everyone had free will and could choose between thinking good thoughts or harbouring bad thoughts; the right thinking and wrong thinking of the much later Buddhist philosophy.

If you think nobly, you will be born with a noble character. If you think evil, you will be born with evil traits.

Noble ideals, as thoughts, are the beginning of all things and hence the first point of the Zoroastrian sacred triangle. And as the quotation implies, Zoroastrianism, though not clearly saying so, certainly acknowledges the existence of reincarnation or transmigration as found in the Vedic religious stream.

Next, look at the second point: *Good Words*. In this regard the sacred writings counsel us to “...render to each man his due.” Speak words from a kind heart, for each day offers endless opportunities for good words, spoken generously and touching another’s heart; thereby potentially positively changing his or her life. Words can inspire people to do both good or bad. Good words are

the only ones worth keeping, for only good words lead to growth and upliftment in all areas of life.

And finally the third point of the triangle: *Good Deeds*. Through acts of kindness, a person transforms previously thought-about and spoken-of ideals into physical action. Only by performing *deeds* do things finally crystallise into physical reality. Through every good deed, those doing the deed, as well as those benefiting from it, advance a bit on their path to ever greater spiritual realisation. In the Rosicrucian philosophy, the key to true spiritual growth lies in selfless acts of service to others.

## Only One Lasting Good

Zoroastrianism, also called Mazdayazna or *din-e zardusht* (*the religion of Zoroaster*) by its followers, claims that for all people there is but one lasting good, “...the health, power and purity of the soul.” We have a striking example of this in the clothing of the Parsis (meaning: Persians) in India, who still adhere to this ancient religion of light.

The Parsis wear whatever dress is best suited to their occupation, but beneath their outer garments, the *sudreh* and *kusti* (a white shirt and a belt made from white wool) must always be worn. The *sudreh* is



Zoroastrian Parsi Navjote Ceremony.



Parsis from India, c. 1870.



symbolic of the simplicity and purity of life. The kusti, made of lamb's wool, reminds the wearer of innocence and gentleness. In the act of putting on the kusti, each person makes a commitment to fight evil. This simple act tries to speak to the true inner man or woman as the belt itself is given three winding turns: *good thoughts*, *good words* and *good deeds*, always and everywhere!

The followers of Zoroaster did not *worship* fire, as is sometimes thought. To them, fire was a symbol, and a symbol only, of spiritual purity. His philosophy is based on the supreme value of spiritual health and wellbeing, and provides its adherents with a sense of divine order where a pattern of life in the form of regular prayers and rituals to revitalise the world, social periods, acts of philanthropy, and private moments of devotion to the great God of Light *Ahura Mazda*, gives them a sense of cohesion and continuity.

*Hambandagi* is a term with an inner meaning that the pursuit of goodness is not just a means but is an end in itself, for it alone leads to social cooperation, harmony and personal spiritual liberation. It is a pattern for living a holy life where the Cosmic provides us with many opportunities for growth, progress and happiness. If we could ask Zoroaster what happiness is, he would probably give a single answer: "*Happiness is manifesting your soul for all to see.*"



*Zoroastrian Temple of Yazd, Iran. Photo: GFDL.*



*Zoroaster depicted in The Book of Chronicles.*

## Footnotes

1. Zoroaster is the English variant of the Greek form of his name: Zōroastrēs (Ζωροάστρης).
2. The Avestan language was an early form of Persian and an Indo-European language closely related to Sanskrit. It is partly because the oldest parts of the Zoroastrian teachings were written in old Avestan that experts in the field believe the religion's origins lie close in time to the emergence of the Vedic religious stream during the mid to late 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BCE.
3. The *Gathas* and *Yasna Haptanghaiti*, both works assumed to have been written by Zoroaster, were written in Old Avestan, a language dated to the early part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millenium BCE latest, and more likely several hundred years earlier and contemporaneous with Sanskrit as a living language. All known surviving Zoroastrian literature was however written (or transcribed from earlier documents) no earlier than the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> Centuries CE. Zoroaster's writings were however referred to by the ancient Greeks, and Plutarch and Diogenes, for example, suggested an era prior to 6,000 BCE.
4. Following the conquest of Babylon and lands to the east and north of it by *Alexander the Great*, the *Seleucid Kings* introduced a new calendar based on the year of his death (323 BCE). The Zoroastrian priests countered this by formalising their own calendar based on the birth of their prophet Zoroaster, and the so-called '*traditional date*', widely accepted up to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, was placed 258 years before Alexander, namely, 581 BCE.
5. See *Plato Prehistorian* by Mary Settegast, 1990 Lindisfarne Press.



# Eugenius Idiodi

Grand Administrator of the English  
West Africa Administration of  
AMORC

**A**t a special gathering of Grand Masters of the Rosicrucian Order in Bruxelles, Belgium in October 2021, Fr Eugenius Idiodi was unanimously elected as the new Grand Administrator of the English Speaking West Africa Administration of AMORC. He succeeds his father in the role, the much loved Fr Kenneth U Idiodi, who served the Order in the same capacity for several decades. In a solemn ceremony, Fr Eugenius was installed by Grand Master Sven Johansson at the English West Africa Administration headquarters in Calabar, Nigeria, on 2 April, 2022. Until recently, a successful engineer by profession who worked on several major international projects, he is held in high regard by members and is much welcomed into this high Office.



*The Tao that can be told  
is not the eternal Tao.*

*The name that can be named  
is not the eternal Name.*

*The unnamable is  
the eternally real.*

*Naming is the origin  
of all particular things.*

*Free from desire,  
you realise the mystery.*

*Caught in desire, you see  
only the manifestations.*

*Yet mystery and manifestations  
arise from the same source.*

*This source is called darkness,  
darkness within darkness,  
the gateway to all understanding.*



