

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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ON MOKSHA-NIRVANA	3
FOOD FOR THOUGHT	
THE MYSTERY OF REGENERATION	9
NATIONALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM	15
EXTRACTS FROM UNPUBLISHED LETTERS	19
STUDY, APPLICATION AND PROMULGANTION—I	
COHESION AND DISPERSION	21
THE MOON IN OCCULT PHILOSOPHY—III	27
IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY	33

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ON MOKSHA-NIRVANA

MOKSHA is a term in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism which refers to various forms of emancipation, enlightenment, freedom, liberation and release. Ancient literature of different religious traditions uses different phrases for *moksha*, such as *Kaivalya* (state of Absolute), *Parampadha* and *Nirvana*, which imply release from suffering and rebirth. This liberation can be attained *while one is on earth*, and then it is called *Jivanmukti*, and the person attaining to it is called *Jivanmukta*. On the other hand, *Videha mukti* is liberation from the body, after death.

Man is a soul that takes up a body for the purpose of experience and emancipation, through a series of rebirths. At the end of each birth each soul has accumulated certain merit (good deeds or *punya*) and demerit (sin or *paap*), based on which his state after death would be determined. The length of stay in hell or heaven would be in proportion to the soul's merit or demerit. After which the soul is forced to take birth again on earth, and the cycle continues indefinitely, till one succeeds in reaching self-knowledge and awareness of oneness with the Supreme Spirit. However, those who longed for freedom only from sorrow, to enjoy peace and bliss, were the ones who desired a longer stay in *Swarga*, Paradise or *Devachan*. Thus, a person who does not believe in rebirth, looks for an eternal reward in heaven, while the Hindu relies upon pleasure to be had in heaven or *swarga*, and hopes that he will continue to

enjoy those pleasures by being born in a fortunate family. There are special ceremonies, certain kind of sacrifices, penances, prayers and actions, as a result of which a long stay in the heaven-world, as also, a rebirth on earth in a royal family, or a family with great riches is ensured. “Some ceremonies procure entrance into a delightful state after death which will last for incalculable periods of time,” writes Mr. Judge. (*Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, pp. 57-58)

Actions prompted by selfish, worldly desires may result in temporary happiness, by way of obtaining wealth, fame, name, power and position, but ultimately result in agitation, anxiety and sorrow. But even meritorious actions aimed at bringing the good of humanity, when performed without renouncing attachment to the fruit of action and with the feeling of doership, bind the actor to the action. Such a person earns merit, some of which allows him to enjoy a long stay in *Devachan* or *swarga*, while others bring him back to earth. These actions do not lead to liberation or freedom from the cycle of birth and death. Only selfless actions performed with the feeling of being an agent of the divine, and after renouncing attachment to the fruit of even a good action, lead to liberation.

When a stone is thrown into the pond it causes ripples. These ripples converge back to the point of disturbance. When we perform an action, good or bad, by fixing our desire on the result, we offer an individual focus to which the consequences return. “It is not ours to say, what shall be the result of an action; the Law will bring about a result much better, perhaps, than we had imagined...But if we fix our desire on accomplishing even a seeming good result, we are bound by that desire, no matter whether our wish is accomplished or not,” writes Mr. Judge (*Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, pp. 68-69). The advice is to aim for accomplishing not any particular good, but what is intrinsically good—the universal, supreme, good. We are often short-sighted, and therefore, can view only temporary and immediate good that may flow from our actions. But that which may look to be beneficial in the beginning may prove to be painful in the end. Sometimes the “seeming good result” is not obtained

because the “greater good” which the Law brings to us is that which makes for our growth. When all our efforts to free people from adversities fail, we may be hugely disappointed, but we are unable to see that perhaps some of these people acquired sympathy, tolerance, courage or patience, as a result of being in that situation. The Buddhist say that the mental attitude after performing a good action should be that “May the merit of my good deeds be distributed to the whole humanity.” It is like a writer, who refuses to accept royalty, but wishes that it be distributed to others.

But till we have learnt to act *selflessly*, we remain in bondage. Hence Shri Krishna says, “They, having enjoyed that spacious heaven for a period in proportion to their merits, sink back into this mortal world where they are born again as soon as their stock of merit is exhausted: thus those who long for the accomplishment of desires, following the *Vedas*, obtain a happiness which comes and goes.” (*Gita*, IX)

The risks involved in taking such a course are numerous and great. “So the man may in this life perform ‘special ceremonies’ and conform to texts and doctrine, attaining thereby the reward of heaven, and still have left over a quantity of that ‘mysterious power of meditation’ unexpended; and what its complexion is he does not know,” writes Mr. Judge (*Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, p. 66). At death, only a small portion of the incarnated consciousness unites itself to the divine nature, and goes to *Devachan*. A large portion of our mind which was involved in lower propensities and worldly pursuits is left behind as mental deposits or unexpended Karma. This force of unexpended Karma and unspent affinities, which assert themselves, is called the “mysterious power of meditation.” It is also called the line of life’s meditation, or that on which our heart was set. People who perform ceremonies and rituals to obtain the reward of heaven-world do not realise that they still have a large quantity of unexpended *Karma*. It includes the numberless affinities engendered in past lives which result in our being born in the company of those with whom these affinities were created in the

past. In short, so long as we do not cultivate mental abnegation and mental devotion to the Law of *Karma*, mere ceremonies or leading a virtuous life will not be sufficient to counteract rebirth.

Similar fate is shared by the person who chooses the Path of Liberation or *moksha*, and becomes free from the wheel of birth, death and rebirth. Though *moksha* is generally defined as freedom from suffering and rebirth, and as the highest goal of human life, a closer look shows that it is but the state of exalted and glorious selfishness. In his case after an immense period of enjoyment of peace and bliss of Nirvana, he is born again on earth. In the *Secret Doctrine* (I, 371), H.P.B. appears to refer to those who choose the path of liberation, when she describes *Atyantika Pralaya* which is called the individual *pralaya* or Nirvana; after having reached which, there being no more future existence possible, no rebirth till after the *Maha Pralaya*, the period of 311 trillion years. When that period ends, the one who chose the Path of Liberation is born again, to begin on a relatively lower level in the new universe.

Buddhism speaks of four stages of perfection, of which the fourth is known as *Rahat* or *Arhat*. An *Arhat* sees Nirvana during his life. Every initiate who has crossed or reached the end of what is called the “fourth Path” is placed on the threshold of Nirvana. The path of spiritual perfection becomes twofold in the end—the Path of Liberation and the Path of Renunciation. Having reached Nirvana, every *Arhat* has a choice to enter Nirvana or to renounce it. The one who enters Nirvana, chooses the Path of Liberation or *moksha*, a state of exalted and glorious selfishness. He is said to have become a *Pratyeka Buddha*, who cuts himself off from the suffering humanity. The one who chooses to renounce the peace and bliss of Nirvana, becomes a *Nirmanakaya*, and remains constantly in touch with the misery of humanity. One choosing the Path of Liberation has no more choice, whereas the one choosing the Path of Renunciation has a choice of entering or renouncing Nirvana, again and again. The one who renounces the peace and bliss of Nirvana is not forced to take birth again. We get a hint to this effect in the

Gita: “They take sanctuary in this wisdom, and having attained to my state they are not born again even at the new evolution, nor are they disturbed at the time of general destruction.” (XIV, sloka 2)

Mr. Judge defines the *Jivanmukta* as “entire separation of *Jiva* from all connection with matter and complete destruction of *Karma*, whether *good* or *bad*” (*W.Q.J. Series No. 28*, p. 23). As to separation from all connection with matter, we find that according to Visishtadwaita philosophy, the released soul or a *Jivanmukta*, after reaching *Moksha*, enjoys the bliss in a place called *Parampadha*, which place is not material, but made of *Suddasatwa*, the essence of which the body of *Iswara* is formed. There, the *Jivatmas* (Monads) who have attained *Moksha*, are never again subject to the qualities of either matter or *Karma*, but if they choose, *for the sake of doing good to the world*, they may incarnate on Earth (*S.D.*, I, 132). In the footnote, H.P.B. states that such voluntary incarnation is defined as *Nirmanakaya* or the “*surviving spiritual principles of man*.” This clearly indicates that when a perfected being blends all his “principles” into one, it refers to the higher three principles of *Atma-Buddhi-Manas* clothed in the *Nirmanakayic* body.

It appears that it is comparatively easy to attain *moksha*, freedom from rebirth, but far more difficult to become a “renouncer.” Probably, compassion and altruism must be predominantly developed all through various lives, as was the case with the Buddha, as is evident from various stories of self-sacrifice in the Jataka tales. In *Studies in the Voice of the Silence* (p. 11), we read, “The knowledge necessary for spiritual Self-Realization is limited; but that necessary for the service of other souls is vast and complex. Esoteric philosophy, advocating for its votaries the treading of the Path of Renunciation, requires that they obtain the latter knowledge.” Shri B. P. Wadia points out that one can liberate himself by overcoming sins and vices. A person can become free by discharging his duties. He pays off the debt. He acts, as suggested in *Buddhi-Yoga* of the *Gita*, without attachment to the fruits of action, and renouncing doership. The one, who wishes for liberation, performs his duties in such a

way that he exhausts his karma, so that no new Karma or causes are created. But such a person leaves behind him a particular set of *skandhas*, which force him to incarnate, even if it is in another *manvantara*. He may be unselfish, but he has not become selfless.

However, besides detachment, it is also essential to learn the lessons contained in the performance of a duty, and develop the power which is connected with that duty. He says that unless *effort along special lines* is made, power which is associated with that duty will not be unfolded. In performing the duty, one should not only have detachment from the personal self, *but also attachment to the higher Self*, and only then the field of sacrificial service widens. The one who aspires to walk the path of renunciation, acts in such a way that every duty he performs creates for him the opportunities to serve an increasing number of human minds. His duty becomes a sacrifice and that in turn deepens his spiritual insight, provided that it was performed correctly, both in motive and method, according to the teachings of Esoteric Philosophy. The “renouncer” has to practice the most difficult art, of doing good to others, and that requires exceptional knowledge. This higher knowledge will be sought only by those who aspire to walk the path of renunciation.

The Path of Liberation or what is normally known as *moksha* is termed the “Open” path, in the *Voice of the Silence*, the Mahayana Buddhist text. The Path of Renunciation is called the “Secret” path. The Open Path is taught to the laymen, which leads to the goal of Self-realization and Nirvana, and the much-desired freedom from rebirth. It appears that in earlier times both the paths were taught, but gradually, it was only the Path of Liberation which was emphasized, and the existence of the other path might have been only indirectly hinted at. It may be because the Path of Liberation is more attractive to lay people, who are looking for their *own* peace and bliss, and freedom from rebirth. It may also be because the treading of the Path of Renunciation calls for different kind of aspiration and deeper knowledge.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT THE MYSTERY OF REGENERATION

HOW AND WHY a lizard can regenerate its tail while a cat cannot. A lizard when attacked, loses its tail and runs for safety. Within 60 days, the tail is regrown. What is the biology behind this? This question was addressed by Dr. Kenro Kusumi and colleagues at Arizona State University in the U.S. on August 20, 2014. They found that a lizard turns on as many as 326 genes of its genome in specific regions of the re-growing tail to do so. It also turns on what are called “satellite cells,” which can grow and develop into skeletal muscles and other tissues. One of the authors has suggested that since humans too have such satellite cells, may be humans too can regrow muscles and cartilage if they can be harnessed inside the body.

Lizards are a late entry into the world, having first arrived on Earth around 310-320 million years (MYR) ago. Preceding them were the earthworms (518 MYR) and flatworms (840 MYR), which were called “the intestines of the earth” by Aristotle and “the earliest ploughers” by Darwin. In a recent paper (PLOS ONE, Zattara et al. Proc. Royal Soc. B 286:20182524), scientists studied the way 35 different species of worms regenerated their body, after parts of their bodies were chopped off. At least four separate types of worms could regenerate their heads. Studying the biology of these organisms would be remarkably insightful, as has been attempted with lizards.

Why can worms even regenerate their heads, but the later day arrivals, lizards, can only rebuild their tails and “higher animals” cannot even do that? There are two kinds of analytical arguments towards this...

A more recent analysis is by Dr. Jonathan Slack of the University of Bath, U.K., titled “Animal regeneration: Ancestral character or evolutionary novelty?” which appeared in EMBO Reports 2017. He points out by using genetic analysis, that the ancestral character in all organisms is reflected by the expression of two major genes,

conserved across all animals—lizard to human—namely *Wnt* and *BMP*. *Wnt* mediates the developmental pathway implicated in the proliferation of cells and in self-renewal signals. *BMP* is another gene, seen again from fruit flies all the way up to us, and the *BMP* mediated pathway too plays a key role in organ and body development. The fact that these genes are present in all cells would seem to make organ regeneration possible in principle.

But then, once the tail is lost, in say a rat or a cat, it does not regenerate. They just make do without the lost tail. Dr. Bely (from the University of Maryland, U.S.A.) points out that the bio-energetic cost of regenerating the tail here does not appear worthwhile when the animal can make do without it (indeed, the lizard seems to need the tail as an important organ, in order to survive and flourish—it is what Slack might call as an evolutionary novelty; its predecessors did not “invent” this important appendage).

Coming back to the lizard, actually, the regenerated tail is not identical to the lost one, but an “imperfect replicate,” as was shown by Lozito and Tuan (*Dev.Bio.*2015, 399, 249). Instead of the original vertebral tail, the regrown one had no bones but softer, more flexible cartilage. In other words, it is what Dr. Sukla Ghosh of Kolkata had described as a “compensatory growth” rather than true regeneration.

While the Arizona group, working on the cell biology of the regenerated lizard tail, did not find any specific progenitor cells or stem cells of the tail tissues, the newly emerged stem cell technology is generating a lot of excitement in the field. Stem cells found, for example in the bone marrow, can be cultured in a laboratory to produce cells and tissues of a few other parts of the body. This has been done in generating a bladder and stitching it on to a youth who had a bladder injury. In recent times, any cell in the body can be “induced” to become a stem cell upon the introduction of four chosen genes. The so produced induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs) have been used in the laboratory to generate chosen tissues and even mini-organs called “organoids.” While this field is still in its infancy, it promises to produce organs which, when needed, can be used for

regeneration. (Courtesy: *The Hindu*)

[Taken from *Bhavan's Journal*, April 15, 2019: “The Lost Tail that Wags Research Tales,” by D. Balasubramanian.]

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Regeneration means regrowth of a damaged or missing organ part from the remaining tissue. In nature there are numerous examples of regeneration. Several of the amphibia can replace lost parts to a high degree. The whole limb of a salamander or a triton will grow again and again after amputation. Many lower marine animals like the hydra have the capacity to reproduce an entire organism from a single transverse section. The Flatworm cut into nine pieces will grow into nine normal smaller worms. Crayfish, Starfish and Earthworms, too, have the capacity for regeneration. The same power is witnessed in the vegetable kingdom. We can grow whole plants from a piece of the root, stem, and in special cases, from the leaf, of certain species. Humans can regenerate some organs, such as the liver. If part of the liver is lost by disease or injury, the liver grows back to its original size. Our skin is constantly being renewed and repaired.

In the article, “The Mystery of Regeneration,” that appeared in *Theosophy* magazine (September 1937) we are given a broad outline of the Theosophical perspective on the subject. As regeneration is a secondary aspect of the creative force in nature, it is useful to begin with consideration of morphogenesis as a universal process. Morphogenesis is the biological process which causes the organism to develop its form or shape. The evolution of form out of pre-existing material is in every case the result of thought. The entire universe is the result of this power of thought, called *Kriyasakti*. H.P.B. gives an illustration of the power of thought in *The Theosophist* (February 1885), by referring to the fact of an insect assuming the form of a fly, which is known in Sanskrit as *Brahmarakitanyayam*. She explains that if a bee and a caterpillar are put together in a box with some green leaves, and the box is

closed, then when the lid is opened, after fifteen days, it is found that the caterpillar has assumed the form of the bee. That is because, in the closed box, whenever the caterpillar moved, the bee stings it. This creates such a fright in the insect that it seems to forget its very existence, and meditates only on the form of the bee. But such a direct use of *Kriyasakti* by man would involve knowledge of what Mr. Judge calls the “inner chemical and dynamic laws of Nature.”

We see that “regeneration” is not possible to man and also to mammals, but is possible to the lower forms. We get the answer by tracing back their origin. Theosophy teaches that human form was astral and ethereal in the far past. The potentiality of every organ useful to animal life is locked up in Man. Before arriving at the present form, human evolution has involved various forms of reproduction, giving rise to a variety of forms. In an attempt to build the present human form, these prototypes were *shed* in the course of astral development, and the same was preserved by Nature, for building the animal forms. Thus:

So far as our present Fourth Round terrestrial period is concerned, the mammalian fauna are alone to be regarded as traceable to prototypes shed by Man. The amphibia, birds, reptiles, fishes, etc., are the resultants of the Third Round, astral fossil forms stored up in the auric envelope of the Earth and projected into physical objectivity subsequent to the deposition of the first Laurentian rocks....But the Third Round terrestrial animal forms were just as much referable to types thrown off by Third Round man, as that new importation into our planet’s area—the mammalian stock—is to the Fourth Round Humanity. (*S.D.*, II, 684-85)

In other words, it appears that the lower forms of life, belonging to lower kingdoms, possessing the power of regeneration were evolved from the prototypes shed by Man of the Third Round. Likewise, the mammalian forms must be traced to prototypes shed by Fourth Round humanity. The forms belonging to lower kingdoms, which possess the capacity for regeneration only typify or express

in reflected form the capacities of their creators (the Third Round Man) during that period. What was the nature of third Round evolution, which produced the types of the organisms which can now regenerate lost parts? There are numerous references which show the *astral* character of the third Round evolution. “A vast period of time, about 300 million years, was passed by earth and man, and all kingdoms of nature in an astral stage. Then there was no gross matter such as we know now. This was in early rounds when Nature was proceeding slowly with the work of perfecting the types on the astral plane, which is matter though very fine in its texture,” writes Mr. Judge. (*The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 141)

In modern biology two kinds of cells are recognized, germ cells and somatic cells. The germ cell is any biological cell that gives rise to the gametes (sperm or ovum) of an organism. Somatic cells, on the other hand, can reproduce only themselves, and carry out ordinary bodily functions. The characteristic feature of regeneration in mammals is that lost cells are only replaced from cells of the same morphological order. The somatic tissue of the lower animals, however, has the power to form a complete organism, including the reproductive organs and new germ cells. But where does the germ cell obtain the pattern of the entire organism? Chemical analysis of the chromosomes of germ cells have shown lack of variety in their constituents. If genes are physical entities containing the hereditary characters of future organism, they should have highly complex chemical structure, but instead they have a simple and definite composition. There can be but one conclusion: *The morphological plan is written in a subtler substance than visible physical matter.* This is the astral body. In the lower forms, however, the organic memory of the astral matrix pervades in latency the entire form, as must be the case if a small piece of a worm can reconstruct the complicated system of tissues and organs of its species. Such a capacity indicates that the morphogenetic process during the third Round was quite different from the prevailing order of the fourth. The unfolding of the astral pattern is now limited to the specialized

agency of the germ cell, in the case of those forms, peculiar to fourth Round evolution.

In other words, the present *lowest* forms are *nearest* to the third Round conditions. Thus, worms, insects, etc., consist in large part of germ plasm, while in man and mammal the somatic cells enormously preponderate. This may be regarded as the physical explanation of the problem. Add to this the psychological factor: the imagination of man which dwells on the injury, and as a result it is easy to see that the astral limb would soon wither away. If thought can generate organic lesions, as is now admitted by medical science, who can deny that the same power reversed might work equal wonders on the side of reconstruction? When man develops his powers of Will and thought he will have the power of regeneration, as we are told that ages ago there were beings born by the powers of Thought (*Kriyasakti*) and Will (*Ichhasakti*).

Stem cells are cells of the body which can divide and become differentiated. When an organism grows, stem cells specialize and take specific functions. They have the ability to develop into many different cell types, like muscle cells, skin cells, bone or liver cells. Stem cells are divided into two main forms: embryonic stem cells and adult stem cells. The *embryonic* stem cells come from unused embryos resulting from an in-vitro fertilization procedure. They are pluripotent, *i.e.*, they can turn into more than one type of cell. There are two types of *adult* stem cells: One type comes from fully developed tissues, like the brain, skin and bone marrow. They are more likely to generate only certain types of cells. Thus, a stem cell derived from the liver will only generate more liver cells. The second type is *induced pluripotent* stem cells, which are manipulated in the laboratory to take on the characteristics of embryonic stem cells. Scientists admit that limb regeneration is more than just replacing tissues. It involves bone, muscle, blood vessels and nerves. It appears that limb regeneration largely remains a mystery for modern science, at least at present.

NATIONALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

LOVE OF and devotion to one's native country, called patriotism (from the Greek root-word, *pater*, meaning *father*) is as natural a sentiment of a human being as filial reverence one feels for one's parents. As mind-beings, each an incarnated ray of the universal mind, we humans have the innate capacity to enter into intimate relation with every conceivable condition, from the restrictive and limited—such as, interests of our personal self and its limited environ—to expanding areas of experience and feeling to embrace the whole of mankind and the universe. In this vast scale of expanding field of consciousness men, as souls, are at different stages of development. Patriotism is a stage in the evolution of Soul, or growing expression of heart-consciousness, heart being the seat of divine consciousness.

Patriotic feeling for one's homeland has many facets, and takes on manifold moral colouring. It may be of political, ethnic, geographical, cultural, linguistic, religious, or historical. All these aspects of patriotism may be glimpsed in the seminal classical work of Jawaharlal Nehru, *Discovery of India*, an eloquent and scholarly expression of his unbounded love of India, its ancient philosophical and cultural heritage, its multi-ethnicity, its art and literature. His love of the mother land was so intense that he had willed that the ashes of cremation of his mortal remains should be immersed in the rivers and the three seas surrounding the sub-continent, and scattered over the mountains and plains of India. It is noteworthy that his patriotism did not preclude his respect for people and cultures of other nations and his belief in cosmopolitan humanism. He was an ardent protagonist of world peace and amity among nations. This is an example of patriotism of nobler and universal character. There were thousands of others, like him, who, during India's struggle for freedom from colonial rule, moved by the same lofty sentiment of patriotism, sacrificed their lives and fortunes for political freedom of their motherland and for the uplift of countrymen who have suffered material and spiritual impoverishment by centuries of

political slavery to alien rule of invading hordes.

When we study the ancient epics, *Srutis*, and *Smritis* which are extant, history of rise and fall of kingdoms and empires of many cultures and ethnicities, of their marvellous arts, architectures, from ancient to mediaeval times, dotted all over India, and classical literary and artistic masterpieces of unmatched beauty, depth of insights, wisdom and elevated morality, one feels a deep love of India of hoary antiquity. We cannot help but deeply feel the loss of the glory of the perfect civilization that India was in every field of human endeavour, and a longing to see her restoration to her past glory. This is all the more so when we realize that India is a vast treasure house of profound exhaustless knowledge, which it is her destiny to disseminate freely to the whole world, which, disillusioned with the hollowness of mere material advancement, is looking to ancient India for help and inspiration for a worthier ideal for the reconstruction of a better and a nobler world order.

Many an Indian heart feels such patriotic surge, who are working, each in his own way, towards the desired end. But there are also many pitfalls in this great patriotic enterprise; when, due to lack of spiritual discrimination and understanding of universal brotherhood, it is carried by some to extremes along the lines of cultural exclusiveness with an undue sense of superiority of one's own brand of culture, a pride of heritage, an indifference to and an intolerance of other traditions and cultures, misreading and misinterpreting historical facts and experience of the nation to subserve their bigoted ideologies, biases and prejudices, causing divisions and discord.

The latter kind of patriotism is termed in modern lexicography as *nationalism*. Liberal thinkers everywhere have discountenanced it as productive of much evil in the society and a cause of disturbance of world peace. George Orwell draws a clear line of distinction between patriotism and nationalism. He states it well when speaking of patriotism, to the effect that it is devotion to a particular way of life to which one belongs but has no wish to force it upon other people, and that, of its nature, it is defensive, culturally and militarily.

Nationalism, he says, on the other hand, is inseparable from desire for power and more prestige for one's nation over other nations. World history is replete with instances of ethnic, religious and cultural genocide and wars in which nations have indulged, motivated by chauvinistic sentiments, so much so, that pacifists like Samuel Johnson distrusted the very sentiment of patriotism. "It is lamentable," said Voltaire, "that to be a good patriot one must become the enemy of the rest of mankind."

Yet patriotism is natural to the human heart, which must be facilitated to flower out into the next higher stage of universalism or internationalism, if it is not to be constrained by narrow conceptions of life and duty, and degraded into chauvinistic nationalism, which is one of the potent causes of world's misery and national distress. The soil of the mind of the nation is to be cultivated and enriched with non-sectarian education that eliminates weeds of prejudices and biases, promotes liberal outlook, and inculcates universal values, for the reception of seminal seeds of eternal verities. It is on such soil that grows the spirit of true patriotism which ever tends to mature into universalism. Patriotism is a necessary stage in the evolution of man towards a higher and nobler sentiment of love of mankind as a whole. Says a Master of Wisdom, "In learning to love one's country one but learns to love humanity the more."

Individuals have perforce to progress on the path of Self-development along the national and racial line of heredity to which the individual belongs. As one eliminates individual and national defects and prejudices, cultivates nobler virtues born out of an appreciation of the ideal of human perfection through a truer realization of the nature of the true Self, as Self of All, and a conviction of universal brotherhood, one raises oneself morally and spiritually, in however small a measure it may be, and by reaction raises the consciousness of his nation, with a beneficial effect on mankind as a whole. In India the true patriot will devote himself to educating people out of the evils of false caste system which has been the bane of India, the scourge of untouchability, religious superstitions

and seek to inculcate religious tolerance and brotherhood among communities, by personal example and labour. “India has been going down for thousands of years. She must take equally long for her regeneration. The duty of philanthropists is to work with the tide and assist the onward impulse,” writes a Master of Wisdom.

In America the patriot will perhaps cherish the universal and humanistic values of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness as fundamental and natural rights of man free from the regressive theological dogmatism, as articulated in the American Declaration of Independence, and help in the realization of the “new order of ages” encompassing all mankind, envisioned by the noble founders of the Republic. It will be promotion of true Theosophical education which alone can liberate minds from racial and creedal prejudices which divide man from man, and bring about true national and international unity, concord and cooperation. Mr. Judge wrote, “I believe personally that the day is coming when America is to be the country where the new race will be born that will know all about the true laws and what is right, and will be able to perform it” (*W.Q.J. Series No. 3*, p. 17). Rescuing the seminal values of national ethos, which might have fallen into degradation, towards reconstruction of social order on higher ideals would be the endeavour of the true patriot of every nation. The spirit of true patriotism, which every patriot ought to imbibe, is stated by Gandhiji, who practiced it in the service of his nation and for the larger good of humanity:

My patriotism is not an exclusive thing. It is all embracing and I should reject that patriotism which sought to mount upon the distress or exploitation of other nationalities. The conception of my patriotism is nothing if it is not always, in every case without exception, consistent with the broadest good of humanity at large. (*The mind of Mahatma Gandhi*, Navajivan Publishing House, p. 28)

EXTRACTS FROM UNPUBLISHED LETTERS STUDY, APPLICATION AND PROMULGATION—I

THE metaphysical and moral aspects of Theosophy are intimately connected. They are Higher Manas and Buddhi, correspondentially speaking. Buddhi, the moral aspect, has to be activated; students of *The Secret Doctrine* go to the mental aspect. But Buddhi-Manas is latent and aloof from our personalities. We are Kama-Manasic; so lower-Manas mentality, joined to human desires and passions, functions prominently. When we speak of morality we mean human-personality morality—to be good in contradistinction to being spiritual. Similarly our mental efforts at, let us say, grasping the Three Fundamentals are mechanical, not truly metaphysical. The sevenfold man is a *robot*, not a living, vibrating *Antahkarnic* entity. Study of the Stanzas of the *Book of Dzyan* and *The Voice of the Silence* should and would produce at least temporarily an *Antahkarna* state, during which the world of the senses and the sensuous falls away and that of the Soul and Spirit, of Ideation and Imagination, is brought into activity. We might return to the world of pelf from the world of power, but then we would remember and aspire not to have the world too much with us.

Wisdom is an aspect of Compassion. You will get it a little more quickly if you train your memory to remember and to retain ideas in pairs; *i.e.*, to discern in every teaching both the metaphysical and the moral aspects. You will find that *the* strong point in Judge’s articles and in Crosbie’s letters. Do not consider only your mental capacities but also your heart-sight. This is very important for you.

Study should not remain an external thing. In fact, if it so remains then it is not real study. Application, leading to assimilation, is the true learning by heart. Promulgation is the test-tube in which our application-assimilation has to be evaluated. The practice of ethics without a study of metaphysics is not practicable. Why did H.P.B. write on Cosmogogenesis and Anthropogenesis? Why did the Masters take the time and the trouble to give the teachings not only about the seven principles but also about Rounds, Races, etc.? *The Voice of*

the Silence came the very last. How can anyone seek the Inner Ruler within without a proper and very careful study of (1) the seven principles; (2) their interrelationship; (3) their macrocosmic source; and (4) the Divine Ethics underlying these teachings? Study-application-promulgation are the three sides of an *equilateral* triangle.

The study of books is highly important. We are apt to become speculative without a proper check-up by consulting the texts. Thinking and assimilation imply application. Of course we should preach what we are able to practise; but do not overlook that promulgation draws our attention to our lack of application. Because we advise and preach, it soon strikes us what we ourselves need to apply. Also, promulgation reveals gaps in our knowledge and it does not take long for us to infer that unless more application is made more knowledge cannot come.

IF WE believe in our message and in the aim of the Society, we ought never to tire telling the people that which they can understand. And the rich as well as the poor are the people to whom I refer. They need the help of Theosophy, for they are wandering very close to the marshes of materialism. They must have a true ethic, a right philosophy. Tell them of our great doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation. Tell of these with confidence, unshaken by opinions of others, and that confidence of yours will beget confidence in the hearer. Science and exact scholarship are factors in our progress, but although they are important, the mass of the people are more important still. You cannot scientifically prove everything. But if you are sure, as so many of us are, that we are immortal pilgrims, then tell the people plainly and practically how they have been here before in other bodies, and will be here again to suffer or enjoy just as they may have decided in their other life, and they will believe it. They will soon come to that belief because these laws are facts in nature...

—W. Q. JUDGE

COHESION AND DISPERSION

COHESION is defined as the tendency to stick together. In physics, cohesion is the force by which the molecules of a substance are held together. The force of attraction is defined as the force between molecules of the same substance, while the force of adhesion is the force of attraction between two dissimilar substances in contact. The hardness of diamond is due to the strong cohesive force between the carbon atoms of which it is made. A water drop is made up of water molecules which stick together, and thus exhibit the property of cohesion.

Occult science explains cohesion in many different ways. H.P.B. gives Dr. B. W. Richardson's views on cohesion in the *Secret Doctrine*. According to him there exists in nature two agencies—matter which is ponderable, visible and tangible, and matter, which is imponderable and inactive. The imponderable matter, also called caloric, is a material substance flowing from the sun, which fills every point of our solar system. H.P.B. points out that the “caloric” or sun-force is the physical residue, so to say, of Ether. It is the astral fluid or astral light of the Kabalists. H.P.B. points out that truly speaking it is not ether, but one of the principles of Ether, just as Ether itself is one of the principles of *Akasa*. This ether or astral light is *without weight, substance, form, or colour, and its particles repel each other*. Dr. Richardson states that “by the attraction of caloric [imponderable matter] for ponderable matter, it unites and holds together all things; by its self-repulsive energy separates and expands all things.” H.P.B. considers this to be an almost occult explanation of cohesion. This ether penetrates the particles of ponderable substance and holds them together in bond or union. Further, the caloric or astral light or ether, pervades everything—the most solid earth, rock, crystal, metal, plant, including the human body, are charged with ether in various degrees. The capacity to receive ether or the sun-force is different for different kinds of ponderable matter. It is the amount of ether or imponderable matter

in the ponderable matter that determines various *states of matter*, such as solid, liquid, gaseous, etc. The densities of various bodies, the hardness and softness, depend upon the relative proportions of ethereal and ponderable matter of which they are composed. Thus, by *adding* sufficient quantity of caloric [the imponderable matter] to a solid, its attraction for the particles of imponderable matter is weakened and gradually, the solid is converted to liquid and then to gaseous condition. Likewise, the *abstraction* of caloric from a gas, would lead to gradual increase in the attraction of ponderable matter particles with that of imponderable matter, thus reducing it to liquid and then to a solid state. (*S.D.*, I, 524-527)

We may correlate the concept of cohesion to the power of consciousness or Life. All is Life. We may say that minerals, plants, animals, etc. appear in different forms and states because there is a force called life principle, which holds together an aggregate of atoms. When this force of life principle becomes inactive (it cannot be absent because life is everywhere) in a stone, the particles of the stone would lose their cohesive property and disintegrate. But in each particle, the force of life principle remains present in the inactive or dormant state. Thus, when a stone crumbles, the *vis viva* or energy of motion or living power of the life energy in the stone is transferred to another set of atoms. In that other set of atoms, it is present as kinetic energy while in the particles of the crumbled stone it is present as potential energy or latent life. (*H.P.B. Series No. 25*, pp. 32-33)

There is yet another way in which the power or force of cohesion can be understood. In *Answers to Questions on The Ocean of Theosophy*, Mr. Crosbie suggests that cohesion is brought about by the power of the regulated *Will*. When that *Will* is withdrawn, the original condition of dispersion is brought about. An adept can disperse atoms by making use of *Will*. Mr. Crosbie seems to suggest that the power of cohesion is something more than mere force of attraction and repulsion. The attraction and repulsion of atoms of matter, if not disturbed by a superior force, will exhaust itself and allow the atoms to go back to their original form. But, the *Will* of

man can hold together or disperse any form. This is the principle behind the phenomenon of disintegration and reintegration.

The forces of cohesion and dispersion are employed in the phenomenon of disintegration and reintegration of objects. When one metal ring is made to pass through the other, one of the rings seems to melt away at the point of contact. A ring could be made to appear inside the closed drawer, without touching it. This could be done by either disintegrating the ring and then causing it to pass into the drawer, *or* disintegrating the drawer for sufficient space of time. Always, the intervening obstacle is made *fluidic* or *diffused*. If by mechanical, chemical and electrical processes, molecules could be kept apart or pressed together, the same could be achieved by the powers of mind and *Will*. There is the force called cohesion, by means of which masses of matter are held together within limits of form. Minerals go to pieces very slowly, as compared to living masses such as vegetables, animals and human beings. The normal rate of disintegration of minerals is very slow. But using the *Will*, this normal rate of disintegration could be altered. The force of repulsion could be introduced to oppose the force of cohesion or attraction so that the molecules are kept apart and held in that position by the trained *Will*. When repulsion is slackened, the molecules rush together and the body regains its former appearance.

One has to master the science of “occult chemistry” before one can control the forces governing cohesion and dispersion. In *Answers to Questions*, Mr. Crosbie explains: “The great laws of electrical force are behind all these operations. Cohesion works on the particles of a single subject. As now constituted, there is a rate of vibration which represents the combination of the vibrations of the intelligences composing the object. In other words, the object has a mass cord which keeps it in shape. Once you know the mass chord, you can strike a tone higher, and the object will disperse.” (p. 217)

Perhaps we can understand this by referring to the explanation given by H.P.B. We are told that out of two chords vibrating in

unison, one will be weaker and the other stronger, which has mastery over the weaker chord, and makes it vibrate in unison with itself. The stronger chord has the potentiality of even destroying the weaker chord. The flame of candle, will dance or flicker in unison or rhythm with the sound vibrations, up to a point, but if the sound is intensified, then the flame can also be extinguished. (*H.P.B. Series No. 9*, pp. 37-38)

However, human or animal body cannot be dispersed the way mineral body is dispersed, because that would lead to destruction of the life of that body. According to Theosophy man is a complex being composed of seven principles—material, psychic, astral and spiritual. Physical body is but one aspect, being an outer clothing of the psychic and spiritual man. Astral body is enmeshed in the physical like fibres of the mango in the mango pulp. Likewise, the other principles, namely, life energy, desires and passions or *kamarupa*, mind, and Ego are held together by the cohesive power. The principles have their own term of cohesion. When there is a natural death, they separate from each other under their own laws. In case of a violent or unnatural death, by hanging, poison, bullet, knife, sword, electrocution or any other mechanical processes, we are able to destroy only the cohesive force related to the physical body. Thus, when a man dies a violent death, by murder, suicide, execution or accident, there is only violent separation of man from his body.

The psychic and spiritual man remains in the invisible atmosphere, *minus* the physical body. Mr. Judge explains that a natural death is like falling of a leaf in autumn, or of a ripe fruit from a tree. The time is ripe, as all the powers of the leaf have separated, so that the slightest breeze is enough to separate it from the branch. So also, with the death of the physical body, the astral body, along with passions and desires, and the three higher principles which constitute the Ego, finds itself in an astral region called *Kama loka*. Here there is separation of the Ego from the lower principles, the grain from the chaff. The cohesive power which keeps the Ego united to the

lower principles consists of powers of thoughts and desires. In an averagely good person, the Ego separates from the lower principles almost immediately and goes to *Devachan*, *Swarga* or Paradise. But if the person was an absolute materialist, or had taken his first steps towards black magic, or if there was still remaining in him some strong, unsatisfied desire, then that can prolong the separation of the Ego from the *Kamarupa* shell or *vasana sarira*. The *vasana sarira* is made up of astral body coalesced with passions and desires, and the record of unwholesome and purely personal thoughts and actions. Its separation will be quick in case the person had led a life of pure thoughts and desires, but longer otherwise.

What happens in case of a black magician is vividly described by Damodar Mavlankar, thus: “The powers of black magic are due to the will-power engendered by a concentrated form of selfishness....The greater the powers of a black magician, the greater must be his selfishness. The energy of cohesion being thus very powerful, it must take a very long period before annihilation [of lower principles] is complete. For aught we know, it (not his physical body which cannot live so long) may extend over thousands—nay a million—of years. The tendency for evil is there; the desire for mischief is strong: but there are no means for the gratification of sensual appetites: and the miserable being suffers the throes of dissolution for a very, very long period until he is totally annihilated.” (*The Theosophist*, February 1884)

A spiritually advanced person can see that the time for death has arrived for a person. Astral body exists within the physical like fibres of a mango in the mango pulp. In case of natural death, there begins natural separation of the astral from the physical or rather disintegration of the astral form. A clairvoyant can see the disintegration of the astral body, at least two years in advance. In some rare cases, he can see even as early as five years in advance, before the physical body dies, when death is natural, and it includes death due to disease, writes Mr. Judge (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, p. 115). He says that there is another method of seeing in

advance, violent or unnatural deaths because in such deaths, the astral does not disintegrate beforehand.

One of the cohesive forces which holds together various principles in man is Will to live or desire to live. We know how a person lives for several hours or several days when there is a wish to meet, one last time, a son, a daughter, a beloved, and so on. On the other hand, when one of the partners dies, often there is a feeling of hopelessness, so complete, that for an instant, the clutch on life or grip on life or intensity of “will to live” is weakened, and that is like being hit by a bullet and the person dies.

In case of violent or unnatural death, the physical body is violently separated from the other principles which are still closely knit together and are not ready for separation. “They are bound together by law and force over which only great Nature has control,” writes Mr. Judge. In the article, “The Sheaths of the Soul,” Mr. Judge says that what Nature binds, nature dissolves; what soul binds soul dissolves. Nature binds the body to the soul. But it is soul which binds herself to the body. Nature frees the body from the Soul, but Soul can free herself from the body. In other words, so long as there are karma to be exhausted we keep coming back to earth, and get the body and astral body of a certain kind which is separated and disintegrated at the appointed time. But a person can separate the soul from the body, which means he can live such a life that in his case Nature can no longer decide how long he will live.

In the article “The Elixir of Life,” we are told that we only die when our will ceases to be strong enough to make us live. Thus, a person in whom there is a *strong realization* of the sense of completing the life-task, or the feeling of worthlessness of one’s existence, that realization will produce death as surely as poison or a rifle-bullet. Thus, the more intense and true is the realization, the lesser would be struggle in leaving the body. When the crude wish to live has departed from disciple, he takes birth only in pursuit of a divine object and not for the sake of emotion and experience.

THE MOON IN OCCULT PHILOSOPHY

III

GERALD MASSEY, the poet and Egyptologist, says that the Egyptians portrayed the moon as a cat because they observed the fact that the cat saw in the night, and so also the moon was the *seer* in the night. The moon brings light in a dark night or throws light in darkness and by which, as it were, it sees. Science teaches that almost all nocturnal animals are able to see in the night, but of these the cat and the owl are able to see things far more clearly in the darkness of night. Experiments have shown that there are two types of photoreceptor cells in the retina of the human eye—rods and cones. The photoreceptors called rods are called twilight photoreceptors, which help us see things in dim light. The photoreceptors called cones, give us colour vision. The retina of the human eye has far more rods than cones. For every cone, there are four rods. The retinas of nocturnal animals are packed with rods and have few cones. However, the cats’ eyes have six to eight times more rod cells, which are more sensitive to low light than human beings.

The moon is a “seer” in the night. A psychic or spiritual *seer* sees things using the astral or spiritual eye, things which are hidden and not seen by the physical eye. So also, the moon sees by virtue of its light borrowed from the Sun, things normally not seen in the darkness of night. Metaphorically, when the moon is portrayed as a male god, such as Soma, he represents Wisdom, which is all-seeing. The Egyptian goddess Pasht is a cat-headed goddess and represents the moon. The cat was sacred in Egypt for several reasons: as a symbol of the Moon, “the eye of Osiris” or the “Sun,” during night. Moon watches in the night on behalf of the sun, and so in the form of goddess Pasht, the moon or the cat watches out for the serpent of evil or darkness and holds him down. Pasht is said to be both the reuniting and the separating principle. Her motto is: “punish the guilty and remove defilement.” (*The Theosophical Glossary*)

H.P.B. points out that in the days of old, wicked “evil” spirits fought against the moon. Also, the moon was intimately connected

in all the Pagan theogonies with the Dragon, wherein the Virgin or Madonna has been shown standing on the mythical Satan, who is crushed and made powerless under her feet. She points out that the head and tail of the Dragon are represented in the Eastern astronomy as the ascending and descending nodes of the moon, and in ancient Greece by the two serpents. (*S.D.*, II, 403)

In Astrology, the “nodes” formed by the intersection of the Earth’s and the Moon’s orbits are called, *Rahu* and *Ketu*. They are not physical planets. They are called shadow-planets (*Chhaya-grahas*) as they have no material existence, but only position. In mythology, *Rahu* is the *Daitya* (demon), whose lower part of the body ended in a Serpent’s or Dragon’s tail. He is supposed to have stolen and tasted a little bit of *Amrita*, the waters of immortality, produced during the “Churning of the Ocean,” making him immortal. The Sun and the Moon, who detected the theft, promptly informed *Vishnu*, who beheaded *Rahu* when the *Amrita* (nectar) was still at the throat level. Vishnu then placed the two parts of his body in stellar spheres, the upper portion of his body representing the Dragon’s head (*Rahu*) and the lower (*Ketu*) the Dragon’s tail; which two are the ascending and descending nodes. They are the two points in the sky, represented by two Planets, *Rahu* and *Ketu*, who now take revenge on the Sun and the Moon by occasionally swallowing them, which is an allegorical representation of eclipses. The fable had another mystic meaning, says H.P.B., since *Rahu*, the Dragon’s head, played a prominent part in the mysteries of the Sun’s (*Vikarttana*’s) initiation, when the candidate and dragon had a supreme fight (*S.D.*, II, 381). This is the fight between good and the evil, also allegorised by the fights between Osiris and Typhon (Dragon Apophis).

The candidate for initiation personifies the sun, who has to kill all his fiery passions and wear a crown of thorns, before he can rise into new life and be reborn. In the Puranic allegory, Viswakarma’s daughter Sanjana (spiritual consciousness), who was the wife of *Surya* the sun, complained to her father of the very great effulgence of her husband. Viswakarma, the divine carpenter, crucified the

sun on his lathe and cut away eighth part of his rays—creating round him a dark aureole. After that, *Surya* looked as though he had been crowned with dark thorns and he became “*Vikarttana*,” one who was shorn of his effulgence. *Vikarttana* is the type of the initiated neophyte. It refers to the process in Initiation, wherein the candidate touches the lowest levels of his consciousness and after facing and purifying it, he rises with fully purified consciousness.

The moon has a dual nature—one giving life and wisdom, and the other being lethal and destructive. H.P.B. explains that the term *Pitri* means the ancestor, but esoterically, when *pitris* are invoked during religious ceremonials, it is actually *lunar* wisdom that is invoked. Thus, the Brahminical religious ceremonials are connected with the full moon, whereas the dark ceremonials of the sorcerers take place at the new moon and its last quarter. “The Sorcerer, the Dugpa, who always performs his hellish rites on the day of the new moon, when the benignant influence of the *Pitris* is at its lowest ebb, crystallizes some of the Satanic energy of his predecessors in evil, and turns it to his own vile ends; while the Brahman, on the other hand, pursues a corresponding benevolent course with the energy bequeathed him by his *Pitris*.” Soma is one of the names of the moon in Sanskrit and it is also the name of the mystic drink of the Brahmins. These two are connected. A “Soma-drinker” attains the power of placing himself in direct *rapport* with the bright side of the moon, thus deriving inspiration from *the concentrated intellectual energy of the blessed ancestors*. (*Raja-Yoga or Occultism*, pp. 98-99)

In *Isis Unveiled*, H.P.B. compares the drinking of wine at Eucharist with the drinking of soma juice by the Initiated Brahmins. “Thus, the Hindu soma is mystically, and in all respects the same that the Eucharistic supper is to the Christian. The idea is similar,” says H.P.B. Brahmins believe that by means of sacrificial prayers or mantras, the soma juice gets transformed into real soma, or the angel, and even into Brahma himself. Thus:

The soma makes a new man of the initiate; he is reborn

and transformed, and his spiritual nature overcomes the physical; it gives the divine power of inspiration, and develops the clairvoyant faculty to the utmost. According to the exoteric explanation the soma is a plant, but, at the same time it is an angel. It forcibly connects the *inner*, highest “spirit” of man, which spirit is an angel like the mystical soma, with his “irrational soul,” or astral body, and thus united by the power of the magic drink, they soar together above physical nature, and participate during life in the beatitude and ineffable glories of Heaven. (*The Theosophical Glossary*)

The symbolic intoxication may perhaps be compared to “Manticism,” or mantic frenzy, in which, “while the initiate drinks (albeit sparingly) of this sacred soma-juice, the Brahma, or rather his ‘spirit,’ personified by the god Soma, enters into the man and takes possession of him,” leading to ecstatic vision, clairvoyance, and the gift of prophecy. (*Isis*, p. xxxv)

There is the allegory of Tara, Soma and Brihaspati (Jupiter), wherein Brihaspati represents *dead-letter* and ritualistic or ceremonial worship. Tara, his wife, symbolizes a person, who although wedded to dogmatic worship longs for true wisdom. She is *carried away* by Soma—who initiates her into mysteries, *Gupta Vidya* or esoteric Wisdom. This is represented by saying that the union of Tara and Soma was Budha—(Greek Hermes or Mercury), *i.e.*, God of Wisdom or Ganesa. Hence the incarnated consciousness of the aspiring soul unites with *Buddhi* giving rise to wisdom. “The partaker of Soma finds himself both linked to his external body and yet away from it in his spiritual form. The latter, freed from the former, soars for the time being in his ethereal higher regions, becoming virtually ‘as one of the gods,’ and yet preserving in his physical brain the memory of what he sees and learns. Plainly speaking, *Soma* is the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge forbidden by the Elohim to Adam and Eve,” explains H.P.B. (*S.D.*, II, 499 and fn.)

The connection of the moon with women, conception and child-

birth was known to the ancients. Jehovah is connected with the moon and with child-giving. H.P.B. observes that phallic worship has developed because symbols are interpreted literally (*S.D.*, II, 264 fn.). Thus, for instance, Jehovah is the androgyne, male-female, and represents the active and the passive aspect. *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 460) explains the generative symbol of the four mystic letters of Jehovah’s name, thus: *Jod* stands for *membrum Virile* or hymen; *Hé* stands for the *womb*; *Vau* stands for a crook or a hook, a nail; and *Hé* again, also means an “opening”; the whole forming the perfect *bisexual* emblem or symbol or Y (e) H (o) V (a) H, the male and female symbol. Just like the symbol of *Lingam* and *Yoni*, other symbols are also taken literally. We have to understand their spiritual significance.

H.P.B. points out that in many temples there is *Sanctum Sanctorum* with walls on three sides and there is a curtain in front of the door on the fourth side, which is the *Adytum*. The *Sanctum Sanctorum* or the *Holy of Holies* in the temples is the symbol of the womb. This idea seems to have been borrowed by the Jews from the Egyptians and Indians. The “King’s Chamber” in the *Pyramid of Cheops* is the Egyptian “Holy of Holies.” Mysteries of initiation were enacted in the Pyramids. On the day of the mystery of initiation, the candidate representing the solar god had to descend into the Sarcophagus. The sarcophagus is oblong and boat-shaped, representing the female principle, containing the germs of life. The candidate for initiation represents the solar god or the energizing ray of the sun that enters the sarcophagus, fecundating the female principle. This represents *spiritual conception*. After remaining there for two days and two nights, and after undergoing most cruel trials on the last night, the candidate for initiation is resurrected. In Egypt the female principle was represented by boat-shaped vessel. The crescent-form *Argha* of the Greeks was connected with Diana, or the Moon. In India, instead of Sarcophagus, it is the “golden” Cow through which the candidate has to pass, in order to become a *DWIJA* or twice-born. The ceremony of passing through the *Holy of Holies*

meant *spiritual conception* and *spiritual rebirth* of an individual, and his regeneration. (*S.D.*, II, 462-63)

In Egypt, Osiris was represented by man, having a bull's head, while his consort Isis was represented by a woman, with a cow's head. They were shown to be connected with the Sun and the Moon. Both a cow and a woman have the same period of parturition of 280 days or 10 lunar months of four weeks. These symbols degenerated into phallic worship, writes H.P.B. (*S.D.*, I, 390-91)

The occult position is that the Moon or globe D of the moon chain is the mother of our earth, or globe D of our earth chain, and that the Moon we see is far older than our earth. But from the scientific point of view the Moon is the satellite of our earth. The theory advanced in earlier times was that when the earth was still a molten plastic mass, a portion of it was extruded and part of it was projected out in space thus producing our moon. The occult philosophy explains that the Moon that we see is the satellite of our earth, in the sense that she revolves around the earth, but it is the Moon which has transferred or given all her principles to our earth. Science is not able to satisfactorily explain why Venus and Mercury have no satellites. The reason being science only possesses the material key whereas occult philosophy possesses seven keys to understand a symbol. Occult philosophy answers that Venus and Mercury have no satellites but they had parents. The Moon, the satellite of the earth is likewise a parent or mother of our earth, and when our earth reaches its seventh Round, our moon would have disappeared and that is what must have happened with other planets which have no moons or satellites. But then there are planets with several satellites or moons, and that is the mystery no Oedipus of astronomy has solved. In other words, it seems that Venus and Mercury have no moons at present, but may have had them in the past, and they have disappeared because both these planets are in their Seventh Round. (*S.D.*, I, 155-56 fn.)

(Concluded)

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Have we become a bunch of impatient people? It is a daily experience in big cities that we are inwardly angered if our way is obstructed by hawkers and other people, when we are walking to work. It appears that we were never so impatient before. But now, slow drivers, slow internet, slow books, slow grocery lines, or anything that seems slow can put us in rage. An article in *Nautilus* explains: "Slow things drive us crazy because the fast pace of society has warped our sense of timing." But it is not as if we became impatient only when life became fast-paced. Nature has given impatience as a useful instinct. "It is an internal timer that tells us when we have waited too long for something." According to Marc Wittmann, a psychologist at the Institute for Frontier Areas of Psychology and Mental Health in Freiburg, Germany, "Impatience made sure we did not die from spending too long on a single unrewarding activity."

However, our present-day impatience is not a survival aid, but is connected more with our expectations. "Frustration is often a consequence of expectations being violated," says James Moore, neuroscientist at Goldsmiths, University of London. The book "Social Acceleration: A New Theory of Modernity" says that in the past few hundred years, speed of human movement has increased a hundredfold, that of communication has increased by a factor of 10 million, and that of data transmission by a factor of 10 billion. It seems, back in 2006, people happily waited up to four seconds for a website to load. Now, they expect it to load in 0.25 seconds. People in the cities are walking faster now, than they did a few years ago. As people's expectations rise, and the pace of life gets faster, the willingness to wait has reduced. A slight delay seems like a crisis, because our sense of time is subjective, says the article in *Nautilus*. (*Sunday Times of India*, April 21, 2019)

Modern man lives a fast life, characterized by hurry and impatience. We live in the age where we get "instant" coffee and

“instant” noodles. Electronic gadgets seem to have contributed to our impatience. Very few of us can stand in a long queue or wait in a traffic jam without getting agitated, at least inwardly—though we may control angry outbursts. We are also impatient with other people when they do not “deliver” the results, at the expected time, and in the way we expected. In impatience, there is subtle assertion of personal will. “The way of inward peace is in all things to conform to the pleasure and disposition of the Divine Will.”

“Great man is he who is strongest in the exercise of patience,” says a Master of Wisdom. Perfect patience which gives birth to a man of unruffled serenity is most difficult to develop, and yet it is one of the most important virtues, because without it nothing lasting can be achieved or learned. Haste makes waste. “Nothing is gained, but a good deal is lost, by impatience—not only strength, but also sight and intuition. So decide nothing hastily. Wait; make no set plan. Wait for the hour to make the decision, for if you decide in advance of the time you tend to raise a confusion.” (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, pp. 124-25)

If we could practise forbearance and patience, in the middle of the trials of everyday life, without complaint, anger or irritation, then that is truly highest asceticism. Impatience and anxiety often go hand in hand. We are anxious, because we expect instant results. When we are anxious we seem to assert, in a subtle way, our own will. We want things to happen as we desired. We have these encouraging words from Mr. Judge: “Keep right on, and try for patience in all the very smallest things of life every day, and you will find it growing very soon, and with it will come greater strength and influence on and for others, as well as greater and clearer help from the inner side of things.” (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, p. 126)

Jo Cameron, a Scottish woman, who is now 71 years old, does not feel pain. It seems she never experienced pain also during childbirth. She likened it to a tickle, saying, “I could feel that my

body was changing, but it did not hurt me.” In a paper published in *The British Journal of Anaesthesia*, researchers attributed Cameron’s virtually pain-free life to a mutation in a previously unidentified gene. They hope to use this discovery to make a new painkiller. “They believe this mutation may also be connected to why Cameron has felt little anxiety or fear throughout her life and why her body heals quickly,” writes Heather Murphy in *The New York Times*.

Five years ago, after a hand operation, she did not feel any pain and needed no pain killers, which perplexed the doctors. At the age of 65 she had needed to have her hip replaced but she had not noticed that anything was amiss because it had not caused her pain. She did not feel any pain due to cuts, burns or fractures. In last few years scientists have identified a number of people who process pain in unusual way. But her genetic profile did not resemble that of others who were known to live without pain. The gene that is responsible for her pain free life is called FAAH-OUT. It appears that we all have this gene, but in her case there is deletion which removes the front of the gene. Even though she often burned and cut herself, her injuries rarely left scars, and the scientists believe that something else is connected to the mutation. She never found this unusual because even her father never needed any pain killers. So she suspects that she inherited the mutation from her father.

Scientists are intrigued by her low anxiety level. She has never felt scared or depressed in her life. However, there are downsides to this situation. For instance, she is very forgetful and loses her train of thought mid-sentence. Also, she has never felt the “adrenaline rush” that other people feel. Adrenaline rush is the surge of energy when faced with an exciting or dangerous situation. The researchers hope to better understand how FAAH-OUT works and use that knowledge to discover pain or anxiety treatment, and to develop in the distant future, an entirely new class of pain medication. (*The Economic Times*, Mumbai, March 30, 2019)

Theosophy teaches that the physical evolves from the spiritual, the mental and the psychic. Heredity is but a mode of the evolutionary

process by which the conscious Force within matter strives for fuller self-expression and self-realization. It is felt that we are stepping beyond behaviourism to embrace genetic determinism. Once alcoholism was associated with weakness of character, but now science has found a gene that increases the risk of alcoholism. “While genes influence behaviour, they do not govern nor determine it,” says Deborah Denno, director of the Fordham University Neuroscience and Law Center. There are others who feel that identifying genes may lead to new drug prospect, but the cause and the explanation will still elude us.

Man is a complex being, with physical, psychic, mental and spiritual aspects. Our physical body is built on the astral body, subtle body or *sukshma sarira*, which is inextricably interwoven with the physical, like the fibres of a mango in mango pulp. Sensation of bodily pain or pleasure belongs to the psychic man. The astral body which is the vehicle of *prana* or life energy, and that in turn is the vehicle of *kama* or desire nature, is supposed to form the Inner or Astral man, in whom are located real centres of perception as also centres of sensation. While the man is living in the world, the principle of *kama* or desires and passions, has no separate existence, but is diffused throughout his being, writes Mr. Judge. Probably, we should look to these lower principles and *rapport* between them to understand bodily sensations of pain and pleasure.

H.P.B. says that woe to those who live without suffering. Could it be that the bodily karma of this person is such that they do not allow her to go through the experience of physical pain, and in that sense deprive her of learning all the lessons which are taught by bodily pain? However, that need not mean that the person is also free from mental, emotional and moral anguish, such as the pain of betrayal, heart-break, qualms of conscience, and so on.

In an article, “Against Moral Sainthood,” that appeared in the *Aeon* magazine, Daniel Callcut, a freelance writer and a philosopher,

analyses American philosopher, Susan Wolf’s essay, “Moral Saints,” in which she imagines what it would be like to be morally perfect. As a philosopher Susan Wolf argues that life is far more meaningful and rich if we do not aim at being morally perfect. She imagines two different models of the moral saint, which she labels the “Loving Saint” and the “Rational Saint.” The Loving Saint does all that is morally best in a joyful spirit, which may include selling all the possessions and donating the proceeds to famine relief. The Rational Saint is equally devoted to moral causes, but is motivated by a sense of duty. Both these types of people, in trying to live ultra-ascetic moral lives, having no friendships, no hobbies, no distractions from the ethical, are missing out on things that make for happiness. She argues, “Why go so far as to live a life entirely and exclusively devoted to moral causes?”

Wolf’s two versions of moral sainthood are modelled on the two most influential moral philosophies of modern Western philosophy: utilitarianism (which inspires Wolf’s Loving Saint) and Kantianism (which inspires the Rational Saint), and neither of these philosophies value very highly personal happiness. She feels that we need a more well-rounded concept of good life. At present, a morally good life has been identified with selfless altruistic life, which is opposed to self-focused, pleasure-seeking life. She feels that morality does not require you to have no other interests besides morality. She says, “You can be *perfectly wonderful* without being *perfectly moral*,” and that meaningful existence must have place for loving relationships, engagement with the natural world, love for fine arts or great sport, and so on. “If you have absorbed Wolf’s lessons, you will not throw away your life for the sake of the cause. You will continue to make time for friends...you will not lose that brilliantly sarcastic sense of humour. You will not become, in other words, a moral saint,” writes Callcut.

Is moral or spiritual life divorced from worldly life? Does moral life imply absence of pleasure? The key lies in being detached or in practising detached-attachment, and learning “to be *in* the world,

but not *of* the world.” It means enjoying all the harmless pleasures the existence has to give, when they come your way, but not get dependent on any of them, or go seeking for them. “No one is truly free who is still attached to material things, or to places, or to people. We must be able to use things when we need them and then relinquish them without regret when they have outlived their usefulness. We must be able to appreciate and enjoy the places where we tarry, and yet pass on without anguish when we are called elsewhere,” writes Peace Pilgrim.

As one rises in one’s morality and spirituality, one automatically leaves behind gross pleasures and seeks more refined pleasures for one’s psychic nature. A time comes when one’s psychic nature is so refined that he or she finds his recreation in working and living for others. Altruism is an integral part of self-development. There are degrees and degrees of morality. In his essay, “Three Kinds of Men,” Professor C. S. Lewis says that the first class of men are those who live simply for their own sake and pleasure, regarding Man and Nature as so much raw material for their use. The second class consists of men who acknowledge some other claim upon them, and therefore, will not try to acquire pleasure at the expense of others. They are like honest taxpayers, who live on what is left after paying their tax. But the third class is of those who can say like St. Paul that for them “to live is Christ.” Their day to day activities are like commandments of Christ. “They have got rid of the tiresome business of adjusting the rival claims of Self and God by the simple expedient of rejecting the claims of Self altogether. The old egoistic ‘will’ has been turned round, reconditioned, and made into a new thing,” writes Professor Lewis.

We gradually move from *kamic* actions or desire-prompted activities to *dharmic* actions, or cheerful and careful performance of our daily duties, till finally we learn to perform *yagnic* or sacrificial actions, *i.e.*, giving more to others than to oneself.