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सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

Vol. 18, No. 5

September 17, 2026

ON THE UNIVERSAL DIVINE FORM

I

THE ELEVENTH discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita* has been entitled *Vishwarupa Darshan* or the “Vision of the Divine Form as Including all Forms.” The Tenth discourse was all about the “Universal Divine Perfections.” From the first ten chapters of the *Gita*, it is very clear that the energy, power and glory of God or One Reality is present in everything, in every particle of atom, but only as *potentiality*. All evolution is from within outwards. Perfection consists in exhibiting or manifesting the power, energy and glory of the divine within. Arjuna asks Shri Krishna, “In what particular forms shall I meditate on thee?” Shri Krishna acquaints him with the chief of his divine manifestations, giving examples, in various departments and kingdoms of nature, of those entities which are perfect expressions of the Divine. Thus, for instance, among the planetary bodies the Sun is the perfect expression of the Divine Self, being the giver of light and life, physical and metaphysical. The fact remains, as the ancients said, that the Divine Self is in all beings, and shines in all, but *it does not shine forth equally* in all. Thus, in the tenth chapter of the *Gita*, Arjuna is able to appreciate, at least theoretically, the presence of the Divinity or One Reality in everything. However, he still does not have a practical demonstration of everything in the entire Universe existing in One Reality. In other words, as Swami Shri Chinmayananda expresses it, to prove that mud is the essence

of all mud pots, we not only should be able to prove that mud is present in all pots but also prove that pots of all shapes and sizes are potentially present in the mud. It is easy to see that mud is in all pots, but to discern all kinds of pots within mud, the observer needs a “special eye.” To see the presence of the One Reality in all is comparatively easy, but to see all manifestation present in the One Reality is very difficult.

From the *Mahabharata* story it is clear that Krishna reveals His Cosmic Divine Form not once but at least thrice. On the first occasion, it was to Yashoda, the foster mother of Krishna, who doubtfully asked child-Krishna to open his mouth to see if he had eaten clay. When Krishna opened his mouth, Yashoda saw in it the entire Universe with its vast expanse. Yashoda fainted, only to be revived by Krishna, and it is said that *Maya* immediately cast a veil over her, and she forgot the vision. The second time Krishna revealed his Universal Form was when he went to Hastinapura as an ambassador of the Pandavas in an effort to prevent war. Duryodhana and his band tried to capture him, but Krishna expanded himself so that his Universal Form was visible to Duryodhana and to all those present there, and the third time it was revealed to Arjuna.

At the request of Arjuna, Krishna assumes the Universal Form or Body. He tells Arjuna, “Here in my body now behold, O Gudakesha, the whole universe animate and inanimate gathered here in one, and all things else thou hast a wish to see.” However, this is a spiritual form and therefore cannot be seen with the physical eyes but requires spiritual eyes. Therefore, Shri Krishna says, “As with thy natural eyes thou art not able to see me, I will give thee the divine eye.”

Mr. Crosbie remarks, “*Body* implies form and substance, and in this relation must mean the highest conceivable primordial matter or substance, which to us might be comprehended as ‘luminosity and energy,’ the source of all light and power.”

In other words, this “body” or Universal Form is made up of the highest kind of matter or primordial matter which in the Eastern

school is called *Mulaprakrti*. It is the root of matter, invisible, and which cannot be weighed, measured or tested with any instrument. Mr. Crosbie explains that it is this primordial substance which is described as “the divine form” or “the universal form,” because this Universal Form includes all forms, that means there is not a form which is not included in the Universal Form. In other words, the substratum of every form is the same primordial substance, or that every form we see in the world is potentially contained within *Mulaprakrti* or primordial substance, and is derived from it by differentiation.

Primordial matter is the highest level of matter, and there are seven planes of matter and consciousness, or seven worlds, of which the higher three planes represent the *Arupa* or “formless worlds,” and the remaining four planes represent the *Rupa* or “world of forms,” which we may perhaps correlate with the three planes of Akasa and three planes of Astral light that are above the terrestrial plane.

In *Studies in the Secret Doctrine*, we read: “The archetypal world is an expression of Platonic philosophy,” which is “the world as it existed in the mind of the Deity.” Further, “This world in the mind of the Deity, this cosmic substance which is energized by cosmic ideation, is the world of noumena, in which inheres, in which lives, the world of phenomena, in its abstract and archetypal aspects.” (pp. 29-30)

In *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, H.P.B. explains that the condensed and concrete forms in the physical world develop from the prototypes in the archetypal world. The “prototypes or ideas of things exist first on the plane of Divine eternal Consciousness [Akasa] and these become reversed in the Astral Light.” Akasa represents higher planes of matter and consciousness, and it is also called the *noumenal* or archetypal world. In the Archetypal World of Plato, there exist abstract ideas of things to be.

We may say that on that plane there is an idea of “triangularity,” based on which different types of triangles—right-angled triangles,

equilateral triangles, etc.—may be formed subsequently. Likewise, based on the abstract idea of “tabularity,” all the tables of the past, present and the future get built. “Everything that *is*, *was*, and *will be*, eternally is, even the countless forms, which are finite and perishable only in their objective, not in their *ideal* Form.” Thus, everything in the physical world first existed as an idea or ideal type in the archetypal world. Further, “Occultism teaches that no form can be given to anything, either by nature or by man, whose ideal type does not already exist on the subjective plane. More than this; that no such form or shape can possibly enter man’s consciousness, or evolve in his imagination, which does not exist in prototype at least as an approximation.” (*S.D.*, II, 282)

Thus, it is based on the abstract ideas that the builders build the models. The models built by the builders are improved from plane to plane till the Elementals or Nature Spirits work on those models to build the physical forms. The first model is improved upon by the worlds that succeed it, each of which is grosser than the one on the higher plane, and, in that sense, less pure. These are the astral prototypes, which are like developed pictures. We can understand this by an analogy: the blueprint of a house prepared by an architect represents spiritual prototypes, while the miniature model made of wood or cardboard represents the astral models, based on which the actual house (as also physical forms) is built.

Thus, the archetypal world may be regarded as the plane of Alaya-Akasa, which may be described as the “*Karana-Sarira*” of the Universe. Mr. Crosbie remarks that “every being possesses a divine form which contains within it potentially every power and element” and that is the true basis of evolution, which implies unfolding from within outwards. This divine form within every being is also in man, and that in *Raja-Yoga or Occultism*, H.P.B. describes as the “Causal Body” or “Karmic body,” which is a compound of the Monad (Atma-Buddhi) and Manas. After death, the permanent ideals like kindness, love, truth, beauty and inclination towards goodness—the aroma of the last personality—attach themselves to the Ego which

goes to Devachan, wrapped up in an ethereal vesture called the Causal body or *Karana Sarira*. The seeds of spiritual knowledge, art, science, agriculture and architecture exist in the divine nature of man, burnt into the imperishable centre of his consciousness, by the divine Instructors, 18 million years ago. These exist as *innate* ideas. All our knowledge and experiences are assimilated and stored within the *Karana Sarira*. Why do we not show forth this knowledge? We may understand it by the analogy of light surrounded by a glass covering. For the light to shine forth, we need to clean the soot on the glass. The light of wisdom is covered by layers or sheaths or vehicles, which need to be purified.

Occult philosophy teaches that nothing can be evolved unless it has first been involved, indicating that life is from the spiritual potency and that the process of unfoldment is guided by intelligent forces under the immutable Law. This is known as the *doctrine of emanations*. Thus, there is first involution—involvement or descent of spirit into matter—and then evolution, which consists in expression or actualization of what is potential, through perfection of forms. In the process of growth, we do not add anything new from the outside. There is only *unfolding* of what is locked up within, as potential.

Arjuna is given the divine “eye” by Krishna, and that is not a personal favour. Arjuna is a disciple or a Chela. There are degrees and degrees of chelaship, beginning with the Lay Chela, followed by the stage of lay chela on probation, and ultimately becoming an accepted chela. There is a Sufi story showing that there must be gradual transformation in the disciple before he is fit for certain knowledge and experiences. Especially is this true as regards experiencing Truth, Reality or God. There are twin terms “Shining and Concealment” as regards perception of God. This is well illustrated through the famous, allegorical romance of *Layla-Majnun*. The tribe of Majnun (“the madman”) interceded with the people of Layla so that Majnun might be allowed to be illuminated with the “sight of Layla’s beauty.” Layla’s tribe replied that there was no harm, but Majnun had no power to behold Layla’s beauty. The

story goes on that, acceding to the request, they brought him near Layla's tent and only lifted a corner of her tent. Majnun could glance only at the fold of Layla's skirt and yet fell senseless. Idries Shah remarks: "Illumination cannot be sustained by someone who is not ready for it. At the best it will throw him into an ecstatic state in which he is paralyzed, as it were, and unable to consummate the contact." (*The Sufis*, p. 313)

Shri B. P. Wadia comments that the Eleventh Discourse is actually the Discourse of practical initiation. What is initiation? "Initiation is the giving by the Teacher to the Pupil of something which changes the consciousness of that pupil. Krishna actually imparts something to Arjuna which enables Arjuna immediately to acquire the supreme vision, to obtain for himself the Divine 'I'...and this Divine 'I' immediately changes Arjuna from the position of an aspirant to that of discipleship, and then to that of an accepted chela. A disciple, once he has acquired the knowledge given at the final, the supreme initiation, is able to know the ultimate truth of the Universe. That is why he has through this divine 'I,' the power to perceive Krishna in his own Universal Form. This divine vision of the whole of the Universe embodied in the person of the Teacher, Krishna, also shows to Arjuna what is his innermost nature, for all of us from the highest point of view, in the real depth of our own being are the whole of the Universe." The teaching is clear. Initiation—the ultimate or the Supreme Truth, is reserved for all pupils and chelas treading the spiritual path, the path of the Masters. Initiation may be described as a trial or a test, which every earnest spiritual aspirant has to pass through and which helps to determine if the aspirant is ready to take the next step on the Path. There are levels and levels of initiation, wherein the aspirant is subjected to progressively difficult trials.

Having seen the Universal or Divine Form of Krishna, Arjuna realizes the grandeur and majesty of Krishna, whom he had taken to be a friend, a cowherd boy, an ordinary human being. He is over-awed. He is not yet at a stage to understand fully what he has seen.

(To be concluded)

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

KACHA AND DEVAYANI—III

IN the Marathi book *Shri Gurucharitra Anvayārtha*, the author, Umakant Kurlekar, has interpreted this story in the light of three qualities, *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. Shukracharya has been taken to represent “Shukra dhatu,” or male and female reproductive fluid, as well as *Sanjeevani Sakti*. Devayani represents *Ichha Sakti* or *Vasana* (subtle desires); Kacha represents “Jiva” or a being. Kacha or *Jivatma* is caught in the frying pan of *Vasana* and therefore is impelled to take birth again. This *Vasana* is comparable with McDougal’s concept of “conative energy,” also known as mental energy. This energy is said to have unlimited freedom so that there is no restraint or control over bad tendencies arising from the *Tamas* quality. Additionally, in this story we are able to appreciate how disastrous it would be if *shukra dhatu*, which is labelled as “Sanjeevani” in this story, with the capacity to produce another human form, is also under the dominion of *Ichha Sakti*. By this analogy, the author seems to be hinting at the misuse of sexual energy.

When considered in the light of Theosophy, we find that the one desiring to live the Higher Life must learn to control one’s animal nature. Sex and Speech are the two avenues through which we lay waste our divinity. Sexual power is a creative power, and sexual indulgence on the physical plane proportionately diminishes the activity of the creative power on the higher plane. In the article “The Pineal Gland and Morality” (*The Theosophical Movement*, March 1937), we read that there is a direct relation between the genitalia and the pineal gland. “These two are creative poles, and when one is positive and active, a proportionate negative and passive condition is produced in the other. When the North Pole of the Pineal Gland is active, it creates children of ideas and thoughts; when the South Pole of the generative organ is active, children of the flesh are created....The Pineal Gland is...the seat of Love...[and]...of Compassion. [However,] in the *ordinary individual* both the Pineal

Gland and the genitalia are active by turns, and therefore he is a mixture of lust and love, of passion and compassion, of evil and good. Our moral perceptive capacity and our mental creative faculties are impaired and distorted when the Pineal Gland becomes only the feeder of genitalia.”

Shri Kurlekar writes that “Devayani” means “the one desiring to move towards God or the Divine.” Similarly, “Kacha” means hair. Just as our hair grows again after cutting, no matter how many times we cut, so also, Kacha comes back to life after being repeatedly killed by the Asuras. When a *Sattvic* individual like Kacha finds himself in the frying pan of *Vasana*, represented by Devayani, backed by *Sanjeevani Sakti* (represented by Shukracharya), then not only is that Jiva or individual largely troubled, but there is also a wastage of *Sanjeevani Sakti* (creative power, including sexual power). And after all this, in the end, *Ichha sakti* (*Vasanas*) remain unfulfilled.

Thus, Devayani stands for vasanas, tendencies, mental drive and desire or effort to do something. She represents human behaviour that deals with will, intention and striving to act so as to turn thoughts and feelings into action. With the result, sublime creative power (“Shukra dhatu” or *Sanjeevani Sakti*) is used selfishly to satisfy personal desires, which can never be satiated. The Buddha says: “Lusts are never satisfied, not even by a shower of gold.” *The Voice of the Silence* tells us: “Do not believe that lust can ever be killed out if gratified or satiated....It is by feeding vice that it expands and waxes strong, like to the worm that fattens on the blossom’s heart.”

Shri Kurlekar draws our attention to another important aspect in this mythology, which is “Brahmacharya” or Celibacy. When one begins to observe celibacy, it leads to “Vairagya” or detachment, and that in turn leads to Immortality. He also emphasizes the importance of observing *yama* and *niyama* mentioned in Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras.

In the Introduction to the book *Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*, Shri B. K. S. Iyengar writes: “The yogic disciplines are *yama* (restraint) and *niyama* (practice or observance). These

disciplines channel the energies of the organs of action and the senses of perception in the right direction....There are five *yamas*: *ahimsa* (non-violence or non-injury), *satya* (truthfulness), *asteya* (non-stealing), *brahmacharya* (continence) and *aparigraha* (freedom from avarice or non-covetousness)....For a *brahmachari* (a chaste or celibate person), vigour, vitality, energy and spiritual knowledge flow like a river.”

“The five *niyamas* are...*saucha* (cleanliness or purity), *santosa* (contentment), *tapas* (religious fervour), *svadhyaya* (study of the sacred scriptures and of one’s own self) and *Isvara Pranidhan* (surrender of the self to God), [also translated as persevering devotion to the Supreme Soul].” (pp. 26-27)

In the *Gita* we read that each one of us is made up of three *gunas* or qualities: *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. In *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita* (pp. 197-98), commenting on the Fourteenth Chapter of the *Gita*, Mr. Crosbie observes that “the three great qualities called *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*—light, or truth; passion or desire; and indifference or darkness—are *born from nature*, and bind the imperishable soul to the body. The binding is by the attachment of the self or soul to the qualities perceived in nature. The *sattva* quality binds to rebirth through attachment to knowledge and that which is pleasant; the fruit of righteous acts appertains to *sattva*. *Rajas* is of the nature of desire, producing thirst and propensity; it binds the soul through action and its consequences. Being separative and compelling in quality, its fruit is gathered in pain. *Tamas* is of the nature of indifference or darkness; as the chapter states, it is the deluder of all creatures; it imprisoneth the Ego in a body through heedless folly, sleep and idleness; ignorance, delusion and folly exist where *tamas* prevails....The differences in human beings are found in the degrees of attraction which each one has for one or other of the qualities.”

Shri Kurlekar comments that we can regard the story of Kacha and Devayani as the story depicting the mixture of these three qualities which is to be found in the constitution of all ordinary

people. As seen earlier, in every human body there is *shukra dhatu* or male or female reproductive fluid, which endows a human being with the power to create human form. We find that mostly this power is misused, and even when an individual tries to overcome such overindulgence in sexual activity, he does not succeed because it is not a sustained effort.

Kacha is a *Jivatma* having the predominant *sattva* quality. Devayani is representative of a being with *tamasic* desire to go toward God. Since *sattva* is connected with goodness, knowledge, truth, etc., *tamas* is naturally attracted to *sattva*. The purity of *sattva* in thoughts, feelings and actions brings happiness, which is very much desired by a *tamasic* individual (one with predominating *tamas* quality), but it cannot be obtained without the help of *rajas*, i.e., without exertion and systematic effort. However, the one with predominating *tamas* quality desires (*sattva*) happiness, but does not want *rajas* (exertion and effort), and therefore, *tamas* always tries to hold captive the “*rajas*,” considering it to be an instrument for experiencing happiness. Hence, in the story, Devayani wants Kacha to remain under her control and do all those things that she desires. Devayani has a similar attitude towards her father and his “Sanjeevani Sakti.” She wants her father to use this power and revive the dead Kacha as many times as she desires. But neither Devayani nor her father thought of disciplining the Asuras or making some arrangement to protect Kacha. Here we see that *Sattva* quality (of Kacha) is helpless, though he is filled with knowledge and goodness. Hence, although he *sees*, he is *lame*, being completely under the control of *tamas*, and he is unable to give advice or show the right direction. Kacha also represents *Jnana Sakti*. Likewise, *rajas* or *Kriya Sakti* is blind though not lame, which represents Shukracharya with *Sanjeevani Sakti* and the host of asuras. However, this blind *Kriya Sakti* is in enmity with lame *Jnana Sakti*. Therefore, this blind *Kriya Sakti* is unable to guide *Ichha Sakti* (Devayani).

Ichha Sakti, driven by desire to experience happiness, taking the help of *Kriya Sakti* tries to bring back, again and again, *Sattva guna*

(Kacha) to life. But once brought back to life, *Sattva guna* or Kacha suffers at the hands of his enemy, *Kriya Sakti* (or *Rajo guna*, represented by the *Asuras*), which persecutes and even kills it.

Clearly, the sublime powers of *Ichha Sakti* and *Kriya Sakti* or rather their pale shadow, when used to fulfill *vasanas*, get degraded or wasted, as no lasting happiness (*Ananda*) can be obtained thereby, and this applies to all aspirants to a greater or lesser extent, depending on their level of spiritual progress.

Such a situation arises due to lack of harmony among various *Saktis* which are available to *Jivatma*, and they seem to be in conflict with each other. Therefore, *Kriya Sakti* needed to come out from the grip of *Ichha Sakti* and act on the body of man, give impulse to *Jivatma* to move upwards, and convert passions and desires of *Jivatma* into compassion. Both Kacha and Shukracharya are helpless and under the dominion of Devayani. Ultimately what is required is the strict following of *Yama*, *Niyama* and especially *Brahmacharya*, thereby cultivating detachment, which can lead to immortality.

To sum up, this story shows what can happen when one allows one's *Vasanas* (or *Ichha Sakti*) to express themselves without control. It also shows the importance of following *Brahmacharya* to acquire complete detachment, which can ultimately lead to immortality. We are also shown that if one fails to purify the *Vasanas* and allow their full expression, they not only tend to destroy *Kriya Sakti*, but also the desires or *Vasanas* remain unfulfilled forever, forcing the *Jiva* to take birth again and again.

Theosophy teaches that all these *saktis* or spiritual powers, lie latent in every man, but only those who are ready to pay the price of discipline and self-conquest can hope to develop these powers. Man, himself is the Alchemist who in the crucible of Right Knowledge transmutes the iron of his lower nature into the gold of the higher. So long as we are identified with the personality, we will remain poor, weak, miserable sinners. Hence, says the *Voice of the Silence*, "Knowest thou of Self the powers, O thou perceiver of external

shadows? If thou dost not—then art thou lost.” At our present stage of development, we must free the mind from *Kama* or the desire principle. This can be achieved by making our feelings and desires universal and by living for others. Nothing must be done that hurts any other creature, for every thing and every being are part of us.

Itchasakti is the *power of the Will*. It is also described as the “force of desire.” On the spiritual plane, desire is indistinguishable from Will. But on our plane, distinction is made between the two, and desire is regarded as the mover of the Will. Both Will and desire are creative forces, but whereas desire creates blindly, Will creates intelligently. We say, “Behind Will stands Desire.” Desire is the mover of the Will. We experience Will at two levels. There is the *personal will*, displayed markedly by a strong-willed or stubborn person. What we consider a strong-willed person is the one with strong and intense desires, which move the Will into action for bringing about the wished-for results. Will is the divine power of the Spirit within—illimitable and exhaustless. We have limited that power by entertaining small, mean and selfish desires. Moreover, the ideas give direction to the power of Will, but what we lack are universal ideas.

Some people develop their willpower through various Yoga practices. But development of *Spiritual Will* or *perfected human Will* requires cultivation of unselfishness and readiness to be assisted, guided and instructed by our divine nature. The Spiritual Will could be developed only when we have learnt to drink, to the last bitter dregs, what the cup of life holds for us, without a murmur, and realize that the adverse and painful circumstances are for our experience and discipline. When we are ready to sacrifice our personal nature and loosen its hold on the higher, all the powers and forces of divine nature become available.

The creative power of thought is variously described as *Kriya Sakti* and *Sankalpa Sakti*. When we undertake self-discipline, we first make an ideal plan or *Sankalpa* and then execute it. *Sankalpa* means to thoroughly think and imagine so that the thing thought of

gets translated into action. The highest power of thought or *Kriyasakti*, which makes man a creator, lies latent within each human being. *Kriya Sakti* is the highest power of thought, which makes of man a creator, and it lies latent within each one of us, but only in a few has it been called to life and developed. It remains dormant in 999,999 men out of a million and becomes atrophied. This creative potency is described as “the mysterious *power of thought* which enables it to produce external, perceptible, phenomenal results by its own inherent energy. *The ancients held that any idea will manifest itself externally, if one’s attention [and Will] is deeply concentrated upon it....* A Yogi generally performs his wonders by means of *Itchasakti* [Will-power] and *Kriyasakti*.” (*S.D.*, II, 173)

(Concluded)

THE only reason for living is being fully alive;
and you can’t be fully alive if you are crushed by secret fear,
and bullied with the threat: Get money, or eat dirt!—and forced
to do a thousand mean things meaner than your nature, and
forced to clutch on to possessions in the hope they’ll make
you feel safe, and forced to watch everyone that comes near
you, lest they’ve come to do you down.
Without a bit of common trust in one another, we can’t live.
In the end, we go insane.
It is the penalty of fear and meanness, being meaner than our
natures are.
To be alive, you’ve got to feel a generous flow, and under a
competitive system that is impossible, really.
The world is waiting for a new great movement of generosity,
or for a great wave of death.
We must change the system, and make living free to all men,
or we must see men die, and then die ourselves.

—D. H. LAWRENCE
“BEING ALIVE”

THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE

FRAGMENT ONE—XX

“ERE THY Soul’s mind can understand, the bud of personality must be crushed out; the worm of sense destroyed past resurrection.”

We are asked to make our Higher Manas active on our plane. This can be done by crushing the “bud of personality.” It is the higher mind which enables us to say “I am I” and, in conjunction with *Atma-Buddhi*, becomes the Individuality, or Reincarnating Ego or “Hidden Self.” The real “I,” or the true individuality, is different from the complex feeling, “I am Mr. Smith or Mrs. Brown,” which we call the *personal* “I” or *terrestrial* “I.”

The word “personality” is derived from “*persona*,” meaning a mask, which the actors used to wear in earlier times. This mask carried the make-up of the role which the actor was going to play, so that behind the mask, the actor remained hidden and anonymous. The different roles played by the actor are our personalities. When an actor performs the role of Hamlet, he is not fully conscious of the fact that in real life he is So-and-so; similarly, we are so absorbed in playing our present life’s role that we are seldom aware of our true Self, which tends to get obscured. “The general answer to the question, “Who am I?” is, “I am Mr. or Ms. ‘X,’ of certain height, weight, skin and hair colour, with certain academic qualifications and emotional nature.” No one finds anything wrong with such a concept of “I.” But deeper thinking shows that such a sense of “I” is a “derived” sense of identity. The personality consists of four lower principles, which are evanescent and perishable.

From Spirit comes the power to know, to act and to become. The soul is the seeing and knowing. Our senses bring to us raw data in the form of sensations. Our lower *Manas* interprets these sensations, which we term as “perception.” As one controls the senses, one must also control the mind and not indulge in mental gratification by fantasizing. It is important to recognize that *ultimately*,

it is the *mind*, and not the senses, that leads us astray. Our “perception” must end with perception, *i.e.*, once the sense organ has perceived a sense object, the enjoyment of that sense object is complete. But our mind tends to dwell over it and relive the experience, creating desire and attachment.

Perhaps, a little reflection on oneself will enable us to note how many times we use the pronoun “I” in a day—what I said, did, felt, and thought of my experience, my habits, likes, dislikes, etc. Such a self-centred person is like a plant growing in a dark room. Without sunlight, it will slowly wither away. To “crush the bud” of personality is to become impersonal. Impersonality is like selflessness. It does not mean annihilation of self but is an attitude of impartiality towards all things, all beings. Impersonality implies looking at things, objects, persons and events in their true perspective and not according to one’s own likes and dislikes.

Even though we are asked to control senses, it is more important to have control over the mind because from the mind emerges egotism. We have the story of a yogi named Chang Dev, who had succeeded by the correct use of *Hatha Yoga* (ascetic practices of breath control, postures, etc.) in reaching the age of 1,400 years. He had thousands of disciples. When he heard of Jnaneshwar, he desired to meet him. He chose an appearance calculated to impress and strike terror in the young sage. He was dressed in skins, astride a fierce tiger, with a cobra whip and his long, matted locks beating the air. At that time, Jnaneshwar was sitting with his brothers and sisters on a wall. Seeing Chang Dev approach them riding a tiger, they decided to go and greet him and show him their respect. It is said that Jnaneshwar patted the wall with his hand and ordered it to rise gently and carry them towards the yogi. The disciples accompanying Chang Dev fell silent in sheer amazement when they saw four figures riding a brick wall approaching them. Chang Dev got down from his tiger and threw himself at the feet of Jnaneshwar and said, “Though I lived 1,400 years, instead of pursuing the goal of self-realization, I have wasted such a long life in trifles like yogic

powers!” Chang Dev took Jnaneshwar as his guru. The most difficult foe to overcome is *Ahankara* or egotism, from which emerges the sense of superiority and separateness.

Upanishads speak of the “knot of the heart,” which Mr. Judge in his article “Through the gates of gold” calls an “iron bar” that holds down the heart. It is the astringent power of self or *egotism*. He says that it has many strongholds. As one progresses, it becomes more and more subtle. From the obvious forms such as greed, envy, pride, etc., it may become love of power—not obvious power, but expectation of love of one’s fellow beings for the good done to them, and so on. This knot is our delusions and false learning. It is like tying the lotus bud with a string so that it cannot bloom. We need to remove the knot by the knowledge of the Self.

Personality is not necessarily bad, but even a good personality is an obstacle. Like Dharmaraja Yudhisthir in the *Mahabharata*, who had an extremely good personality, and therefore, when asked to find a bad person, he said that he did not find anyone bad in the world. But Krishna could see badness and goodness separately.

There is a subtle difference between human dignity and Egotism. Humility does not mean having a very low opinion of oneself. There will always be someone who knows more than us; let us not compare our present personality with that individual but with what we potentially are, *i.e.*, our Higher Self. We must always keep our Higher Self as our Judge. When we happen to be in a superior position, we should maintain a balanced relationship with the subordinates such that the subordinates should feel free to approach us but never completely overpower us. This is difficult to achieve. It is said that only King Dilip was able to be like this. We can think of the sea. In the sea the great creatures as well as the tiniest ones feel at home, and yet even the greatest of creatures cannot “overpower” the sea.

“Thou canst not travel on the Path before thou hast become that Path itself.”

In the article “Occult knowledge” in *Universal Theosophy*, we

read that occult knowledge is the knowledge which is hidden and also the knowledge which is known, and that is Wisdom. Since it is knowledge that is known, there must be knowers of it, and they have obtained that knowledge by following a certain path which leads to it. They have shown this path to all of us; if we are ready to follow it, we can also obtain that knowledge. However, in order to walk the path, one has to *become* that path. This knowledge is not found in books or in the opinions of people or the outside world. Unlike our ordinary knowledge of chemistry, biology or economics, which does not bring about transformation in us, the Real occult knowledge brings about a perceptible change, and this is in terms of change in the level of consciousness.

In the footnote, we are told that this “Path” is mentioned in all the Mystic Works. In *Dnyaneshvari*, Krishna says: “When this Path is beheld...whether one sets out to the bloom of the east or to the chambers of the west, *without moving*, O holder of the bow, *is the travelling in this road*. In this path, to whatever place one would go, *that place one’s own self* becomes.” “Thou art the Path” is said to the Adept Guru, and by the latter to the disciple after initiation. “I am the way and the Path,” says another MASTER.

The “Path” spoken of is not an external, physical path, but it refers to the journey within. It matters not in what direction one is going, east or west, when one has become that Path itself. It is no longer a theoretical investigation and exploration. It is no longer striving after “self-realisation” through devotion or knowledge or works as a means employed. One becomes IT through identification and realisation. Then, the Master becomes “a way and the Path” to be emulated by the disciple. It is not to be achieved by discipline imposed by someone from the outside. The disciple has to put the bit into his own mouth.

Moreover, it seems to suggest that occult knowledge does bring about transformation in a person. There are things which we understand only when our level of consciousness has changed. Someone has rightly said, “what makes you think that a piece of art or poetry is like a pebble on the sea-shore to be picked up by any

careless passer-by?” To completely understand it one has to repeat the adventure of the artist or poet, which means going through similar experiences as the writer or artist had gone through. So also, every step on the path is like a certain level of consciousness. Whatever place or step (level of consciousness) on the path one goes to, that place or step one’s own self becomes, because it is an inward journey.

Every conquest of a vice and cultivation of a virtue is a step on the path that takes us to a different level of consciousness. To become a calm person, we do not move physically or astrally, but we change our state of consciousness. The disciple says to the *Guru*, “Thou art the Path,” because the *Guru* adjusts the mind of the disciple. The disciple may wish to practice humility, but may be all mixed up about the idea of humility, human dignity, self-respect, egotism, etc. The *Guru* can make it clear and adjust his mind by correcting the fault in his thinking. Teachers are the embodiment of this Path. They have perfected their principles to the utmost degree, and therefore, without interfering with the karma of the disciple, the teacher brings about “minor mental adjustments” in the disciple. It is as if it were a person guiding a stranger in an area unknown to the stranger. They open up certain doors in the consciousness of the chela, whereby the knowledge, which is “intuition with certainty,” is at the disposal of the chela. Thus, the disciple realizes and says, “Thou art the Path.” After initiation, the disciple himself becomes an Adept, and then the *Guru* says, “Thou art the Path.”

Light on the Path expresses it thus: “He [the disciple] has, in fact, at the first step to take himself steadily in hand and put the bit into his own mouth; no one else can do it for him.” It is the inner goal set which he will then strive to achieve. A “bit” is part of the bridle which is put in the mouth of the horse and works as a restraining instrument, and is very painful. This “bit” for the disciple refers to certain restrictions he voluntarily undertakes for disciplining himself. Each spiritual aspirant has to make a beginning with his ordinary self, with its various desires and interests, and discover with pain that morality often requires giving up some of our desires

that we consider legitimate. We experience an inner conflict. “Living the higher life” means waging a war not only against our *vices*, but also against our habits, beliefs, pet theories and our likes and dislikes.

What we at our level experience is just wandering on the path. Slipping down more than taking upward steps. When the disciple thus prepares to walk the path, the Guru tells this initiated disciple, “Thou art the Path.” This path is the path walked under the guidance of the Higher Self, and as the person obeys it more and more, he becomes that path itself; he becomes universal in his approach, and having attained that stable state, nothing can shake him from his firm position. “It is written that for him who is on the threshold of divinity no law can be framed, no guide can exist.”

“Let thy Soul lend its ear to every cry of pain like as the lotus bares its heart to drink the morning sun. Let not the fierce Sun dry one tear of pain before thyself hast wiped it from the sufferer’s eye. But let each burning human tear drop on thy heart and there remain, nor ever brush it off, until the pain that caused it is removed.”

There are varieties of lotus, which bloom under the rays of the moon or sun. It is significant that we are first asked to lend a sympathetic ear to the misery of another even before we can do something to alleviate or remove the pain. Anton Chekhov’s story “Misery” explores human grief and the need for human compassion. The old man’s desperation to share his grief of the loss of his young son with someone is expressed when he thinks to himself, “To whom shall I tell my grief?” The lack of compassion he finds in the world around him increases his misery. Human beings have an innate need to share their emotions, joy, sorrow, fear, etc., with someone. There are many reasons which lead to misery, but the misery of losing a loved one is almost always acute and unbearable, especially when it has been an untimely death. The author portrays the picture of a materialistic world, barren of feelings, little aware that money, position or power can never take the place of a lost loved one.

The author tries to awaken the indifferent man and show him

how insipid and tasteless life may be when the doors of communication are closed. “Indeed, the highly torturing agony of man is the sense of solitude that he feels in the presence of the absent individuals of the crowded world of indifference.” Chekhov tries to convey that only when all the individuals feel the need for caring and sharing that can there be a happy and joyous life.

“Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about. Be kind. Always” is the quote giving sage advice. If we remember that “we are our brother’s keepers,” we would see our responsibility. We do not live in isolation but are interconnected. There is nothing like the karma of an individual, because each man’s karma is bound up with the karma of society, community, nation and the world at large. Hence, we must always try to remember that “the indissoluble unity of the race demands that we should consider every man’s troubles as partly due to ourselves, because we have always been units in the race and helped to make the conditions which cause suffering,” writes Mr. Judge. If we fail to show sympathy to a person, it becomes an act of omission for which we are karmically responsible.

As the saying in the Bible goes: “Blow hot or blow cold; the lukewarm I spew out of my mouth.” Life brings us to a point where our eyes may be opened, and instead of drifting along, we begin to realise the true meaning and purpose of life. We not only learn through proper response to *our own* pain, which is one of acceptance instead of rebellion, but also through proper understanding of another’s pain. The extent to which we are willing to embrace and understand others’ suffering, to that extent we are better able to cope with our own suffering. But generally, we are sensitive to our own pain. Is it possible that our incapacity to tackle our own suffering is in some way related to our lukewarm attitude when others suffer? Very rarely is there a genuine and deep concern at another’s loss, as if it were our own.

(To be continued)

ON PHILOSOPHICAL ANARCHISM

III

PICTURE, therefore, an individual, say, in the family-State: even there, he is, to use the Aristotelian phrase—not a very complimentary one to budding Gods—“a political animal.” In that elementary State of the family, [We must not forget that there are evolved family-States which are more complex than evolved tribal States.] he is evolving politically—learning something which will enable him to become the Free Man, the Perfect Citizen of a Perfect Commonwealth, where each man lives his life by the laws which he has made for himself. He is learning this lesson by the process of yoga or union with the family-State, and the consciousness of that State widens and continues to widen, till the complete family-State—*i.e.*, a State where laws of consanguinity predominate and guide human endeavour—is realized by the individual. It begins at an early stage of human evolution, and even in modern civilization human beings, by and large, have not emerged from it. Complex family-States, suitable for highly evolved beings, exist today, in which human beings are acquiring the virtues of the householder. This State is not yet transcended. The man of the family today is performing yoga with the consciousness of his family, and thereby with that of the family-State.

The process has two definite stages to which passing reference has already been made. There is the first factor—the entwining of the individual with the State, and the second—his extricating himself from the State when he has nothing more to gain therein. Before our very eyes is taking place a somewhat strange phenomenon; settled family-life is more and more being given up by members of the evolved races under economic and other pressures. The inclination to marry and settle down is less strong and general today than in ages past. Time was when civilization had no lifelong bachelors, when family life was supreme and the chief function which members thereof had to perform was going through the marriage rite and living the married life.

If we refer to Maine's *Ancient Law*, he says: "The idea that a number of persons should exercise political rights in common simply because they happen to live within the same topographical limits was utterly strange and monstrous to primitive antiquity. The expedient which in those times commanded favour was that the incoming population should *feign themselves* to be descended from the same stock as the people on whom they were engrafted; and it is precisely the good faith of this fiction, and the closeness with which it seemed to imitate reality, that we cannot now hope to understand. One circumstance, however, which it is important to recollect, is that the men who formed the various political groups were certainly in the habit of meeting together periodically for the purpose of acknowledging and consecrating their association by common sacrifices. Strangers amalgamated with the brotherhood were doubtless admitted to these sacrifices; and when that was once done, we can believe that it seemed equally easy or not more difficult, to conceive them as sharing in the common lineage. The conclusion, then, which is suggested by the evidence is, not that all early societies were formed by descent from the same ancestor, but that of all of them which had any permanence and solidity either were so descended or assumed that they were. An indefinite number of causes may have shattered the primitive groups, but wherever their ingredients recombined, it was on the model or principle of an association of kindred. Whatever were the facts, all thought, language, and law adjusted themselves to the assumption. But though all this seems to me to be established with reference to the communities with whose records we are acquainted, the remainder of their history sustains the position before laid down as to the essentially transient and terminable influence of the most powerful Legal Fictions. At some point of time—probably as soon as they felt themselves strong enough to resist extrinsic pressure—all these States ceased to recruit themselves by fictitious extensions of consanguinity." (p. 131)

In its place today we find a more complex State than the family-State, and we are all evolving through the nation-State and the race-

State. The principles of nationality are being utilized today as those of the family-State were once made use of. We are making ourselves one with our respective nations and races, and in a few years, we should have completely transcended that and should be engaged in making ourselves one with a more complex organism of an international and inter-racial character. Even today there are men and women who are dreaming some such dreams and aspiring after some such State. Therefore, we see that it is also a question of escaping from a State when the lessons it has to teach are learnt, just exactly as a disciple becomes a Master and leaves behind the stage of discipleship. Thus, we get a picture of the function of the individual in the State, and indirectly of the duty of the latter towards the former. This applies to all the members of the human family—for they are “political animals” and will be perfect citizens of an anarchical commonwealth—once again in the philosophical sense.

We have referred above to the simultaneous processes whereby a man gets entwined with and also extricates himself from the State—the two *margas*, as it were, of human political evolution. The first has been described in terms of yoga, union with the State; the second may be aptly spoken of as the spiritual counterpart of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest—the emergence of the Free Man, not a “political animal” but the fit “Anarchist,” one who has freed himself from all the bonds and fetters that long evolution has imposed on us. These two aspects lead us to the inference that there must be also two fundamental principles on which they rest. A little careful study confirms our expectation, for we find that, common to all States, simple and complex, are two factors, the principle of union (with co-operation as its central manifestation), and the principle of unity (with the Supreme *Purusha*, the Perfect Citizen, the Free Man, as the goal ever held in view). Let us put it a little more clearly.

We find that an individual belonging to a particular State, in the process of yoga with that State, entwines himself, by the help of this principle of union, with other members of the State. The State

is not apart from the individual, though it is created for him; the individual is, so to say, part of the machinery of the State; without him the necessity for the State vanishes. The divine scheme provides for the State because individuals have to have a playground for exercise or progress. Where would be the need for a playground if no players have any game to play? The playground implies players—the latter being part of the former. Now the individual and the State have a similar relationship. The individual acquires the virtues of the State through the instrumentality of fellow citizens. In performing yoga with the State an individual co-operates with other individuals in that State. All the time the individual is learning how to co-operate—in the family with a few, in the tribe with a few more, as a nationalist with many, as an internationalist with many more, and as a humanitarian with all. That is the first process, which is predominantly in manifestation in the first half of human political evolution. Progress is rapid, and is mainly achieved, in the first period, by this co-operation. The second phase is predominant in the second half, and in that period the individual, as individual, emerges and receives his due. His mastery over the State, his independence of the State—he being, as it were, more than the State—are phases of the second half of political evolution. The keynote of the first is union, co-operation with others; that of the second is unity, as a result of which the individual, self-reliant, self-satisfied, flowers as the Free Man, the perfect Citizen of a Lawless Kingdom.

Lest this be misunderstood, we will say that we do not contend that in simple and early State-conditions men co-operate with each other, and in the second half they are warring entities. There are no two periods; rather are there two phases common to all States. These States may be simple or complex in structure; they may be stable or moving in space; they may be early or late in time. In the remotest past and in the simplest of family-States, both processes were at work, as a little observation shows. In the most complex world-State of the future also—the world-State of Free Men—these two will be found. Thus, it will be seen that we have to evolve through

uniting with others and yet retaining our individuality. Thus, co-operation and competition are not opposed to each other, but are supplementary, or complementary, whichever way one likes to look at the pair. It is a strange idea, but it is apparently true, that we are engaged in the work of obtaining something only to leave it behind, to reject it, to throw it away. We make ourselves one with our family, and then we want to escape it; with our tribe, and then we have to leave it; with our nation, and then we have to quit it. Get and give away; try to be rich, gain wealth, and then aspire to be possessionless! And this through tens of thousands and millions of years!

This tremendous drama has seven acts which, in Theosophy, we call the seven root-races. Each root-race has seven scenes which we call sub-races, and each sub-race several parts. In each act one phase of the sevenfold man plays the leading part, the remaining six phases being also at work on the stage. The perfection of the whole is aimed at in the very end, but the greatest impetus for the perfection of each is given to it when it plays the leading part. Take an example: in one particular act or root-race Kama plays the leading part; Kama will not show perfection at the end of that act, but only at the end of the play, but it receives the greatest impetus towards perfection in the particular act or root-race. The Kama in man will manifest perfection at the close of evolution, but it receives the greatest help to attain it in the root-race where Nature plays upon that particular human principle. All the States, from the simplest to the most complex, in that particular root-race, are engaged in aiding Kama to progress towards perfect manifestation in the individual. The double process of union, or co-operation, and of unity, implying competition in all the States of that root-race, is mainly in reference to Kama. What happens in root-races, also happens in the subraces of each root-race.

Lest the reader may think that all the above implies some kind of a fixed plan guided by the fatalistic aspect of Karma we must point out that this is not a correct inference. “Nature unaided fails”; but the aid given calls for effort on the part of the evolving intelligences.

If the latter fail to rise to their cyclic possibilities the door is closed for them and further progress is delayed. Consider the teaching about the “Moment of Choice”; consider how and why the door into the human kingdom was shut in the middle of the Fourth Round; correspondentially there will be a closure in the middle of the Fifth Round.

The ideas presented here are all derived from *The Secret Doctrine* of H. P. Blavatsky. H.P.B. was One Free Man—Internationalist, Philanthropist, Humanitarian; a Soul of Power, of Devotion, of Sacrifice. Her pupils should follow the Path she showed, seek the Masters she pointed to. Knowledge, service, self-abnegation will enable us to osmose from her writings the strength to progress towards perfection.

(Concluded)

BE ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?

And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.

—*Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians* (vi. 14-17)

NEO-DARWINISM

A THEOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE—II

IN the first part of the article, which appeared in the previous issue, the theory of science that organic evolution of species through random genetic variations in association with environmental factors by means of Natural Selection of heritable variants that successfully adapt to geological, climatic and other changes in the natural world to be non-teleological physical process was discussed; and it was shown that the theory cannot explain the stupendous complexities and marvels of the human body, for instance, without a supervisory quasi intelligent impulse.

Yet another conundrum of the Darwinian theory of evolution remains unresolved. It is the whence of the Root Types to which the lines of differentiations of each species and their variants are traced (the single, original starting point of the “Tree of Life”) in the distant past in the geological time line. Science postulates that these Root Types to have originated from the first simple primitive life form which it named as the *Last Universal Common Ancestor* (LUCAS). As to the origin of the latter, the Universal Common Ancestor—obviously a primeval elementary life form—science hypothesises that it originated through *abiogenesis*; meaning primitive first living organisms originated from a fortuitous combination of non-living chemical elements in association with solar radiation and atmospheric conditions, hence called abiogenetic origin. While the theory of the abiogenetic origin of primitive life on earth in a far distant geological past to be the starting point of evolution of life is the generally accepted theory of science, not all scientists, however, agree with it, as it cannot account for extreme complexity of molecular and evolutionary biological life. The contradiction in the theory of abiogenesis was pointed out by scientists during their dialogue with His Holiness, the Dalai Lama. They pointed out that the causality chain that describes the events of life ceases to be linear when probing the mystery of origin of life on earth. They pointed out that proteins,

which are essential for building biological life, are produced by amino acids, but that amino acids are produced by proteins. Furthermore, DNA is required to produce proteins, but proteins in the form of enzymes are needed to build DNA. They said that thus “the causality chain is more than circular as it is a complex three-dimensional net of events, all dependent one on the other, and that no beginning of this causality chain can be found.” (*Gentle Bridges*, Shambala Publishers, Boston and London, 1992, p. 225). In other words, science says that no organism can come into existence without DNA; but how the first DNA ever came into existence remains a mystery.

Science holds the view that theoretically it is possible to build a living organism that entirely bypasses DNA but it has not been able to create or discover a fully functional, self-sustaining organism that completely lacks DNA. It remains an unproven hypothesis.

One alternative hypothesis to overcome the conundrum of the origin of life some scientists postulate is that some primitive life form landed on Earth from some distant life-bearing planet in sidereal space, which became the starting point of the evolution of species on Earth. This view is again not a solution to the riddle but only throws the question further back as to its origin in whatever region of space.

Thus, modern science, holding to the premise that non-living particles and elements originated life, mind and consciousness on Earth, follows the causality chain of the thread of matter and soon hits the *Cul de sac* when it comes to the question of whence the Root types and its hypothetical “last universal common ancestor” from which Root Types of species are said to have originated; and besides, leaving gaps and chasms in the sequential thread of its theories.

Theosophy points out that the truth is the very reverse of the modern premise in that One Life is fundamental, universal and eternal, indestructible source, origin, of evolution of the manifested universe of life; proceeding from the universal One Life, it traces

the periodical differentiations of that One into Many on seven descending planes from the spiritual and the divine down to the last plane of the matter of our world in all its detail.

Investigations of modern Science begin at the last stage wherein the metaphysical causation gives place to the physical, chemical and biological laws of physical life, which come within the purview of our corporeal senses and empirical knowledge. What lies beyond it—the ontological causes that originated the phenomena of primitive life on earth—remains beyond the scope of empirical science unless it takes into consideration the axiomatic verities of metaphysical science also, at least as working hypotheses. The latter will open up for science vistas of infinite possibilities towards the one unified knowledge that comprehends all—consummation of the “Theory of everything,” the dream of science.

On the question of the cause of Root Types and of the last common ancestor, it is the basic axiom of Occult Science that “*There can be no objective form on Earth (nor in the universe either), without its astral prototype being first formed in space.*” (*S.D.*, II, 660 *fn.*)

Therefore, the Root Types of modern evolutionists appeared in the phenomenal world when the *primeval astral Root Type* of species became physicalised—that is to say, the subjective antetypes becoming objectivised Root Type)—by the impulse of the law of universal evolution of beings. Objectivisation of Root Types is the culmination of the descent of subjective Astral antetypes into matter of the physical world, which is the starting point of the physical processes of the evolution of species. Therefore, the Darwinian theory of physical evolution of species begins at the midway-point wherein astral evolution gives place to ordinary physical forces, which act on and differentiate relatively fewer Root Types into numerous species and their prolific variations. While it is true that such constantly changing physical, chemical, geological, climatic and other external factors are the causes of variations, differentiations, and selection of the most suited variants for further evolution of species, Occult Science traces these to still deeper causes underlying

the Astral antetypes to the agency of intra-cosmic intelligent powers, generally called as Dhyan Chohans.

“The underlying physiological variation in species—one to which all other laws are subordinate and secondary—is the sub-conscious intelligence pervading matter, ultimately traceable to a REFLECTION of the Divine and Dhyan-Chohanian Wisdom.” (*S.D.*, II, 649)

As to the origin of the primary germ of life—the “last universal common ancestor” science speaks of, ascribing to it an abiotic origin—Esoteric philosophy traces it to the eternal Germ of Universal Life, not in the remote geological past but before the commencement of planetary and solar evolution, in abstract Space “the One homogeneous divine SUBSTANCE-PRINCIPLE, the one radical cause.” (*S.D.*, II, 273)

(Concluded)

LIFE, believe, is not a dream, so dark as sages say;
 Oft a little morning rain, foretells a pleasant day.
 Sometimes there are clouds of gloom, but these are
 transient all;
 If the shower will make the roses bloom,
 O why lament its fall?
 Rapidly, merrily, Life's sunny hours flit by,
 Gratefully, cheerily, enjoy them as they fly!
 What though Death at times steps in and calls our Best away?
 What though sorrow seems to win, o'er hope, a heavy sway?
 Yet hope again elastic springs,
 Unconquered, though she fell;
 Still buoyant are her golden wings,
 Still strong to bear us well.
 Manfully, fearlessly, the day of trial bear,
 For gloriously, victoriously, can courage quell despair!

—CHARLOTTE BRONTË
 “LIFE”

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

“Before we can keep company with others, we must learn to keep company with ourselves,” writes Hannah Arendt. In 1840 Edgar Allan Poe wrote about an ageing man who roamed the streets of London from dusk till dawn to be amidst the crowd of people. “He refuses to be alone,” Poe wrote. Stressing the significance of solitude, he said that it was “such a great misfortune” to lose the capacity to be alone with oneself, to get caught up in the crowd, and to surrender one’s singularity to conformity. Ralph Waldo Emerson emphasized the importance of “periods and habits of solitude,” which made abstract thinking possible when “nature may speak to the imagination.”

According to Hannah Arendt, a German-Jewish émigré who fled Nazism, freedom involved not only the capacity to act spontaneously and creatively in public but also the capacity to think and judge in private, “where solitude empowers the individual to contemplate her [their] actions and develop her [their] conscience, to escape the cacophony of the crowd—to finally hear herself [themselves] think.”

When she was asked by a magazine to cover the trial of Adolf Eichmann, a Nazi SS officer who helped to organize the Holocaust, she wondered, how could anyone perpetrate such evil? She came to the conclusion that Eichmann, as a person, was “quite ordinary, commonplace, and neither demonic nor monstrous” and lacking ideological convictions. She attributed his eagerness to commit crimes to his “thoughtlessness,” or his inability to stop and think. She recognized that Eichmann “had failed to embark upon the essential question-and-answer process that would have allowed him to examine the meaning of things, to distinguish fact and fiction, truth and falsehood, good and evil.” A society could function freely and democratically only if the individuals engage in “thinking” in solitude, because “living together with others begins with living together with oneself.”

In solitude, one is alone but not lonely, because one is attuned to one's inner self and the world. "In our hyper-connected world, a world in which we can communicate constantly and instantly over the internet, we rarely remember to carve out spaces for solitary contemplation....if we lose our capacity for solitude, our ability to be alone with ourselves, then we lose our very ability to think." For Arendt, that solitude is the state of mind essential for developing not only one's conscience but is also a practice that prepares one for participation in social and political life, writes Jennifer Stitt, a Ph.D. candidate in US intellectual history at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. (*Aeon* magazine, November 12, 2017)

"Loneliness—that is the badge of all our tribe. At times it becomes intense; at times it has only a numbing effect. Loneliness is part of the inner life," writes Shri B. P. Wadia. When we try to overcome our lower nature and succeed but are not yet accustomed to the Higher, then our position is like that of Trishanku; we are in mid-air. "Do not be frightened. This loneliness acts both in good and bad ways and we have to learn to make good use of it. ...Right Loneliness of the Noble Eightfold Path is 'want of pleasure in congregations of men.' But the next exercise is meditation, which unfolds companionship with our Inner Ruler, followed by that with fellow pilgrims. To get away from the lower into the higher is the War; to enjoy the higher is light, peace and divine contentment which through divine discontent, urges us on to progress to perfection," writes Shri B. P. Wadia.

When solitude is unwanted, it can result in loneliness, anxiety or fear. When used at the right time and in the right manner, it can play an important role in spiritual development. After his baptism, Jesus is said to have spent forty days and nights alone in the desert. Before his enlightenment, the Buddha too spent extended periods alone in the forests. The Buddha teaches Right Loneliness and says that it must be preceded by Right Purity and Right Thought, followed by Right Rapture. These are inner states. Right Loneliness implies inner equipoise and an absolute detachment from worldly matters, such that one lives *in* the world but is not *of* the world.

Spirituality is all about learning to cultivate inner solitude while in company with others. Solitude can teach us to be independent, yet connected. It can bring peace of mind and contentment with what we are and have. To be able to embrace solitude, apart from cultivating impersonality and self-dependence, we might learn to spend some time *every day* in solitude. The mystic traditions of Islam emphasize the need to be away from the activities of life and spend periods of time in quiet contemplation. In the process of spiritual development, help and guidance come from the inner planes of being, and to avail ourselves of it, we must stop the inner and outer chatter. “Silence thy thoughts and fix thy whole attention on thy Master, whom yet thou dost not see, but whom thou feelest.” For developing right loneliness, we are asked to increase impersonal moments in our lives—such as when we are lost in appreciating sunrise or in helping someone.

What is yoni worship, and what is its significance? The worship of the feminine has been the most ancient form of worship, and in India, the worship of the Divine Feminine still flourishes. In men and women, both the “masculine” and “feminine” qualities are found, and to lead fulfilling lives, individuals and societies need to balance both these aspects within themselves.

In Sanskrit, “Yoni” means “womb.” At the physical level, when masculine and feminine meet, it is known as sex, but at the highest level, this union is spirituality, the union of the opposites. The worship of the linga, the masculine principle, and the yoni, the feminine principle, is always together. Though many yoni temples have been demolished by those who do not understand their significance, several of them have survived, the most significant of which is Kamakhya in Guwahati.

“When crass economics rules, the subtler and finer aspects of life will be ignored, and the masculine will naturally dominate. However, once the feminine is lost, everything that is nurturant, beautiful and

non-competitive will vanish from our planet. The fire of life will be lost forever. . . . The yoni is the magic chamber in which life is created. Each of us has inhabited it in the most crucial part of our making. In addition to our mother's womb that nurtured us, there is the larger womb that nurtures the planet, and an even larger one that nurtures the entire cosmos. When we venerate the yoni, we are seeing the entire existence as a life-making crucible. Every step we take is always within the sacred womb of Devi," writes Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev. (*The Speaking Tree, The Times of India*, July 31, 2026)

Purusha and *Prakriti* or Spirit and Matter, are co-eval and co-eternal. They are two poles of One Reality and are necessary for manifestation. H.P.B. points out that phallic worship only developed with the gradual loss of the keys to the inner meaning of the religious symbols. When the symbology of *lingam* and *yonis* is not understood, it leads to phallic or sexual worship. The corruption began with the Atlanteans. In some temples, the *Lingam* is often represented with the *Yoni*, which is the female generative organ, and symbolizes female creative energy. The *lingam* is generally placed in the *Yoni*, and their union represents the abstract form of creation.

H.P.B. points out that in many temples there is a *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 Great Pyramid of Egypt, as well as, the *Yoni* symbolizes the *Holy of Holies*. The Levites had in their *adytum*, the "Sacred" Ark of the Covenant. The Ark is the emblem of female generative power and is often depicted in the form of *Yoni*. The Ark is the sacred *Argha* of the Hindus, which was an oblong vessel used by the priests in the worship of Isis, Astarte and Venus-Aphrodite, which were all goddesses of the generative powers of nature. It is the Ark, in which are preserved the germs of all living things.

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 days of the mysteries 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 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. The *Holy of Holies*, which was “earlier symbolized by *Hiranyagarbha* or golden egg, now symbolized by the cow, is the symbol of universal abstract nature. The stooping man at the entrance of the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, ready to pass through the matrix of Mother Nature, is the physical man ready to re-become the original spiritual Being. The spiritual man is a hermaphrodite, in whom there is a permanent conjunction of *Buddhi* (Hermes) with *Manas* (Venus-Aphrodite).

The *sanctum sanctorum* of the Hindu temples is surrounded by seven *praharas* or corridors. Sometimes these are five, comparable to the five *Koshas* or vestures of the body—*Annamaya kosha* [physical body], *Pranamaya kosha* [vital sheath or astral body], *Manomaya kosha* [intellectual sheath or lower mind], and *Vijnanmaya kosha* [Higher Mind], and *Anandmaya Kosha* [Spiritual Soul].

HOPE is sister to Patience, and they together are the
godmothers of Right Living.

—W. Q. JUDGE