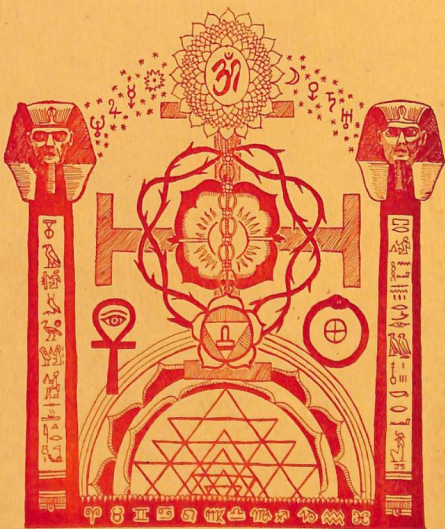


May 1957

Vol. II, No. 8

# VALUES



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VALUES is devoted to integrating human understanding unitively, impartially and globally in the interests of the general good.

NEXT MONTH'S TOPIC  
**THE WISDOM OF SOUTH INDIA**

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# Editorial

THE esoteric or hidden is in ourselves. We are all hierophants. When we enjoy poetry we initiate ourselves into a secret world of wonder. We open the magic casements and, by means of the evocative word-image, realize the Absolute as Beauty. We can see Blake's World in a grain of sand. It is a world of strangeness and awe. But we also live in a world of law, and there we can take the grain of sand and analyze its chemical, stony nature.

As Lao Tzu says, the manifest and the unmanifest, the known and the unknown, are front and back of the same golden coin of the Absolute (the Tao), and their ultimate sameness is the deepest mystery. Narayana Guru also reduces these two to "absolute mind-essence, a silence-filled ocean of immortal joy."

Without great clarity of spirit which may come by discipline, the followers of all *mystiques* are exposed to self-deception and exploitation, and this is true at all levels, instinctive, intellectual or philosophical. The erotic as well as the esoteric is a source of huge profit to racketeers. Few would want to get rid of sex on that account. Nor need the gates of wonder and the numinous be closed. The notion that the mystic needs the priest is as false as that the lover needs the pimp.

The "knowing" aspect and the "mystery" aspect of the grain of sand both belong to that unitive intelligence which is the light of the Self. Rich values shine on either side. The Gurus should not be confused with priests. They are teachers, not salesmen of secret hoards of goods. While they have been intensely matter-of-fact individuals, invariably they have used poetry to express their highest thoughts. Two and a half millenia separate the lives of Lao Tzu and Narayana Guru, yet we find a common language in both.

There need be no confusions between the numinous and the descriptive. The esotericist is not required to upset the orderly world of the physicist by talk of miracles, nor the exotericist to violate the domain of wonder by describing numinous experience as due to physiological

(continued on page 246)

## The Carnivorous Dr. Schweitzer

To the Editor,

VALUES

Dear Friend :

The title of the article, *Absolute Reverence for Life* on Albert Schweitzer in the December issue of VALUES is misleading.

Dr. Schweitzer does *not* reverence all life. He writes that animal life is taken in order to gratify his appetite. John Gunther in his chapter on Dr. Schweitzer in *Inside Africa* describes the meat served at meals during his visit to Lambarene.

Dr. Schweitzer states that "Man's supreme manifestation is kindness," but his favourite dish is *pate de foie gras*. In addition to killing the goose, the gross cruelty inflicted on the victim in the fattening process can hardly be considered a manifestation of kindness.

In supplying his table Dr. Schweitzer forgets the saying : "A merciful man is merciful to his beast."

ELLEN WINSER,  
658 Brooke Road,  
Wayne, Pa., U.S.A.

[We are glad to have this correction. The principle involved is the main thing. Whether this or that individual applies it or not belongs to another domain. Since Dr. Schweitzer is now very old, but has spoken of high values, let these remain and the errors or low values of his personal life be forgotten. We are not compelled to imitate his way of life. Perhaps he would be the first to acknowledge his weaknesses.—EDITOR.]

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## OBSTACLES

Neither by psychic discipline, rationalist inquiry, actions, or academic learning is liberation attained, but only by the direct awareness of the identity of the Self with the Absolute Principle: there is no other way.

The lovely form of the *vina* and great skill in drawing music from its strings may please many, but does not bestow universal supremacy.

Ingrained habits of social behaviour, of revering traditional texts and of giving attention to the body, prevent the proper victory of wisdom.

The ultimate truth is this, that there is neither birth nor death, neither a bound nor a struggling soul, neither a spiritual seeker nor a liberated one.

—SHANKARA, *Vivekachudamani*, 56, 57, 271, 574.

# Temple Exoterics



By NATARAJA GURU

REALITY is not always self-evident. Conversely, all that glitters is not gold. That which hides as reality behind appearance thus gives room for what is known to the lay thinker as esoterics. This kind of knowledge

has flourished in many lands in the various epochs of human history. Logic, reason, systematized philosophy and higher intuition have made attempts to dive into this hidden treasure so as to be able to formulate esoteric secrets in terms of exoteric doctrine.

Such attempts at the rationalization of esoterics have produced good, bad and indifferent results. When the process has had a steady and lasting record, a precious streak of wisdom has been left behind sometimes, on the river-beds, so to say, on which ancient civilizations have traced their course. The Cabalistic, the Tantric, the Hermetic, the Theosophical, the Rosicrucian or the Masonic are just some names applied to such streaks of precious wisdom-deposits found alongside with much dross which the course of civilizations have left in different contexts.

The common human intelligence which is behind such traces of subtle wisdom, springs from the same stratum of human life where the myth-making tendency also resides. Through proverbs and fables much common sense attains to universal validity instead of just remaining vague, dull or useless to mankind. These often enshrine wisdom values which should not be treated light-heartedly.

**Iconographic Esoterics :** In the context of idol worship in South Indian temples, under the general title of *Agama* or *Tantra Shastra*, the present writer has been familiar with a very interesting streak of exotericized wisdom of this kind deposited through very ancient times.

In considering the methods of installing idols of the familiar South Indian gods in temples and in the very elaborate formalities of their daily worship, as laid down in various books, and in examining the various ramifications,

gradations and precedence to be given to the vast hierarchy of gods and goddesses, we are able to discover implicitly or explicitly much mystical or contemplative doctrine or philosophy of great value to humanity. Academic philosophy could hardly be expected to retain such wisdom and pass it on from one generation to the next without losing its essential flavour or interest to the mass of contemporary human beings.

*Mantra-ke mavinakai ududodilla*

"Mantras won't make a mango fall."

—Kannada Proverb.

One has only to glance at the long list of books pertaining to the *Agamas* or the *Tantra Shastras* to be convinced of their vast variety and quantity with many ramifications. The South Indian section of the Tantric tradition comprises such schools as the *Prajapatya* (based on Vedic cosmology); the *Vaikhanasa* (based on austere practices of the Vishnu tradition), and the *Pasupata* (based on the tradition of Shiva) with its secondary branches such as the *Ganapatya* (giving primacy to Ganapati the first-born of Shiva). The *Maharnava* and the *Tantra Samuchchaya* are prevailing text-books used in the extreme south of India. Any attempt, however, to follow up these books with any degree of understanding or fidelity by the modern man would be sure to land such a novice into such a maze of injunctions and counter-injunctions having such a close mesh of elaborate detail in acts to perform that it would be likely to leave him confounded. However, the saving feature is that in and through these ramifications the critically-minded seeker would still be able to discover a streak of precious unitive and universal doctrine, forming the simple base of the technique and theory of an otherwise very elaborate temple esoterics.

**Microcosm and Macrocosm :** One of the basic ideas underlying idolatry or temple worship is that there is a presence invoked which represents the Cosmic Principle. Psychic factors meet the physically cosmological elements, bringing together unitively the dual aspects of Spirit and Nature. The sacred presence has always a lower half or

negative side which is represented as evil to be rejected. On the top of this is the positive, the good or the bright which prevails in glory. The dark side of *Maya* or ignorance is transcended by Light or Wisdom which is masculine or positive. The female principle is sometimes given a higher status as the Ganges in the crown of Shiva's locks. At other times she is a co-partner. In one rare case, that of the androgynous Shiva (*Ardhanarisha*), the male and female principles meet bilaterally in the same central presence which is neutral and represents the Absolute.

Cosmological, psychological, theological, ethical and eschatological factors are brought together and meet in elaborately devised images and are further enriched with the help of the uttered formula and the attendant formalities of the ritual and ceremony. The many hands and heads on Indian images are meant to represent varied aspects of the doctrine synthetically brought together and juxtaposed.

Images thus speak an esoteric language of their own, containing and revealing valuable mystical doctrines to the connoisseur. The tendency of hypostatizing is made to meet that of hierophantizing, and there is an implicit ascending and descending dialectics in the secret language of temple esoterics which we can but refer to here in passing. In short, the image represents the microcosm and the macrocosm at once, not in the usual sense but in a sense in keeping with the contemplative perennial wisdom tradition of the soil of India.

**Equating Self and non-Self :** Another fundamental principle of temple esoterics is the equating or the equalization of the worshipper and the worshipped. Philosophically this is an attempt to bring together the self and the non-self into one unitive or Absolute notion of the Self that is most high (the *Purushottama* or the Paramount Spirit of the *Bhagavad Gita* xv, 19).

Indian temple idolatry consists of the ringing of bells, waving of lights, burning incense, sprinkling water, the offering of flowers to the image, besides dressing and decorating it and washing it with ablutions of rose-water, milk, oil, honey, tender-coconut-water, lemon juice, etc. Jewels are put on the image also, with the mutterings of *mantrams* (incantations).

By all this ritual, the attempt is made to equate the worshipper with the worshipped. The worshipper places himself mentally in the position of the worshipped so that through the sympathetic sense of identity the suggestion of a higher personal value is mutually induced. Eyes meet eyes and feet and hands come together through subtle and delicately devised symbolic acts. Before being laid at the foot of the image, a flower is thought of as corresponding to the dialectically-conceived corresponding counterpart of the worshipper. Finger gestures (*mudras*), postures, beckoning calls, exorcising signals and sounds, the invoking, pleasing or placating of the various secondary deities and the scattering of evil forces that range in all directions of the compass, as well as above and below, are some of the component parts of temple ritualism, all of which have esoteric doctrines or meanings to reveal to the critical student.

**The Vertical Axis :** When any temple is to be erected according to the tenets of temple esoterics, the expert who is called upon

to do so first visualizes a vertical axis which links together all the elements of the earth and sky in a series conceived from base to zenith. Man or the spirit-principle dominates them all. The main subtle principle to remember, however, is that there should be no duality between matter and spirit. Matter merges into spirit and *vice-versa*, and the fecundity potency of the lower merges with the fearful awe-inspiring factors of the thunder and lightning of the higher spheres.

The Shiva *lingam* (the phallic symbol representing the virile principle of Shiva) is both an ontological and teleological presence or entity. The glory of fire surrounds it and the round stone is sometimes imagined by the worshippers as a *jyotir lingam* (a pillar of light) reaching from earth to heaven as in the biblical story. The two poles of this pillar of light represent within their range a scale of values which can be ascended or descended; but at the different levels of existence or formal subsistence always revealing unity. It represents the golden ladder of Jacob's dream upon which winged angels could go up or come down. A mystical doctrine is enshrined here which knows no limitations of East or West. An ancient language of perennial wisdom is implied.

**The Six Value Nodes (Shadadhara) :** In Indian temple esoterics, however, this vertical axis is further divided into six centres or plexuses, each representing a value-node in the contemplative spiritual discipline known to yoga. These centres are found in the worshipped and in the worshipper at once. Three of them below the navel are negative, or represent Shakti, and those above represent the positive aspect of the Absolute known as the Shiva principle by which was burnt the three cities with a flame from heaven.

The temple itself, which its *arudha* or spire, its *garbha-griha* or seat of the golden Germ of the Absolute and its *prakara* or surrounding enclosure, octagonal, square or circular, is supposed to enshrine *prana*, the life principle, or *atma*, the Self itself, in its living process of growth and becoming, touching the elements and the highest God above. Even the three bends to be found in most of the images of Shiva, Parvati or Vishnu are representations of the psycho-physical value centres of the higher range or level, or the positive factors in the spiritual contemplative path of the temple votary. The intelligent votary is expected to keep these centres or value nodes in his mind while offering his worship through the laudatory description from head to foot of the worshipped image. A process of mentally sympathetic suggestive equating is implied here also.

During times of festivals the ceremonies usually commence with the placation of the outer nature principles and the *dik palakas* (guardians of the directions), the elementals, and above all the head of all living beings (*ganas*) who is the elephant headed god Ganapati (lit., "Leader of the series" of troops or species), the first-born of Shiva himself. In the Vishnu context there is a regular science of precedence among the holy attributes or presences of the Absolute. The *tulsi* plant (*Ocimum sanctum*, the sacred basil) is treated as the Mother and consort of the Absolute and is tended ceremoniously in every Vaishnava home, especially by women and children. Going around such presences is also an important basic feature of temple worship, for which there is often a walled-in courtyard. The correct *pradakshina* as such circumnabulation of sacred presences is

called, has always to be in a clockwise manner, and never in reverse.

The labyrinthine ramblings into the forests of temple esoterics is almost without possible end. We shall travel no further into it for the present. All that we wish to point out here is that the subject is of growing interest even to the scientifically-minded modern man. Students of Freud and Jung find temple esoterics of absorbing interest. The academic philosopher has much to gain and nothing to lose by taking some interest in this subject. If one day the doctrines could be gathered, graded, and arranged critically, that would be a stride forward in the direction of a more intimate understanding between peoples and in the formulation of a universal *lingua mystica* common to all humanity, so as to promote the solidarity and peace of mankind.

[END]

## Verses on Knowledge

By NARAYANA GURU

*As waves upon the ocean the body, one after one  
It arises to subside anon, wherever is the term to this?  
Alas, within the prime source of the awareness-ocean  
This it is that makes for Karma's perennial action.*

*Within the waveless ocean there abide endless Maya traits  
Potent virtualities these that as effects beginningless  
Assuming bodies of water, sapidity or the like  
Taking the form of various worlds in succession, stand.*

*Never taking thought of the ever new, yesterday, today,  
Tomorrow or other day, do understand that all  
We count or measure here, ceaselessly to be  
Confusion made ; difference there is none at all.*

*Disjunct from knowledge, I have no being as apart ;  
Likewise from me, knowledge cannot remain ;  
In form of mere light ; knowledge and knower both  
Thus on contemplation one reality they become indisputably.*

—SELF CENTILOQUY vv, 56-59

( Translation by Nataraja Guru )

## HAVE YOUR FRIENDS SEEN VALUES ?

# Psychic Attainments

By TAYUMANAVAR

*A great poet, Tayumanavar was able to write both in Sanskrit as well as his native Tamil. He lived in the 17th century under one of the Naicker Rajas at Trichinopoly. He tried to reevaluate and weld together the rival doctrines of the dualists and non-dualists, as well as bringing harmony between the followers of the Vedanta and Siddhanta.*

## I

We can pacify and control even the wildest elephants,  
Tie the mouths of fierce tigers and bears,  
Mount on the backs of lions,  
Drag snakes from their holes and play with them,  
Live alchemically on the five metals,  
Rove invisibly over the world,  
Enslave the spirits and gods,  
Attain to everlasting youth,  
Enter into the bodies of others,  
Walk on the waters,  
Live unharmed in fire,  
And attain many wonderful powers ;  
But —

To remain just a little while Silent and Still is very hard for us !  
O Lord of Intelligence abiding in the shrine of my heart as the  
untraceable Truth ! O Radiant Joy !

## II

Leading the spiritual life,  
As a world pilgrim bathing in holy rivers,  
Enduring fire with no feeling of hunger and thirst,  
Calm at hunger's call, content with withered leaves, air and water,  
Entering into the mountain cave,  
Resorting to the life of psychic discipline,  
Cleansing the mystic nerves,  
Rousing the root-fire by breathing exercises,  
And coursing it up to the moon-world,  
And drinking at the fountain of youth,  
Sustaining thereby this frail body for countless ages,  
Are all these of any avail for attaining liberation without Thy wisdom ?  
O Liberating Lord of Mystic Powers ! O Southern Guru-Form Who shines  
at the crown of the head !  
O Blissful Master of Intelligence !

# Esoteric Doctrines

By FRIEDRICH MAX MULLER

*The English knowing public owes perhaps more to Prof. Max Muller than to any other single individual for his life-long labours in bringing Oriental source-books on wisdom within easy reach of all. The fifty odd volumes of The Sacred Books of the East represent his chief monument. Speaking Latin at the age of fourteen, he began Sanskrit when he was seventeen. He struggled up from poverty and became one of the most popular scholars of his time. He may be said to have introduced Vedanta to the West. "Madame Blavatsky," he wrote in a letter to Col. Olcott of the Theosophical Society, "was either deceived by others or carried away by her own imaginations. There is nothing esoteric in Buddhism. . . It is a religion for the people at large, for the poor, the suffering, the ill-treated. Buddha protests against the very idea of keeping anything secret." In his last lectures at the Royal Institution, when he gave a course on the Vedanta Philosophy, he again reiterated the open nature of Indian philosophy. "Nothing" he said, "nothing was kept secret, no one was excluded from the temple, or rather the forest, of truth." The following piece is from the Gifford Lectures, which he delivered at the University of Glasgow in 1892, when he was seventy.*

IT is well known that in India the perfect absorption of thought into the supreme spirit is accompanied, or rather preceded, by a number of more or less painful practices, which are fully described in their ancient catechisms (in the Yoga-Sutras, etc.), and which continue to be practised to the present day in India. I believe that from a pathological point of view there is nothing mysterious in any of the strange effects produced by restraining or regulating the breathing, fixing the eyes on certain points, sitting in peculiar positions, and abstaining from food.

But these things, which have of late attracted so much attention, are of small interest to the philosopher, and are apt to lead to much self-deceit, if not to intentional deception. The Hindus themselves are quite familiar with the extraordinary performances of some of their Yogins or so-called Mahatmas, and it is quite right that medical men should carefully study this subject in India, to find out what is true and what is not. To represent these performances as essential parts of ancient Hindu philosophy, as has lately been done by the admirers of Tibetan Mahatmas, is a great mistake.

**Esoterics a Modern Invention :** It is likewise a mistake to suppose that the ancient Hindus looked upon the Upanishads or the Vedanta-Sutras as something secret or esoteric. *Esoteric* mysteries seem to

me much more of a modern invention than an ancient institution. The more we become familiar with the ancient literature of the East, the less we find of Oriental mysteries, of esoteric wisdom, of Isis veiled or unveiled. The *profanum vulgus*, or the outsiders, if there were any, consisted chiefly of those who wished to stay outside, or who excluded themselves by deficiencies either of knowledge or of character.

In Greece also no one was admitted to the schools of the Pythagoreans without undergoing some kind of preparation. But to require a qualifying examination is very different from exclusiveness or concealment. The Pythagoreans had different classes of students; naturally, as we have Bachelors and Masters of Arts; and if some of these were called *esoterikoi* and others *exoterikoi*, that meant no more at first than that the latter were still on the outskirts of philosophical studies, while the former had been admitted to the more advanced classes.

The Pythagoreans had even a distinctive dress, they observed a restricted diet, and are said to have abstained from flesh, except at sacrifices, from fish, and from beans. Some observed celibacy, and had all things in common. These regulations varied at different times and in different countries where the Pythagorean doctrines had spread. But nowhere do we hear of any doctrines being withheld from those who were willing to fulfil the conditions imposed on all who desired admission to the brotherhood.

**Modern Comparisons :** If this constitutes mystery or esoteric teaching, we might as well speak of the Mysteries of Astronomy, because people ignorant of mathematics are excluded from it, or of the esoteric wisdom of the students of Comparative Mythology, because a knowledge of Sanskrit is a *sine qua non*. Even the Greek Mysteries, whatever they became in the end, were originally no more than rites and doctrines handed down at the solemn gatherings of certain families or clans or societies, where no one had access but those who had acquired a right of membership.

It is true that such societies are apt to degenerate into secret societies, and that limited admission soon becomes exclusiveness. But if outsiders imagined that these so-called mysteries contained any profound wisdom and were meant to veil secrets which it seemed dangerous to divulge, they were probably as much deceived as people are in our days if they imagine that doctrines of esoteric wisdom have been handed down by the Freemasons from the days of Solomon, and are now confided to the safe keeping of the Prince of Wales.

**Discipline, not Secrecy in India:** It is quite true that the doctrine of the Upanishads is called *Rahasya*, that is, secret. but it is secret in one sense only, that is to say, no one was taught the Upanishads in ancient times, who had not passed through the previous discipline of the two stages of life, that of the student, and that of the householder, or who had not decided from the first on leading a life of study and chastity.

This secrecy was easy when there existed as yet no books, and when therefore those who wished to study the Upanishads had to find a teacher to teach them. Such a teacher would naturally communicate his knowledge

to men only who had attained the proper age, or had fulfilled other necessary conditions. Thus we read at the end of the Samhita Upanishad in the Aitareya-aranyaka, "Let no one tell these Samhitas to any one who is not a resident pupil, who has not been with his teacher at least one year, and who is not himself to become an instructor. Thus say the teachers."

As to the study of the Vedanta-Sutras, I know of no restriction, particularly at a time when MSS had become more widely accessible, and when numerous commentaries and glosses enabled students to acquire a knowledge of this system of philosophy even by themselves. Nay, it is certainly curious that while the ordinary education and the study of the Veda was restricted to the three upper classes, we read again and again of members of the fourth class, mere Shudras, sharing the knowledge of the Vedanta, and joining the rank of the mendicants or Bhikshus.

[END]

## THE SECRET DOCTRINE

This Self is not to be obtained by instruction,  
Nor by intellect, nor by much learning.  
He is to be obtained only by the one whom He chooses;  
To such a one that Self reveals His own Self.

—*Mundaka Upanishad*, III, ii, 3.

The supreme secret in the Vedanta  
Which has been declared in former time,  
Should not be given to one not tranquil,  
Nor again to one who is not a son or a pupil.  
To one who has the highest adoration for God,  
And for his Guru even as for God,  
To him these matters which have been declared  
Become manifest (if he be) a great soul—  
Yea, become manifest (if he be) a great soul!

—*Shvetashvatara Upanishad*, vi, 22-23

This profoundest teaching one should not mention to anyone who is not a son, or who is not a pupil, or who is not tranquil. However, to one who is devoted to none other than to his Guru, or to one who is furnished with all the qualifications, one may give it.

—*Maitri Upanishad*, vi, 29.

## THE TEN ERRORS

By YOGI GAMPOPA

These precepts are from *The Rosary of Precious Gems*, a Tibetan work, wherein the North Indian yoga discipline is skilfully blended with Buddhist teaching. These precepts could very well apply to all seekers who turn to the path of mysticism and its various disciplines.

1. Weakness of faith combined with strength of intellect are apt to lead to the error of talkativeness.
2. Strength of faith combined with weakness of intellect are apt to lead to the error of narrow-minded dogmatism.
3. Great zeal without adequate religious instruction is apt to lead to the error of going to erroneous extremes, or of following misleading paths.
4. Meditation without sufficient preparation through having heard and pondered the Doctrine is apt to lead to the error of losing oneself in the darkness of unconsciousness.
5. Without practical and adequate understanding of the Doctrine, one is apt to fall into the error of religious self-conceit.
6. Unless the mind is trained to selflessness and infinite compassion, one is apt to fall into the error of seeking liberation for self alone.
7. Unless the mind be disciplined by knowledge of its own immaterial nature, one is apt to fall into the error of diverting all activities along the path of worldliness.
8. Unless all worldly ambitions be eradicated, one is apt to fall into the error of allowing oneself to be dominated by worldly motives.
9. By permitting credulous and vulgar admirers to congregate about thee, there is liability of falling into the error of becoming puffed up with worldly pride.
10. By boasting of one's occult learning and powers, one is liable to fall into the error of proudly exhibiting proficiency in worldly rites.

# The Oriental Psyche of Modern Man

By C. G. JUNG

*A famous psychologist analyses the reason for the current interest in Eastern religions and their Westernized imitations.*

THERE can be no doubt that from the beginning of the nineteenth century—from the memorable years of the French Revolution onwards—man has given a more and more prominent place to the psyche, his increasing attentiveness to it being the measure of its growing attraction for him. The enthronement of the Goddess of Reason in Notre Dame seems to have been a symbolic gesture of great significance to the Western world—rather like the hewing down of Wotan's oak by the Christian missionaries. For then, as at the Revolution, no avenging bolt from heaven struck the blasphemer down.

It is certainly more than an amusing coincidence that just at that time a Frenchman, Anquetil du Perron, was living in India, and, in the early eighteen-hundreds, brought back with him a translation of the *Oupnek'hat*—a collection of fifty *Upanishads*—which gave the Western world its first deep insight into the baffling mind of the East. To the historian this is mere chance without any factors of cause and effect. But in view of my medical experience I cannot take it as an accident. It seems to me rather to satisfy a psychological law whose validity in personal life, at least, is complete. For every piece of conscious life that loses its importance and value—so runs the law—there arises a compensation in the unconscious. We may see in this an analogy to the conservation of energy in the physical world, for our psychic processes have a quantitative aspect also. No psychic value can disappear without being replaced by another of equivalent intensity. This is a rule which finds its pragmatic sanction in the daily practice of the psychotherapist; it is repeatedly verified and never fails.

**The Entry of the East :** And so we can draw a parallel : just as in me, a single human being, the darkness calls forth the helpful light, so does it also in the psychic life of a people. In the crowds that poured into Notre Dame, bent on destruction, dark and nameless forces were at work that swept the individual off his feet ; these forces worked also upon Anquetil du Perron, and provoked an answer which has come down in history. For he brought the Eastern mind to the West, and its influence upon us we cannot as yet measure. Let us beware of under-estimating it ! So far, indeed, there is little of it to be seen in Europe on the intellectual surface ; some orientlists, one or two Buddhist enthusiasts, and a few sombre celebrities like Madame Blavatsky and Annie Besant. These manifestations make us think of tiny scattered islands in the ocean of mankind ; in reality they are like the peaks of submarine mountain ranges of considerable size. The Philistine believed until recently that astrology had been disposed of long since, and was something that could be safely laughed at. But today, rising out of the social deeps, it knocks at the doors of the universities from which it was banished some three hundred years ago. The same is true of the thought of the East ; it takes root in the lower social levels and slowly grows to the surface. Where did the five or six million Swiss francs for the Anthroposophist temple at Dornach come from ? Certainly not from one individual. Unfortunately there are no statistics to tell us the exact number of avowed Theosophists today, not to mention the unavowed. But we can be sure that there are several millions of them. To this number we must add a few million Spiritualists of Christian or Theosophic leanings.

Freud has prefixed to his Interpretation of Dreams the citation : *Flecter si nequeo superos Acheronto movebo*—"If I cannot bend the gods on high, I will at least set Acheron in uproar." But to what purpose ?

The gods whom we are called to dethrone are the idolized values of our conscious world. It is well known that it was the love-scandals of the ancient deities which contributed most to their discredit ; and now history is repeating itself. People are laying bare the dubious foundations of our belauded virtues and incomparable ideals, and are calling out to us in triumph : "There are your man-made gods, mere snares and delusions tainted with human baseness—whited sepulchres full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness." We recognize a familiar strain, and the Gospel words, which we never could make our own, now come to life again.

**Search for Certainty :** The unexpected result of this spiritual change is that an uglier face is put upon the world. It becomes so ugly that no one can love it any longer—we cannot even love ourselves—and in the end there is nothing in the outer world to draw us away from the reality of the life within. Here, no doubt, we have the true significance of this spiritual change. After all, what does Theosophy, with its doctrines of *karma* and reincarnation, seek to teach except that this world of appearances is but a temporary health-resort for the morally unperfected ? It depreciates the present-day world no less radically than does the modern outlook, but with the help of a different technique ; it does not vilify our world, but grants it only a relative meaning in that it promises other and higher worlds. The result is in either case the same.

I grant that all these ideas are extremely "unacademic," the truth being that they touch modern man on the side where he is least conscious. Is it again a mere coincidence that modern thought has had to come to terms with Einstein's relativity theory and with ideas about the structure of the atom which lead us away from determinism and visual representation? Even physics volatilizes our material world. It is no wonder, then, in my opinion, if the modern man falls back upon the reality of psychic life and expects from it that certainty which the world denies him.

But spiritually the Western world is in a precarious situation—and the danger is greater the more we bind ourselves to the merciless truth with illusions about our beauty of soul. The Occidental burns incense to himself, and his own countenance is veiled to him in the smoke. But how do we strike men of another colour? What do China and India think of us? What feelings do we arouse in the black man? And what is the Opinion of all those whom we deprive of their lands and exterminate with rum and venereal disease?

## FEAR OF THE SOUL

*PEOPLE will do anything, no matter how absurd, in order to avoid facing their own souls. They will practise Indian yoga and all its exercises, observe a strict regimen of diet, learn theosophy by heart, or mechanically repeat mystic texts from the literature of the whole world—all because they cannot get on with themselves and have not the slightest faith that anything useful could ever come out of their souls. Thus the soul has gradually been turned into a Nazareth from which nothing good can come. Therefore let us fetch it from the four corners of the earth—the more far-fetched and bizarre the better!*

—C. G. JUNG, *Psychology and Alchemy*.

**The Aryan Bird of Prey:** I have a Red Indian friend who is the governor of a pueblo. When we were once speaking confidentially about the white man, he said to me: "We don't understand the whites; they are always wanting something—always restless—always looking for something. What is it? We don't know. We can't understand them. They have such sharp noses, such thin, cruel lips, such lines in their faces. We think they are all crazy."

My friend had recognized, without being able to name it, the Aryan bird of prey with his insatiable lust to lord it in every land—even those that concern him not at all. And he had also noted that megalomania of ours which leads us to suppose, among other things, that Christianity is the only truth, and the white Christ the only Redeemer. After setting the whole East in turmoil with our science and technology, and exacting tribute from it, we send our missionaries even to China. The stamping

out of polygamy by the African missions has given rise to prostitution on such a scale that in Uganda alone twenty thousand pounds sterling is spent yearly on preventatives of venereal infection, not to speak of the moral consequences, which have been of the worst. And the good European pays his missionaries for these edifying achievements! No need to mention also the story of suffering in Polynesia and the blessings of the opium trade.

That is how the European looks when he is extricated from the cloud of his own moral incense. No wonder that to unearth buried fragments of psychic life we have first to drain a miasmal swamp. Only a great idealist like Freud could devote a lifetime to the unclean work. This is the beginning of our psychology. For us acquaintance with the realities of psychic life could start only at this end, with all that repels us and that we do not wish to see.

**Asia Invades the West:** But if the psyche consisted for us only of evil and worthless things, no power in the world could induce a normal man to pretend to find it attractive. This is why people who see in Theosophy nothing but regrettable intellectual superficiality, and in Freudian psychology nothing but sensationalism, prophesy an early and inglorious end for these movements. They overlook the fact that they derive their force from the fascination of psychic life.

We do not yet realize that while we are turning upside down the material world of the East with our technical proficiency, the East with its psychic proficiency is throwing our spiritual world into confusion. We have never yet hit upon the thought that while we are overpowering the Orient from without, it may be fastening its hold upon us from within. Such an idea strikes us as almost insane, because we have eyes only for gross material connections, and fail to see that we must lay the blame for the intellectual confusion of our middle class at the doors of Max Muller, Oldenburg, Neumann, Deussen, Wilhelm and others like them. What does the example of the Roman Empire teach us? After the conquest of Asia-Minor, Rome became Asiatic; even Europe was infected by Asia, and remains so today. Out of Cilicia came the Mithraic cult—the religion of the Roman army—and it spread from Egypt to fog-bound Britain. Need I point to the Asiatic origin of Christianity?

We have not yet clearly grasped the fact that Western Theosophy is an amateurish imitation of the East. We are just taking up astrology again, and that to the Oriental is his daily bread. Our studies of sexual life, originating in Vienna and England, are matched or surpassed by Hindu teachings on this subject. Oriental texts ten centuries old introduce us to philosophical relativism, while the idea of indetermination, newly broached in the West, furnishes the very basis of Chinese science. Richard Wilhelm has even shown me that certain complicated processes discovered by analytical psychology are recognizably described in ancient Chinese texts. Psychoanalysis itself and the lines of thought to which it gives rise—surely a distinctly Western development—are only a beginner's attempt compared to what is an immemorial art in the East. It should be mentioned that the parallels between psychoanalysis and yoga have already been traced by Oscar A. H. Schmitz.

**Towards Pristine Experience:** The Theosophists have an

amusing idea that certain Mahatmas, seated somewhere in the Himalayas or Tibet, inspire or direct every mind in the world. So strong, in fact, can be the influence of the Eastern belief in magic upon Europeans of a sound mind, that some of them have assured me that I am unwittingly inspired by the Mahatmas with every good thing I say, my own inspirations being of no account whatever. This myth of the Mahatmas, widely circulated and firmly believed in the West, far from being nonsense, is—like every myth—an important psychological truth. It seems to be quite true that the East is at the bottom of the spiritual change we are passing through today. Only this East is not a Tibetan monastery full of Mahatmas, but in a sense lies within us. It is from the depths of our own psychic life that new spiritual forms will arise; they will be expressions of psychic forces which may help to subdue the boundless lust for prey of Aryan man. We shall perhaps come to know something of the circumscription of life which has grown in the East into a dubious quietism; also something of that stability which human existence acquires when the claims of the spirit become as imperative as the necessities of social life. Yet in this age of Americanization we are still far from anything of the sort, and it seems to me that we are only at the threshold of a new spiritual epoch.

I do not wish to pass myself off as a prophet, but I cannot outline the spiritual problem of modern man without giving emphasis to the yearning for rest that arises in a period of unrest, or to the longing for security that is bred of insecurity. It is from need and distress that new forms of life take their rise, and not from mere wishes or from the requirements of our ideals.

The force within us that impels us to search, turning outward, annexes Eastern Theosophy and magic; but it also turns inward and leads us to give our thoughtful attention to the unconscious psyche. It inspires in us the self-same scepticism and relentlessness with which a Buddha swept aside two million gods that he might come to the pristine experience which alone is convincing. [END]

Is there anyone unaware of the Self? But they do not like even to hear of this Truth, whereas they are eager to know what lies beyond, about heaven, hell and reincarnation.

—RAMANA MAHARSHI.

If you want to get men to act reasonably, you must set about persuading them in a maniacal manner. The very sane precepts of the founders of religions are only made infectious by means of enthusiasms which to a sane man must appear deplorable.

—MR. SCOGAN IN *Chrome Yellow* BY ALDOUS HUXLEY.

# Actuality and Consciousness

By SHANKARACHARYA

*One of the World's great Gurus postulates his reasons for giving priority to the public waking reality rather than that of private dreams :*

THE non-existence of external things cannot be maintained because we are conscious of external things. In every act of perception we are conscious of some external thing corresponding to the idea, whether it be a post or a wall or a piece of cloth or a jar, and that of which we are conscious cannot but exist. Why should we pay attention to the words of a man who, while conscious of an outward thing through its approximation to his senses, affirms that he is conscious of no outward thing, and that no such thing exists, any more than we listen to a man who while he is eating and experiencing the feeling of satisfaction avers that he does not eat and does not feel satisfied?

If the critic (in this case a Buddhist) should reply that he does not affirm that he is conscious of no object but only that he is conscious of no object apart from the act of consciousness, we answer that he may indeed make any arbitrary statement he likes, but that he has no arguments to prove what he says.

That the outward thing exists apart from consciousness, has necessarily to be accepted on the ground of the nature of consciousness itself. Nobody on perceiving a post or a wall is conscious of his perception only, but all men are conscious of posts and walls and the like as objects of their perceptions. That such is the consciousness of all men, appears also from the fact that even those who contest the existence of external things bear witness to their existence when they say that what is an internal object of cognition appears like something external. For they practically accept the general consciousness, which testifies to the existence of an external world, and being at the same time anxious to refute it they speak of the internal things as "like something external."

**Dream-things:** We now apply ourselves to the refutation of the averment made by the critic, that the ideas of posts and so on, of which we are conscious in the waking state, may arise in the absence of external objects, just as the ideas of a dream, both being ideas alike.

The two sets of ideas, we maintain, cannot be treated on the same footing, on account of the difference of their character. They differ as follows:

The things of which we are conscious in a dream are negated by our waking consciousness. "I wrongly thought that I had a meeting with a great man; no such meeting took place, but my mind was dulled by slumber, and so the false idea arose." In an analogous manner the things of which we are conscious when under the influence of a magic illusion, and the like, are negated by our ordinary consciousness. These things on the other hand, of which we are conscious in our waking state, such as posts and the like, are never negated in any state. Moreover the visions of a dream are acts of remembrance while the visions of the waking state are acts of immediate consciousness; and the distinction between remembrance and immediate consciousness is directly cognized by everyone as being founded on the absence or presence of the object.

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## REAL EFFECTS

*Critic:* We certainly do not observe that a man bitten by a snake which later turned out to be merely a rope, dies, nor is the water appearing in a mirage used for drinking or bathing.

*Reply:* This objection is without force, because as a matter of fact we do see real effects resulting from unreal causes. We observe that death sometimes takes place from imaginary venom, as when a man imagines himself to have been bitten by a poisonous snake; and effects (of what is perceived in a dream) such as the bite of a snake or bathing in a river take place with regard to a dreaming person.

*Critic:* But these effects themselves are unreal!

*Reply:* They are unreal indeed, but not so the consciousness which the dreaming person has of them!

*Brahma-Sutra-Bhashya*, II, ii, 28-29 and II, i, 14.

WHAT the world thinks the most valuable exhibition of the Tao is to be found in books. But books are only a collection of words. Words have what is valuable in them; that is to say, the ideas they convey. But those ideas are a sequence of something else, and what that something else is cannot be conveyed by words. When the world, because of the value which it attaches to words, commits them to books, that for which it so values them may not deserve to be valued—because what it values is not really valuable.

For what we look at and can see is only the outward form and colour, and what we listen to and can hear are only names and sounds. What a pity that men of the world should think that form and colour, name and sound, are sufficient to give the real nature of the Tao! These things are not at all sufficient, and so "The wise do not speak and those who do speak are not wise." How is the world ever to know that real nature?

—CHUANG TZU, xiii, 10.

ONE and the same libido it is that into the senses  
The inner faculties, the body and all this, itself unfolds;  
Where is there a termination to this? The knower mark  
Is distinct only until knowledge itself gains ground.

From the birth-urge freed and equalized in state no one  
ever.

In this world stays on; beginningless as it is this sport.  
If this could be known as one unrarified whole  
In its entirety, to him boundless bliss befalls.

—NARAYANA GURU, *Self-Centiloquy* 70-71.

## WHY THE WAY IS HIDDEN

The World lost its proper course, and the course it took only led it further astray. The World and the Way, being thus lost to each other, how could the men of the Way bring it again to the World? And how could the World rise to an appreciation of the Way? Since the Way had no means to make itself conspicuous in the World,

and the World had no means of rising to an appreciation of the Way then, though sagely men might not keep to the hills and forests, their virtue was hidden—hidden, but not because they themselves sought to hide it. The sages were under the compulsions of their times. When these conditions shut them up entirely from such action as they could do, they struck their roots deeper in themselves, were perfectly still—and they waited. It was thus that they preserved the Way in their own persons.

CHUANG TZU, xvi, 3.

## PENNY'S WORTH

A man after fourteen years penance in a solitary forest obtained at last the power of walking on water. Overjoyed at this, he went to his Guru and said, "Master, Master, I have acquired the power of walking on water." The Master rebukingly replied, "Fie! O Child! Is this the result of thy fourteen years labours? Verily thou hast obtained only that which is worth a penny; for what thou hast accomplished after fourteen years' arduous labour ordinary men do by paying a penny to the boatman."

—SRI RAMAKRISHNA

## ON SITTING CROSS-LEGGED

When at Demboin, Baso used to sit cross-legged all day in meditation. His master, Nangaku Yejo (Nan-Yueh Huai-jiang, 677-744), saw him and asked:

"What seekest thou here sitting cross-legged?"

"My desire is to become a Buddha."

Thereupon the Master took up a piece of brick and began to polish it hard on the stone near by.

"What workest thou on so, my Master?" asked Baso.

"I am trying to turn this into a mirror."

"No amount of polishing will make a mirror of the brick, Sir."

"If so, no amount of sitting cross-legged as thou doest will make of thee a Buddha," said the Master.

"What shall I have to do then?"

"It is like driving a cart; when it moveth not, wilt thou whip the cart or the ox?"

Baso made no answer.

The Master continued: "Wilt thou practise this sitting cross-legged in order to attain dhyana (unitive contemplation) or to attain Buddhahood? If it is dhyana, dhyana does not consist in sitting or lying; if it is Buddhahood, the Buddha has no fixed forms. As he has no abiding place anywhere, no one can take hold of him, nor can he be let go. If thou seekest Buddhahood by thus sitting cross-legged, thou murderest him. So long as thou freest thyself not from sitting so, thou never comest to the truth."

—*Essays on Zen*, by D. T. SUZUKI

THE dull-witted constantly practise mental control and concentration; the intelligent, established in their own ground, like sleepers, regard nothing to be done.

—*Ashtavakra Samhita*, xviii, 33.

## PARADISE

We men of Earth have here the stuff  
Of Paradise—we have enough!  
We need no other stones to build  
The Temple of the Unfulfilled—  
No other ivory for the doors—  
No other marble for the floors—  
No other cedar for the beam  
And home of man's immortal dream.

—EDWIN MARKHAM.

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### Editorial (*continued from page 225*)

causes. Both the "philosophy" of mere exotericists and the "science" of mere esotericists easily become absurdities to be rejected on either side. Open material facts can be wonderful, while the fact of mystery need not imply obscurity. Words and all esoteric devices can fail—but the Self, never!

# Wisdom and Wonder

By JOHN SPIERS

EXACTLY forty years ago a professor of theology in the University of Marburg published a book in German called *Das Heilige*. A translation in English by J. W. Harvey, entitled *The Idea of the Holy*, was published in 1923. The name of the author, Rudolf Otto, became thereafter fairly well known. He introduced a new term, the *numinous*. Indeed, his whole book was an exposition of its meaning. This word numinous is pivotal in the understanding of esoterics, for it explains the attraction of the subject and the part that the sense of wonder plays in our lives.

**The *Mysterium Tremendum*:** Professor Otto's thesis was an academic presentation which expressed the same intuitional reality which had been emphasized more poetically and excitedly by D. H. Lawrence, William Blake, and a few other writers of strong sensibility who felt the need to revolt against the conventional restraints brought about by the dull intellectualization of life. D. H. Lawrence's springboard was sex; Otto's was religion.

Otto tried to define the numinous as an overplus involved in the use of the word "holy." The numinous can never be rationalized. It remains for ever a secret to the reason, though never to the Self. In this respect it is akin to the erotic. When the numinous is felt it brings an overpowering flood of tremendous mystery. Otto calls this the *Mysterium tremendum*. In his own words:

The feeling of it may at times come sweeping like a gentle tide, pervading the mind with a tranquil mood of deepest worship. It may pass over into a more set and lasting attitude of the soul, continuing, as it were, thrillingly vibrant and resonant, until at last it dies away and the soul resumes its "profane" non-religious mood of everyday experience. It may burst in sudden eruption up from the depths of the soul with spasms or convulsions, or lead to the strangest excitements, to intoxicated frenzy, to transport, and to ecstasy. It has its wild and demonic forms and can sink to an almost grisly horror and shuddering. It has its crude, barbaric antecedents and early manifestations, and again it may be developed into something beautiful, pure and glorious. It may become the hushed,

trembling and speechless humility of the creature in the presence of—whom or what? In the presence of that which is a *Mystery* inexpressible and above all creatures.

**The Sense of Wonder:** What is this numinous? Surely even the most rational have felt it—maybe only to brush it aside as unworthy of respect because outside the scope of a *posteriori* logic. But, as Otto points out, this sense of wonder and mystery, this orgy of ecstasy, is a universal human fact common the world over, and as sharply present in the “wonders” of science and mechanics, in the mystiques of flying saucers and visitants from Venus, as in the tremblings of the Indian *bhaktas* and the transports of Christian mystics.

Take one source of wonder away and the vacuum will be filled by another. Rationalize one kind of esoterics, exotericize it, and a dozen new hydra heads of esotericism will emerge. We are up against a factor of unlimited power to find expression—come materialism, atheism, rationalism, the machine age, or what you will.

It is this urgent sense of wonder which has been responsible for the sacred monoliths found all over the world, from Stonehenge in England to the gigantic figures on Easter Island in the Pacific. It has discovered Atlantis and Lemuria and roamed throughout the various lokas of Tibetan Buddhism. It provided the darkness of Gothic churches and the cavernous temples of Osiris on the Nile; and it pervades to this day the thousand-pillared and multi-imaged shrines of South India where its expert hierophants still survive. The numinous has been responsible for the haloes and auras painted on devotional figures, and its presence is induced by countless rituals and ceremonies. Aum and Amen are its sounds, as well as Hallelujah and Shantih, Shantih, Shantih. For every matter-of-fact reality it counterposes an otherness. It replaces logical premisses with paradoxes, parables and gnostic sayings. It prevails in the silence of the desert, on the mountain tops and in the empty spaces of Chinese Tao paintings. It is in the throbbing drums, clashing gongs, wild pealing of bells and united chantings of all holy places. Its denial is impossible, for it is the sublime terminal of human existence, whose other terminal deals with items of relative actuality.

**The Axis of Understanding :** What we must recognize in approaching all mystery, including esoterics, is the fact that the Self of man has its axis laid between the many and the One, between the relative here and now and the wonder of the Absolute. While there is attention for a time with the science which grapples endlessly with the innumerable facts of active life in the physical world, the Self, compelled by its own nature, swings again and again back to the undivided wholeness of the One. To express this return to the other than this, the numinous forms of expression appear, as various languages of esoterics of the "inner" as opposed to the "outer", in gesture, symbol, Tarot cards, temple carvings, idols and paintings, wonder-inducing chants, ritual actions, physico-psychic devices and in the lore of stars, jewels, numbers and alchemy.

Feeble as all these languages are, and even mere substitutes or signs indicating the esoteric, numinous otherness of absolute wonder, on the whole they have served and still fulfil a universal human need. Viewed from the side of philosophy as stated by the Gurus of humanity, they are finally probably as useless as any other attempt to express what can only be affirmed. No explanation of the highest truth is possible in any language. Thus we find Plato (Letter VII, 341 C) saying :

Concerning these things (ultimate truth) there is not, nor will there be, any treatise written by me. For they do not at all admit of being expounded in writing, as do objects of other scientific studies. Only after long, arduous converse with the matter itself .... a light suddenly breaks upon the soul as from a kindled flame, and once born keeps alive of itself .... Only to a few men is the exposition of these things of any profit, and they only need a slight indication of them for their discovery.

We can compare this basic European philosophic statement with one from India. It is from the *Bhagavad Gita* (II, 29) and is the earliest possible place in that work where the Guru Krishna can extol the great secret of the Absolute.

*ashcharyavat pashyati kashchid enam  
ashcharyavad vadati tathai'va cha'nyah  
ashcharyavach chai'nam anyah shrinoti  
shrutva 'py-enam veda na chai'va kashchit.*

(One person sees This as a wonder ;  
Likewise another speaks about This as a wonder ;  
Another hears of It even as a wonder ;  
But even hearing, no one understands This at all).

**Failure of Theology :** The esoteric appeals to Western man largely because of the failure of systematized religion to recognize the numinous, quite apart from the general staleness of a mechanized way of life. Wearied by a static creed and dogma the seeker looks elsewhere for living water to quench his numinous or spiritual thirst. Even

the psychologist finds the field barren of interest and men like Jung find new pastures of inspiration in Chinese books like *The Secret of the Golden Flower* and the *Yi K'ing*, and also find it worthwhile to study the *mandalas* of Indian and Tibetan magic while exploring rare medieval treatises on alchemy and the philosopher's stone.

There have been many attempts to "numinize" the barren desert of Aristotelian Christianity from its early beginnings. The New Testament itself has its wonder gospel of *Revelation* inserted at the end, where a veritable Coney Island of symbology is presented, full of Angels, the Tree which bears twelve different fruits, strange figures like the Woman Clothed with the Sun, the Four Beasts and apocalyptic Horsemen, trumpets, candlesticks and dragons. Later, we have the Rosicrucians of the Middle Ages, and the cult of Freemasonry using the symbology of Solomon's Temple, and Swedenborg, Blake, and modern Theosophical interpreters. Attempts are made by students like Alan Watts in his *Myth and Ritual in Christianity* to co-ordinate the sacraments of the church with Indian kundalini lore, or to find pagan parallels in holy trees, wood, cross and Christmas.

**The Numinous Personality:** But all that has not been enough. Symbols can exhaust their efficacy. They run down like old batteries or like dried up wells. It is then that the esoteric fraternities spring up so that the water of mystery and wonder flows again. And so from time to time secret cults and societies flourish. The personalities are usually quite specially numinous themselves. They are outside the orthodox category. Phenomenal characters like Rosenkreutz, Paracelsus and Cagliostro belong to the same pattern, and in recent times, there was that amazing figure, Madame Blavatsky.

Few would seem to have played the numinous hierophantic role so well as Madame Blavatsky. She was undoubtedly the foremost leader of the numinous counterblast to the smug world of Victorian Christian materialism, if one can be forgiven the apparent contradiction implied. From all corners of the world she gathered together an *embarras de richesses* of psychic comestibles which were eagerly swallowed by wonder-starved thousands. Much of it was a hotch-potch, gathered apparently indiscriminately from old wives' tales and Indian *puranas* (legends) and general oriental miracle lore; but not all; there were also real gold nuggets of wisdom in this conglomeration, sufficient to justify the almost terrifying extravagance and audacity of this amazingly numinous, humorous and courageous woman. In the Theosophical world many others have followed as her disciples, but none reached her eminence.

Here we can stop for a moment to remark how often women have played a powerful part in a presentation of the numinous and the esoteric. From the time of the Pythoness of Delphi, the Witch of Endor and the wise woman of Dodona consulted by Socrates, right through the period of witches (who seem to have flourished in their hundreds at one time in Europe) and down to the present day when fortune-telling and mediumship is almost entirely a female profession, the role of women in being closer than men to the esoteric world of wonder has been marked in Europe.

**The Male Type:** In India the part has been played by men.

Prophecies from men have usually been better received than from women, although women are on the whole the main support of occult societies and esoteric cults. Like unexpected but welcome comets, various "swamis" and "yogis" flare brilliantly across the Western sky. There are strongly masculine and powerfully magnetic personalities such as Avatar Meher Baba who have a quite unique place in manifesting the numinous, and there was the late Gurdjieff also, not to speak of Krishnamurti. These are all masculine types who come to mind. They each speak a language which gives new and numinous meaning to their large following, though in most cases the vocabulary is often exclusive or esoteric.

Two other features in the Western world must be mentioned before we proceed. For more sober intellectuals, solid scholars like Max Muller and his colleagues brought many texts of oriental lore out of the obscurity of Asian languages, giving consolation to a more educated class. Then for the masses, at a very ordinary level, there were the Spiritualists, supported by a few men of academic rank like Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Today Spiritualism is merging into the quasi-scientific field of experimental psychology, connected with names like Rhine (Extra-Sensory Perception) and Dunne (Serialism).

**The Ocean of Wonders :** Into the vast ocean of the occult it is hardly necessary to enter. Nearly everybody has sometime or other had a dip in its immensity.

It ranges from crystal gazing to the attainment of psychic powers (*siddhis*), from the intricacies of numerology and astrology to the multi-dimensional expositions of Ouspensky. From plain second-sight there are grades of transcendental visions dealing with the reincarnation of both persons and planets. It contains poetry, imagination, lurid fancy and religion all in one. It is populated by fairies and demons, elementals and archangels, Lords of the Dark Face and Mahatmas of Everlasting Youth. Again, it has its omens and amulets, black and white magic, and sorcery.

If, as Nataraja Guru writes, the world of South Indian temple esoterics is riotously complex, the ocean of Western esoterics is equally packed from bed to surface and from shore to shore with an amazing chaos of figures, signs and systems. From all of this we can reflect how amazing is the power of the human mind to find a hundred thousand ways and means of expressing values outside the commonplace world of physical reality, outside the humdrum banality of "sucking life out of dead leaves, like a fungus" as Lawrence said, or "measuring out life with coffee spoons" as Eliot put it. Esoterics, in its way, is also an amplified and extended poetry, supersaturated with psychic Absolutism.

**The Ontological Approach :** But the fact that it is psychic and also poetic does not give it that finality which can be of lasting general good to humanity. On the other hand, as soon as the numinous is explained exoterically, it loses its flavour. So it would seem there is no solution. The way out of the apparent impasse is indicated by the Gurus.

We have just noted how Plato and the author of the Gita, Vyasa, have both stated the impossibility of putting in words what evades all words—"from which all words turn back" is the expression used in the *Kena Upanishad*, and there is Lao Tzu's famous statement in the *Tao Teh Khing*, that "He who speaks does not know, and he who knows does not speak".

To have knowledge of the numinous without the need for words is the prerogative of the Self. Both the knowledge which can be known in the practical world of science which is common to all, and that knowledge of pervading wonder which tries to express itself in psychism, esoterics, poetry and religion, are ultimately joined in the Self-knowledge which being absolute, stands in no need of expression at all, being a locking-in of both subject and object. As far as words can go, this is indicated in one of the shortest of the Upanishads, the *Mandukya*. After surveying ontologically the states of consciousness called the waking, dreaming and sleeping, the fourth (it is not even called a state) from which all values spring forth and back to which they are retracted, is referred to as follows:

Not inwardly cognitive, not outwardly cognitive, not bothwise cognitive, not a cognition-mass, not cognitive, not non-cognitive, unseen, with which there can be no transactions, ungraspable, having no distinctive mark, non-thinkable, that cannot be designated (or represented), the essence of the assurance of which is the state of being one with the Self, the cessation of development, tranquil, benign, non-dual—(such) they (the wise) think is the fourth.

**A, U, M and Aum :** With amazing skill, the ancient wisdom teachers of India devised the little word AUM to represent a whole statement in ontological philosophy. At one end of the axis of being, the word can be broken into its elements, the letters A, U and M, by the analytical knowing process. These letters A, U and M are made to represent the consecutive states of consciousness known respectively as waking, dreaming and sleeping. At the other end of the axis of being, where the whole word is left unbroken, and where it can either be uttered as sound, or left glorified in silence, its numinous totality is understood by the Self. But we have to remember that it is the Self which gives validity and value to the three states and to the fourth. This is clearly stated in verse 2 of the same *Mandukya Upanishad*: "This same Absolute Self has four fourths."

Here we are presented with a matter-of-fact analysis on one side of the Self and on the other by a synthetic non-dual and inexpressible wonder, the whole forming the essentially simple framework for all further elaborations and detailed examination of reality from without or from within.

It is when the numinous terminal principle comes into play or is strongly felt either in waking or in dreaming, and felt without this awareness of the ontology involved, that the innumerable confusions result. The eye is ravished by visions which do not belong at all to the waking world, the ears hear revealing sounds (inner voices), and the mind is lost, so that like St. Paul there is no knowledge of whether one

is in or out of the body, whether awake or dreaming. The greater part of esoterics would appear to result from some such confused state, where values belonging to each terminal are exchanged to the detriment of both. And since the majority of human beings concentrate almost all their attention on the waking world as contacted through the senses, any philosophical approach is generally beyond their depth. This applies as much to the average psychological scientist as to the layman. For the rationalized analytical approach to the numinous is as likely to succeed as repairing a wrist-watch with a crowbar or carrying water in a sieve.

The final breakdown, of esoterics, symbology, on the one hand, and of empirical investigation on the other hand, can best be described by the story of the blind man's idea of the sun, as told by Su Tungp'o a thousand years ago, in China.

There was a man born blind. He had never seen the sun and asked about it of people who could see. Someone told him, "The sun's shape is like a brass tray." The blind man struck the brass tray and heard its sound. Later when he heard the sound of a bell, he thought it was the sun. Again, someone told him, "The sunlight is like that of a candle," and the blind man felt the candle, and thought that was the sun's shape. Later he felt a big key and thought it was the sun. The sun is quite different from a bell or a key, but the blind man cannot tell their difference because he has never seen the sun. The Absolute (Tao) is harder to see than the sun, and when people do not know it they are exactly like the blind man. Even if you do your best to explain by analogies and examples, it still appears like the analogy of the brass tray, and the candle. From what is said of the brass tray, one imagines a bell, and from what is said about a candle, one imagines a key. In this way one gets ever further and further away from the truth. Those who speak about Tao sometimes give it a name according to what they happen to see, or imagine what it is like without seeing it. These are mistakes in the effort to understand Tao.

**Closing the Gap :** Man is always becoming a victim to his own magic. As Plotinus put it, "all dalliance with what wears the mask of the authentic, all attraction towards mere semblance, tells of a mind misled by the spell of forces pulling towards unreality. The sorcery of nature is at work in this; to pursue the non-good, drawn in unreasoning impulse by its specious appearance, is to be led unknowing down paths unchosen; and what can this be but magic?" (*Enneads*, iv, iv, 44). Not only is the Indian proverb (adopted by the Buddha) true which says "All that we are is the result of our thought," but also Plotinus' statement "Man himself is what he contemplates." And here are the words of a modern sage, Narayana Guru :

Beyond all count is One and then there is  
This common reality; other than these two  
No form there is in memory, in sleep, in the City  
Celestial above, nor anywhere else indeed.

and further :

All things are real enough. He who views philosophically  
However, sees unitive reality everywhere.  
Without the vision inward-facing,  
Maya's malevolence great, much varied delusion doth yield  
indeed.

(Self Centiloquy, 67 and 88)

And one more verse from his *Garland of Philosophical Visions* (III, 10) may be quoted finally as summing up the wise man's attitude to esoterics :

The One is real, no second ;  
As real the unreal seems.  
A Shiva-lingam, a veritable stone it is,  
Not a second one by mason made.

Thus the outer (exoteric) and the inner (esoteric) have their proper philosophical status *vis-a-vis* each other, given to them by the self-same Self. In that Self, both exoterics and esoterics come unitively together, without mixing, and yet without independence, since the very notion of opposition between them is the result of a lop-sided approach. The science of the Absolute, having shown the dialectical play between these two extremities of the axis of knowledge, shows also the Self as at once their author and their transcendent and silent witness.

To the Self there is neither exoteric nor esoteric. When we realize this there can be no more bewilderment about the matter

Meanwhile, the task of the wise man is to close up the gap which presents itself between them, calling to aid all available resources, an earnestness of aim, all the forms of reasoning, the *a priori* as well as the *a posteriori*, a sympathetic consideration of the values that humanity finds precious in its esoteric play, the study also of the wisdom texts of the Gurus of all times and, if possible, attention to the voice of his own Guru and, above all, an alert contemplation of his own authentic Self.

[ END ]

## ESOTERIC INDIA

Everybody knows about exoteric India, the land of modern dynamic transformations which are intended to bring about a material prosperity at least as good as that of western countries. While this is no doubt pleasing, there is another India which is hidden and not easy for modern minds to see. This other India lives on in the deep south of the Peninsula. It is here that the great Gurus have lived—and their wisdom has been assimilated into the life and language of the people. The next issue of *VALUES* will deal with this under the title : *THE WISDOM OF SOUTH INDIA*.

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