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AUTUMN  
1956



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Journal of  
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HORIZON LINES  
AN EDITORIAL

## Learning From Our Likes and Dislikes

(LECTURE NOTES)



WE all have certain basic likes and dislikes. These extend over a number of fields, and include persons, places, and various objects. We have preferences in color, music, art, and literature, and inclinations in matters of religion, philosophy, and business. Some like to live by the shores of the sea; others choose mountain homes; and still others wish to reside in desert regions. In some cases, the reasons for these selections are obvious or are the result of simple necessity, but it frequently happens that there is no rational explanation, and we conclude that we are following the dictates of individual taste or preference. Actually, there is a reason for everything, and our likes and dislikes tell a vital story about the workings of our minds and emotions.

Sometimes the causes of our dislikes can be explained, if not justified, by our environment and the qualities of our associates. There are, however, strange intensities which rise out of the depths of our own inner natures, which we cannot explain even to ourselves. We instinctively react with pleasure or displeasure, and feel no natural inclination to resist these instinctual reflexes. We go so far as to accept these spontaneous reactions as proof of powerful intuitive insight. Sometimes we are right, sometimes we are wrong, but the mistakes are quickly forgotten.

Associationalism, as advanced by the brothers Mills, explains many of the mysterious choices which we constantly make. Every person we meet, every incident that arises, and every condition in which we find ourselves, reminds us of some previous circumstance which has affected our living. There is something about the features of a perfect stranger that reminds us of an uncle we greatly admired when we were children. The face of another man, however, revives the imperfect memory of a school teacher who was more of a disciplinarian than suited our inclinations. As a result, we instinctively favor the one, and regard the other with a shade of resentment. We decide that the first is likeable, but make no effort to cultivate the second, as natural sympathy does not flow in this direction. Many facial symbols lurk in the subjective parts of our memories, and each of these faces has become associated with a quality of temperament, or an incident, or a grievance. We are not intentionally remembering these things; they are just there as impressions which refuse to die.

As we grow from year to year, we leave behind various states of ourselves which can also rise to haunt us. I know many persons who have never been able to escape the memory of some critical period or event of early living. One man was blocked by a tragedy which occurred in his sixth year. He related every event of maturity to this incident, which he exaggerated out of all due proportion and used as an excuse for perpetual self-pity. He closed his character and his career to any influence which, by the broadest interpretation, could be associated even symbolically with what he regarded as a complete calamity.

Everyone who is suffering from pressures is suffering in some way from his own mistakes. Until the individual realizes this, recovery is impossible. We cannot cultivate weeds and then gather a good harvest of ripe grain. I have talked with many persons who are tired, worried, harassed, irritable, and even sick—but always someone else is to blame. Yet the world in which we live is an extension of ourselves. If we see it as a miserable and forlorn sphere of tragedy and misfortune, it is because we have not achieved the integration of our own faculties and powers. The good man sees good in everything because he naturally accepts the symbolism of living as essentially good. If we are suspicious, we immediately find grounds for our suspicions. The more we criticize others, however, the more certain it is that we should criticize ourselves. The ancients symbolized the universe by a mirror. Man, looking into space, sees himself reflected and is often frightened by the sight of his own image.

Each person builds his own philosophy upon the life he himself has lived. If he is by nature kindly, he will have created situations which have clearly revealed to him the constructive effect of kind-



ness. Thus he proves his own convictions, and is inspired to recommend his findings to those inquiring about such matters. If, however, a man is by nature irritable, quick-tempered, and critical, he has brought these qualities out of those with whom he has come in contact. Thus, step by step, this person proves to his own satisfaction that the world is made up of unreasonable and irritable folks who resent him. Such a man can well tell to anyone who will listen the long story of his troubles, for to him the world is a most incongenial theater of action.

We are not implying that the world is an illusion or that troubles do not come to the best-intentioned persons. Actually, however, troubles have very little to do with man's estimation of circumstances. Happy persons are not those who have enjoyed untroubled careers, and the most miserable often have the least cause for their attitudes. Real problems can be met, and we grow stronger because we meet them bravely. Phantom miseries, however, which have no substantial origin, can assume the proportions of an obsession and are always difficult to understand. I knew one individual who had complained incessantly for the best part of fifty years, yet could never give one convincing account of an outstanding dilemma. The incidents advanced as an excuse were trivial and childish, but they had been permitted to dominate every thought and action. Two generations had sacrificed themselves in the effort to make this person happy. It was a total failure. No one can find happiness who does not already possess it within his own nature. We can help our friends and associates to find useful outlets for their own constructive instincts, but we cannot create these instincts, or force our own upon another.

We must remember that each person is made up of a complex structure of mental and emotional faculties and propensities. There are some who enjoy communing with Nature. They like to sit under a tree and absorb the tranquillity of the verdant hillside, or listen to the tinkling voice of a mountain stream. Do they live in a different world from the prospector who sees the earth only as the hiding place of precious metals; or the real estate agent, who regards the broad plain as a potential subdivision? Some are bored to distraction the moment they leave the boundaries of a great city, and others are hypersensitive to the eternal struggle everywhere present in the workings of Nature. We cannot say, however, that the mountains and valleys change their appearances to meet the moods of mortals. The man with peace in his soul experiences the peace of Nature, but if he has not contentment within himself, he fears to contemplate vast solitudes and crimson sunsets. Thus he tells the story of his own integration and the degree to which he has ordered the psychic life within him.

To be in chaos, is to see chaos; but the well-ordered human being discovers and experiences a well-ordered universe.

There are certain broad rules underlying our preferences. It is safe to say that we find those persons and things most compatible about whom we have a broader understanding and with which we are familiar. The unknown is usually met with a measure of skepticism and distrust. We have come to associate innovation with discomfort. Change calls for adjustment, and this, in turn, suggests a certain amount of effort or thoughtfulness, and we like to economize upon these resources. Nature unfolds through an orderly pattern of changes which flow into each other without clear lines of demarcation. Our own lack of insight may prevent us from recognizing these patterns or the inevitable transition from one to another. As Lord Bacon wisely observed, most new-born things are ill-shapen. The disproportion of the young, we are accustomed to, and may even find to be pleasing. But it is more difficult to accept the asymmetries of immature minds and emotions if these are noticeable in a physical body already fullgrown.

We must be careful, therefore, not to base our likes and dislikes upon relative perfections or imperfections. Even the standards we most admire today are changing, and it is necessary for us to adjust to these motions without pressure or tension. There are some who have never been able to adjust to the automobile, the motion picture, or the radio. There are others who have learned to accept these things, but cannot bring themselves to ride in an airplane. These self-imposed limitations indicate that the person is not contemporary. He has been unable to escape from some earlier pattern of living. By the same rule, we cannot always accept pleasantly the growth processes of our associates. Even those near and dear can become strangers to us if their experiences cause major changes in their personalities.

This happens all too frequently in families. Young people marrying and building a home are at first congenial, but with the passing of time the growth of one may be more rapid than the growth of the other. Gradually, understanding is lost, and the subtle bonds of sympathy lose their strength. The answer lies in our ability to enjoy the unfoldment of life. We expect children to move from their childish fancies and to develop temperaments of their own. The adult can also change a great deal in ten or twenty years. In fact, if he does not, there is something wrong. Yet many likes and dislikes are due to a lack of understanding of this process of unfoldment through which all living things must pass.

One of the most difficult lessons is the cultivation of a mature sense of values. Good taste is bestowed by the enlightenment of the soul.



When we learn to judge not by appearances, but according to the laws of natural merit, we will find that our area of appreciation is enlarged. The artist discovers this when his technical training teaches him to simplify and organize the elements of a picture. Sometimes when we dislike something, we are merely stating our innate objection to confusion. We have not been able to discover law and order in a person or an object. Realities are most apparent in simple forms. It requires a great artist to organize his own life in simple and natural patterns, avoiding all pretensions and artificialities. But we should remember that if we enter the studio of a great painter and see only a half-finished canvas, we may be disappointed. In life, we are surrounded by works unfinished, and we must learn to sense the labors yet to be accomplished. Our friends, like ourselves, are all at awkward ages, for there is no other age available to man today. Let us not emphasize the awkwardness, but visualize, with patience and tolerance, the ultimate achievement.

When we are ignorant of the deeper meaning of things, dislikes can arise from our imperfect understanding. The obvious is not always the complete truth. Objects, and even persons, like words taken from a book, are incomplete in meaning until they are fitted into their proper context. A man of my acquaintance has a strange picture hanging on the wall of his living room. It is not especially well done; in fact, its defects are overwhelming. An artistic soul once visited him, and in a short time became obviously annoyed. Being one of those individuals who cannot mind his own business, and also feeling himself an expert on the subject, he made a very open and opinionated criticism of the drawing. His host waited until the guest had subsided and then remarked quietly, "That picture was drawn by my daughter when she was eleven years old. A year later she died of infantile paralysis." The artist was immediately and sincerely profuse in his apologies. He did not know; he did not understand; and, emotionally touched, he realized that his remarks had been in bad taste. The lesson is a good one. So often, we do not know, and therefore should never pass judgment until we are in full possession of the facts.

Basic temperament plays an important part in our likes and dislikes. Some folks are born with an aptitude for friendliness; others must develop this potential patiently and lovingly; and still others come into critical situations which force a powerful reformation within themselves. Usually where friendliness is deficient, there is a strong feeling of inferiority. The individual is not sure of himself, and seeks the consolation of a powerful, if misdirected, attitude. He is trying to convince himself, through the symbolism of dominating another

person. If we watch carefully, we can gradually discover our own secret motives, and if they are in any way ulterior, we can learn to correct them.

Often, therefore, dislike and distrust are merely indications of insecurity. We devise various strategies to justify aloneness because we do not have the knack of getting along with our associates. When these symptoms appear, they should never be allowed to continue uncorrected. The best remedy is to involve ourselves in a situation in which we must meet and work with other persons. There is no virtue in remaining a stranger to the world in which we live, and once we assume a negative attitude toward that shadow which we call people, we inevitably vitalize our own timidity. We build walls and barriers to protect ourselves from non-existing evils and hazards. As a result, we lose the basic ability to be friendly, even though the instinct may remain strong. Several instances of this kind have come to my attention. Often there is an almost desperate desire for companionship, but a complete inability to reveal natural warmth and kindness. When internal insecurity is overcome, friendliness is a natural consequence, for the individual is released from preoccupation with himself. He is then able, and usually even eager, to take an active and kindly interest in others.

If we are easily offended, quickly irritated, or unreasonably antagonized, it is because we are defending our own egoism or some deficiency in our own character. An old Greek philosopher was once told that a rival scholar had insulted him. The old sage replied, "It is not important. Only a wise man can insult me, and he would not." If we have too many notions and opinions, prejudices and conceits of our own, we must live in a highly defensive relationship to our world. Some individuals can scarcely spend a social evening without being offended by something that is said or done. They cannot endure disagreement and, being highly personal or self-centered, interpret all remarks as an immediate affront. Naturally, they will have few friends and numerous dislikes.

We seem to have a natural and inevitable distrust for those who disagree with us—even in trivial concerns. We have a feeling that real friendship means that others should adjust to our peculiarities and be patient with us under all conditions. Yet at the same time that we ourselves expect to be accepted without question, we demand a high standard of conduct from those around us. We do not realize that it is both unwise and unkind to impose our standards of estimation upon others. Each individual should be measured in terms of his own character. When this rule is carefully observed, we generally discover that most people are doing the best they can for what they are and



what they have. Their mistakes, like our own, are due to limitations which cannot be corrected by a mere desire for self-improvement.

It is inevitable that even the nearest and dearest of friends will have their faults and shortcomings. It is wise, therefore, to include this simple realization when we attempt to pass judgment on others. Unfortunately, many persons have a tendency to endow their associates with imaginary virtues. To expect more than can be reasonably inferred from available facts, is to be disappointed and disillusioned. Incidentally, the word *disillusion* is a curious one, for it embodies a double negative. It suggests that an illusion has been proved wrong. We have no right to blame a person because he fails to conform with our estimate of his character. We were wrong in inventing a disposition for him. If we had been true to the facts ourselves, a painful situation could have been prevented.

It is important to note whether we are developing a tendency to dislike other persons. It is not likely, however, that we will accept these symptoms frankly or factually. It is easier to say that we are becoming more and more disillusioned with our associates. It ends in a disagreeable complex. We like everyone whom we do not know, but no one who is close to us. It is comparatively easy to have a grand feeling of fraternity for humanity. We insist that all men are brothers, except our own brother. All human beings are equal, except those that we know—and they are inferior. We have a grand passion to serve mankind, but are resentful when a neighbor asks a small favor. As long as likes and dislikes are maintained on a universal level, there are no real problems. Humanity is all right; but human beings are troublesome. All of this means that we are unable to move our constructive attitudes from the plane of generals to the level of particulars. Yet the moment we feel the direct impact of another personality, we should try to make a real and immediate application of our idealistic philosophy. It likely follows that we must exhibit patience, reveal tolerance, and show quick and ready sympathy. We would be much more successful in this if we were less selfish, but the moment self-interest is challenged, we discover that our cultural veneer is superficial.

Persons with strong likes and dislikes tell us by their conduct that they are living unrealistically in a world of their own invention. They have never accepted life as a sphere of exchange in which they grow by giving and receiving. Those most inclined to give advice have the greatest difficulty in receiving suggestions or criticisms. We should never attempt to influence others unless we are open also to recommendations from them. It is important to remember, in this connection, that although friendships may be founded upon a desire for mutual helpfulness, this factor can also be exaggerated. When

two persons settle down to the rugged program of saving each other, trouble will not be far distant. It is a mistake, therefore, to bear in mind continually what we can do for someone. If we are essentially right-minded and good-hearted, we can bring comfort, consolation, and understanding to our acquaintances without trying to preach or teach some grand philosophy. Many good friendships have been broken as the result of an attitude of superiority, and likes may be transformed into dislikes because of a misdirected instinct toward "helpfulness."

On the more positive side of this discussion, we must recognize that the basic patterns of personality are highly individual, and that we cannot all like everything or everyone with equal intensity. Both natural aptitudes and educational conditioning bestow inclinations that must be recognized. It would be a dreary world indeed if we were all identical in our tastes and appreciations. It must follow that we will be drawn instinctively in one direction or another. But if we are truly wise and gracious, our preferences will never be obnoxious or unpleasant. We are entitled to choose our friends and furnish our homes according to our own satisfaction. We believe this and act accordingly. In the course of time, even our tastes change, and some cherished heirloom loses its charm, or we select new wallpaper for our favorite room. Sometimes close companions drift away and new friends take their places. This variety is helpful, normal, and proper. The changes that life brings can be met and accepted by persons innately gracious and understanding. What we outgrow falls away from us, and increasing internal maturity brings with it new associations. The trouble lies not in the gradual shifting of emphasis, but in the overtones with which we surround perfectly normal circumstances.

The trials and tribulations of living usually occur in places, and these become associated with the happenings involved. We therefore find it difficult to enjoy such symbolic possessions as remind us of some unhappy experience. It is wise not to be in close contact with objects which have tragic associations. When major changes come in life, it is better to dispose of all related material things. This will prevent our gradually developing a nostalgia which may end in melancholia. Yet everywhere we go we may see pieces of furniture, pictures, drapes, ornaments, and even houses that remind us of occurrences in our own lives. We react subjectively to such stimuli, and are usually unhappy in such surroundings.

This presents a problem, for it will be almost impossible to live long in this world without occasionally experiencing this condition. The only real answer lies within ourselves. If we thoroughly understand an event, it loses its bitterness. The more we cling to the past,



the more intense our present likes and dislikes will be. We cannot merely reject our sorrows or decree that they shall no longer plague us. We can, however, outgrow them and transmute them with the subtle alchemy of a kindly spirit. When we can look back without remorse, we can also look forward without fear. New opportunities should not be overshadowed by old regrets. We should be able to meet people and like them for what they are, and not turn from them because they seem to remind us of some ancient grievance.

Some individuals develop exaggerated preferences toward their immediate surroundings. They tell us that they cannot live in certain places; cannot endure a particular kind of house; and cannot tolerate the folks next door. Some are miserable in large houses; others in small ones. Some like new things; others prefer the old. Actually, these intensities reveal an undue attachment to surroundings. The individual must have a setting suitable to his own disposition, or he is miserable. Here again, self-discipline is the only answer. It is foolish to permit environment, no matter how intimate, to destroy peace of mind. The greater happiness is always found in modest but tasteful surroundings. To dislike moderation is to proclaim an addiction to excess. The wise have always found that life is a long journey, and it is a misfortune to be burdened with too much baggage.

Naturally we cannot like everything, nor are we required to deny the existence of that which is evidently wrong. But the wise man will keep his likes and dislikes within a normal range, realizing that if they escape from his control they will impoverish his life, and destroy his peace of mind. There is a great difference between things actually bad and things apparently bad, and it is quite possible for us to destroy the good in something simply to satisfy our own selfishness. We must guard against this proclivity. We would all be happier if we could overcome the tendency to criticize or condemn. Our likes and dislikes should be censored by the gentle thoughtfulness of the mind and the kindly sympathy of the heart. If we could achieve this level of acceptances, we would discover much goodness and fineness which we would ordinarily overlook. By degrees, we would experience so much of beauty and warm sincerity that the inclination to negative opinions would subside. Instead of defending our antipathies, we would learn to sustain and support our fellow men. Most persons need appreciation and encouragement, even as we do. If we are quick to give it, we will advance the common good, and, at the same time, enjoy a better relationship with the spiritual life within ourselves.



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## The Psychological Meaning of Tibetan Art

THE arts of Tibet have been strongly influenced by the early religious art concepts of India, particularly those which originated in Hindu philosophy. Indian art of this type is described as *hieratic*, as it deals principally with representations and expositions of the attributes of deities. Art of this kind is not intended to produce an esthetic experience, but rather to advance a certain kind of knowledge or to produce mystical reactions from within the consciousness of the beholder. It follows that both the creation of such art and the ability to appreciate or understand its interior motivation are forms of yoga. This entire concept is foreign to Western man, who likes to emphasize art for art's sake. His Eastern brother would be more apt to say art for the sake of truth or for the love of the gods.

While there are schools of secular art in both India and Tibet, their productions have gradually been drawn into the philosophical sphere through interpretation. This again confuses the Western mind, especially those artists and art critics imbued with ultra-modern tendencies. There is a strong opposition in the West to meaningful art, or the use of any artistic medium for the forthright purpose of teaching or preachment. This is due in part to the level of social consciousness. Eastern man has deepseated religious and mystical convictions, and he likes to be reminded of them. He finds intense personal satisfaction in the stimulation of his powerful instinct to venerate. This is not generally true in the Occident. Symbolic art, on the religious



level, does not awaken or release a spiritual dynamic in the beholder. To him, in his daily living, religion is only one of many interests and activities, and often it is subordinate to so-called practical interests. We seldom appreciate that which finds no responsive chord, or that which baffles us or even reminds us of some deficiency in our temperaments.

The arts of central Asia make use of nearly all the devices which we see in the productions of European masters, but the emphasis is entirely different. Take, for example, the use of the human body as an esthetic symbol. The galleries of Europe are well supplied with examples of "the human form divine." The artist with unusual skill in delineating anatomical structure in repose or under tension, gains distinction for his skill. In the Orient, the human body *per se* is not important. It is simply one of numerous symbols sharing with trees and flowers and animal forms its power to communicate ideas. The deities are frequently represented in human form, but in each case the emphasis is upon the deity implication, its attributes, postures, and adornments. The end always is a revelation of non-material qualities through material structure. Such a basic concept also leads to the mandala form, or meditational design. This may be either a composite work of art or a simple mathematical design, as found in certain forms of tantra. Substantially, the Eastern concept is bound to the mandala theory. All things seen in Nature, or represented in art, are symbols of invisible principles, laws, and powers, operating behind the world-form and pressing through into objectivity through structures basically symbolic. The human body, therefore, is a symbol of the total human being, and not merely a plastic instrument to be posed in some dramatic or alluring posture.

There may be some controversy as to whether Tibetan art should be considered as fine art or folk art. We should remember, however, that all art originates in the folk-instinct to express and reveal the impulses resident in the psychic nature. When an art concept moves from one nation to another, or even passes to a new geographical environment, certain modifications are inevitable. Tibetan art is more fluidic, generally speaking, than the contemporary art of India. This fluidic element has long been associated with the migrations of Buddhism. The extreme subtlety of Buddhistic metaphysical psychology softens the line and intensifies the impulse to depict movement as gracious, graceful, and rhythmic. This is especially notable in the postures of deities and in the draping of their robes. The Buddhist doctrine of universal compassion causes lines to bend, sway, and become more flexible. As the tree accepts the motion of the wind and reveals that motion, so the Buddhist, dedicated to the service of a universal law, feels this law within his own consciousness, moves with it,

and permits it to mold his outward conduct. In this way, he becomes heaven- and earth-witnessing. Life is a revelation of law, and the law of compassion softens and makes gentle what might otherwise be the austerities of religious conviction.

In the Buddhistic belief, deities are not held to be eternal, unchangeable gods ruling from their distant thrones their progenies of creatures. Buddhas and bodhisattvas are beings who have grown up from the earth. They are revered as illumined souls who, by the merit of their conduct, have been sanctified and deified. They have been born, have suffered, and died, and through long cycles of rebirth have attained liberation. Yet, being liberated, they have turned back to serve their brothers and to advance the common good by the renunciation of their own heavenly privileges and attributes. It would follow that such a concept would result in an intimacy and a sense of common understanding. The average person feels a kinship with the great ones who govern the wheel of necessity. He says of them, "What I am, they were; what they are, I will be." Although his religious instinct is strong, the Buddhist is inclined to think of the celestial beings he seeks in his meditation as elder brothers rather than as divine autocrats. He has also come to know that these celestial buddhas and bodhisattvas are bound to him by strong and intimate ties. He can become aware of them because they abide with him. He is of identical nature and substance with them, and he achieves union with their quality by becoming like them through discipline and meditation.

If by folk-art we understand a primitive artistic expression originating on the level of the untutored masses, this would not apply to the Tibetan forms. These are highly stylized, and follow traditional patterns and designs arising in the priestly culture and perpetuated by skilled craftsmen in the various fields. The careful preservation of symbolical forms and attributes reveals the descent of well-defined techniques and motifs. On the other hand, Tibetan art flowered in an isolated region and drew heavily upon the esthetic tastes of a homogeneous group. The result has been a noteworthy school easily distinguished from the productions of surrounding areas. Perhaps the dominant keynote is the organization of material. Although Buddhist images are found in most Eastern countries, the Tibetan artist arranges his masses and distributes his design in a manner peculiarly his own. This is especially evident in his modeling and sculpturing. There is an element of artistic courage which gives a strong vitality. Even figures in repose are life-like and dynamic, and lack the rigid feeling so common in sacred representations. Into each design are incorporated distinguishing peculiarities by which almost identical statues can easily be identified. These characteristics include the type of head-





PLATE I  
THE BODHISATTVA MANJUSHRI

dress, the positions of the hands, implements carried or incorporated into the decorations, and ornaments which are essential parts of each work. A convenient way to include these attributes is the use of a floral device, the summit of which sustains some specific article.

The figure of the Bodhisattva Manjushri (Plate I) is typical of the subtle introduction of differentiating symbols. The right hand of the deity is elevated, and we know that it originally carried a sword sur-

rounded by flames. This has not been preserved, but the hand position is a sufficient indication. Springing from the left elbow is a conventionalized plant, and at the crest of this, a book on a lotus pedestal. The book appears as a small rectangle in the reproduction. Manjushri is the bodhisattva of wisdom, and the book is a sutra, or sacred writing, representing essential learning. The sword is the symbol of discrimination. It is the Hindu sword of quick detachment which divides the false from the true. The headdress is used only in representations of bodhisattvas, and there can be no doubt as to the deity intended. The graceful swing of the body is typically in the Tibetan spirit. The costuming and adornments are reminiscent of the T'ang art of China. As usual, the pedestal is a double lotus, the lower one inverted.

This cannot be mistaken for a Chinese piece or one of Hindu origin, although both schools have influenced the design. The structural form is essentially pyramidal. The word *pyramid*, from its root *pyr*, means flame-like, and the image in the Tibetan iconography sways like a flame, giving a spiritual and ethereal quality which could not be captured had the pose been more static. It is also evident that anatomical treatment is largely traditional. The attempt is not to portray the body accurately, but to depart sufficiently from literalism to suggest that Manjushri is not simply a handsome young man. By a curious elusiveness, the Tibetan artist always takes away the implication of human limitation. There is powerful emotional content, which bespeaks the intensity of the folk-consciousness even though the people themselves may seem stoical or aloof.

The treatment of the great Indian teacher, Padma-Sambhava (Plate II) presents a definite variation, but well within the Tibetan reference frame. Images of this celebrated arhat are extremely scarce, and the present example is older than the average Tibetan piece. The Precious Guru forms with his pedestal an almost perfect triangle or pyramid, the line of which, however, is dramatically broken by the double nimbus. He wears his traditional headdress surmounted by a high plume, and his face, notably the eyebrows and mustache, perpetuates a traditional portraiture. He holds in his right hand the double-headed *dorje*, or thunderbolt. This is associated with him, for it is written in the ancient books that with the thunderbolt of Indra, the Indic god of wind and storms, Padma-Sambhava was able to dispel the monsters and demons that attempted to prevent him from bringing Buddhism across the great mountains of Tibet. In his left hand, the great teacher holds a vessel consisting of an urn with a highly decorative cover. This often stands upon a *kapala* or skull-cup. Both these symbols indicate receptacles to hold the mysterious elixir of immortality which the Great Guru was able to bestow upon his disciples. Supported





PLATE II

## PADMA-SAMBHAVA

by his left arm is the *khatvanga*, his most familiar attribute, which is a magic wand he is believed to have invented. The streamers on this wand signify victory over evil. Above these is a double dorje, representing the four attributes of transcendent attainment: internal tranquility, the yogic disciplines, victory over illusion, and perfect courage. The upper head of this double dorje is in the form of an urn, again a symbol of the sustaining power of reality. Above the urn are two human heads and a skull, signifying the nature of universal life in its three aspects. These are surmounted by a *trisula* or trident. This part of the sceptre bestows dominion over the threefold nature of illusion.



PLATE III

TSONG-KA-PA

The other attributes as represented on this image emphasize the principal doctrines with which Padma Sambhava is identified. The plume in his crown rises from a half-dorje and is a vulture's feather, recognized in this system as suggesting the heights of aspiration. The guru's headdress is called a *lotus cap*, and the lappets which would normally fall over his ears are turned back to signify his attentiveness to the supplications of his devotees. The right hand, holding the dorje, also includes a mudra intended to represent victory over, or protection against, forces of darkness and evil. Padma Sambhava is often



represented as elaborately robed and jeweled in his role of King of Sahor, but in the present image, his garments are less ornate than in paintings, which permit the artist greater freedom of design. Psychologically, the guru represents the perfect teacher, or the wisdom-aspect within man which becomes the messenger and interpreter of the holy mysteries of meditation leading to liberation. He is usually represented in the *dhyanasana*, or meditative posture, with the soles of both feet visible. This is the buddha-posture, which is a further intimation of his own attainment and is reminiscent of the doctrine which he represents.

In Plate III is shown the great Tibetan reformer and religious leader, Tsong-ka-pa. As he was an historical person, he is not represented with the ornaments of a deity. He is seated upon a lotus in the meditative posture (*dhyanasana*). His hands form the *dharma-chakra* mudra, sometimes called the "posture of turning the wheel of the law or of teaching." With this posture, he is also holding the long curling stems of lotus flowers which extend on each side of him in an upward direction. These flowers support further distinguishing attributes. At his right is a *khadga*, or flaming sword, in a vertical position, and at his left a *pustaka*, a book with long narrow leaves bound with a cord. He wears the pointed yellow cap of the Yellow Cap Sect, of which he is traditionally held to be the founder. In paintings, his garments are usually red. Two of his disciples are represented with him in most traditional pictures of this Buddhist saint who has been called "the Luther of Tibet." This drawing is taken from a large passport, a religious document to protect travelers while they are journeying through demon-infested regions. Such documents are exceedingly rare.

Plate IV is from a very large thang-ka or religious banner painted on cloth, and represents the Bodhisattva Maitreya, or the Buddha to Come. In this case there is no doubt concerning the identity of the representation. At the top of the picture is the Tsong-ka-pa triad just described, indicating association with the Yellow Cap Sect. The Maitreya is shown much as in the form in which he is depicted in the colossal wooden statue in the Lama temple at Peking. We seem to feel considerable Chinese influence in the present picture. The distinguishing attribute of Maitreya is the *caitya*, a Buddhist sanctuary or reliquary in the form of a small tower. This usually takes the shape of a squat, almost globe-like, base on the platform, from which rises a slender spire-like tower terminating in a *ratna*, or jewel. This may be seen directly behind the central point of the headdress, which is also conventional. The five-leaved or pronged crown is ornamented with *chakras* or *suryas*, circular devices signifying a wheel or



PLATE IV

THE BODHISATTVA MAITREYA



a sunburst. The flowers attached to the crown are optional and do not always occur. The robes are those of a bodhisattva, and the mudra, or hand posture, is again the turning of the wheel of the law (*dharmachakra*). The figure is ornamented and surrounded with Champa flowers, white blossoms with a yellowish or pink center. These are nearly always associated with the Maitreya. On each side below is a Tara, also holding flowers, and at the lower corners are two deities in their ferocious aspects, indicating strong tantric influence. At the viewer's left is Mahakala or "the Great Black One," easily recognized because he steps on an elephant-headed creature. He is a form of the Indian deity Shiva. At the viewer's right is Yama standing on a bull. He is king of the underworld and judge of the dead, but the Tibetans also recognized him as a patron of wealth. He is thus analogous to the Roman Pluto, whose devotee is sometimes referred to as a "plutocrat."

The ferocious aspects of the Tibetan divinities have an interesting message to students of psychology. All the laws, principles, energies, and forces in Nature are essentially good, but the consciousness of man may not be able to adjust harmoniously with the universal pattern which controls his life. When man, through ignorance or selfishness, violates natural law, he experiences discomfort and misery. Law seems to turn upon him and deprive him of its gracious and benevolent qualities. We may consider opportunity as a delightful and gracious divinity, but responsibility may assume a ferocious aspect demanding of us more than we are willing to bestow. Thus a god of love seems to become a god of vengeance, not because its own nature has changed, but because we have permitted material illusions to cloud our vision and have performed actions for which we must compensate in due time.

In Tibetan painting, the central figures are usually surrounded with aspect-images. Those above are likely to be gracious and beautiful representations of celestial beings, teachers, and buddhas. Those below are frequently monstrous-shaped, surrounded by flames, adorned with skulls and bones, and dancing or striding upon the bodies of their victims. We are likely to misunderstand the purpose of this dynamic contrast unless we approach Tibetan art with a mystical or philosophical receptivity. The beautiful forms and the ferocious forms are like light and shadow, without which contrast realities cannot be depicted. Every good principle presents both its benevolent aspect and its dangerous form. Wisdom, for example, may not only lead us to virtue, it may also precipitate us into the danger of perverting our newly-gained learning. Thus, wisdom can make us kindly, generous, and thoughtful, but it can also lead to arrogance, false pride,

and an autocratic intellectualism. It can strengthen our spiritual resolutions, or sustain our material and selfish ambitions. Thus the paintings remind us of the words of St. Paul when he said that whenever he would do good, evil was ever near to him. Another example is love, which can transform us into noble creatures, dedicated to the highest and most compassionate impulses. But love can also become selfish, possessive, and tyrannical, destroying the very ends which it seeks to attain.

The Tibetan deities are embodiments of energies, the use and abuse of which ennoble or degrade man. The ferocious aspects, gathered around the benevolent deities, thus teach an important moral lesson. They warn and admonish and invite us to seek into ourselves for the secret motives behind conduct. Are we performing apparently good actions from hidden selfishness? If so, our deeds take on a demon form, even though others may never recognize this fact. The wheel of the law (*dharmachakra*) is forever turning, and until the human being attains the perfect detachment and illumination of the bodhisattva, he must forever guard his heart and mind lest the demon forms subtly control them. They are not monsters from some inferno; they are merely the dark shadows in himself sustained by his own egoism. They will linger in his psychic life as long as he seeks his own security and happiness at the expense of the virtues within him or the world around him. Thus hate is the demon form of love; perversion is the demon form of wisdom; and passion, the demon form of compassion. The energies are the same, but man has the power to fashion these good and evil spirits by the intensifying of his own psychic life.

Plate V is an unusually fine representation of Tibetan art. It is in bronze, cast in sections, and the central figure is gilded. The over-all height of the composition is 33 inches, and the central image is 19 inches. This is large for Tibetan castings. It should be stated frankly that this piece presents a number of problems which are in themselves interesting and useful to the student of Oriental art. The figure is deficient in identifying attributes, and it is quite possible that these have been lost in the course of time. As certain contradictions seem to be present, the first thought is to consider the possibility that the parts have been assembled and were not originally associated. Careful examination, however, shows that in the area behind the left shoulder, where the tree droops toward the image, there is clear evidence that an attachment was originally intended. We must assume, therefore, that the tree and the image have been associated from the beginning.

The whole composition is suggestive of Mahamaya, the mother of Buddha. There is a fine thangka or painting of her in the Musée





PLATE V

## STANDING FIGURE IN GILT BRONZE

Guimet. She is represented standing under a sala tree, with one arm raised holding on to a branch of the tree. The infant Buddha is born from her right hip without wounding her. It is the ancient belief that a buddha must be born while his mother is standing and holding on to the mysterious tree of life. In the Tibetan painting just mentioned, she wears a number, in fact most, of the bodhisattva ornaments, but there are distinct differences which should be pointed out. It is traditional that Mahamaya should hold a sala branch with her raised right hand. The left hand is placed downward, crosswise in front of her body.

She stands upon a lotus, and her body sways to the left at the hips with a gesture reminiscent of East Indian plastic modeling.

In our figure, the left hand holds the tree branch, and the right hand is in the *varada* or *vara* mudra, called the "gift-bestowing." These differences could represent artistic modifications, but we must be cautious in so accepting them. It can also be born in mind that in most Indian art, deities for special symbolic purposes may take on the attributes of other deities in order to represent a particular psychological focus or to explain the interplay of psychic energies in the attainment of a composite mood or manifestation. If this figure was originally part of a group, there may have been attendant images, as for example figures of attendants and the god Indra receiving the newborn infant, often represented by an icon on a strip of sanctified cloth.

Deprived of other attributes, the image could also represent one of the Taras, originally the sanctified wives of the Tibetan king during whose reign Buddhism was introduced into the region. These usually wear the bodhisattva adornments, including the five-pointed crown. In the painting in the Musée Guimet, Mahamaya's crown is somewhat different, being ornamented with flowers; nor does she have the round knob on the forehead. The figure is standing in the *alidhasana* position, stepping to the left, the right leg straight, the left leg bent. This position is associated with the Red Tara, but unfortunately the bronze figure gives us no clue to the color symbolism. The *alidhasana* pose is also associated with *dakinis*, Tibetan fairies. Usually, however, these are presented as mischievous creatures, and their images lack the solemn beauty of the present example. Until further research clarifies the issue, it would seem best merely to suggest that in this unusual example we capture the moving spirit in Tibetan religious art. We see its indebtedness to the early Indian schools, and realize that such artistry compares favorably with the work of the trained masters of European schools.

This piece carries a powerful impact. It presents the religion of Tibet as a fluidic spiritual drama, strongly emphasizing the grace and essential dignity of this Northern School. As always, the worldly form is used to capture an unworldly quality of detachment. In this piece, there is no emphasis upon illusion. The pure motion of life itself is expressed, and Lamaism is psychologically unfolded as a religion of Nature, a fulfillment through the growth of living things into a state of completeness. Always the half-closed eyes, reminiscent of the Ajunta frescoes, seem to separate the deity from objectivity. They do not look at the beholder, but are fixed in a wonderful introspection which seems to conflict at first with the exquisite modeling in the physical form. The impact is highly mood-provoking. The message must be dis-



covered by the worshipper who is fully aware that he is not venerating an image, but is in the presence of an artistic representation of a phase of subjective reality.

Through Tibetan art in general, we are invited to become increasingly aware of the universe as an intricate structure of symbolism. Every movement of the body is an expression of interior impulse and is meaningful. All forms, growing and unfolding, reveal the postures associated with the creative impulses of life. The adornments and ornamentations are also the work of artisans whose crafts and trades exist only because they are founded upon immutable universal principles. In everything, the sovereign powers of the Dhyani Buddhas, the primary aspects of universal essence-energy, are repeated and revealed. The world is the lengthening shadow of the gods, even as man's environment is the extension of his own psychic field. Creativity is released from the sources of eternal reality within man himself, and flows through his life, his works, his thoughts, and his desires. Religion, therefore, is the complete release of the perfect universal image, and is possible only to those who seek the way of liberation and find it through the fulfillment of the good rather than the frustration of the evil. Images are those parts of the illusion which, with skill and wisdom, these native artists have captured in transient form. All of these forms invite the contemplation of the formless source from which they come and to which they lead the earnest seeking soul.



A college education seldom hurts a man if he's willing to learn a little something after he graduates. — (*Anonymous*)

#### PLEASE WRITE ADDRESS PLAINLY

The following inscription was found on an envelope written in India and entrusted to the Post Office for delivery:

"If the Almighty pleases, let this envelope, having arrived at the city of Calcutta in the neighborhood of Kulutola, at the counting house of Sirajudin and Alladad Khan, merchants, be offered to and read by the happy light of my eyes and virtuous manners and beloved of the heart, Mian Sheikh Inayat Ali, may his life be long! Written on the tenth of the blessed *Ramzan* in the year 1266 of the Hejira of our Prophet, and despatched as bearing [postage to be paid by person receiving mail]. Having without loss of time paid the postage and received the letter you will read it. Having abstained from food and drink, considering it forbidden to you, you will convey yourself to Jaunpur and you will know this to be a strict injunction."

(*Story of the Indian Post Office*, by Muluk Raj Anand)

# The Absolute as Evolving Consciousness

BY HENRY L. DRAKE

A MISCELLANEOUS group of Prussian intellectuals, neo-intellectuals, and pseudo-intellectuals was assembled in the uninspiring environment of a typical college classroom to listen, according to their various abilities, to an obviously uncomfortable professor. The severely plain man seated behind the scarred and wellworn desk shifted about uneasily and reached for his ever present snuff box. There was a moment of expectant silence followed by a prodigious sneeze, and Herr Doktor Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel began to speak. Slowly, almost painfully, he approached his subject. With his head in his hands, and staring intently at the desktop, he seemed to be talking to himself. Actually, he was consulting his notes. Always there were notes; precious memoranda, corrected, revised, and heavily margined. He would stop in the middle of a sentence, silently peruse his papers, and then continue, often with no effort to maintain his original theme.

Hegel was never exactly dynamic as a speaker, except when discussing the most abstruse material. Then, and then only, enthusiasm possessed him. Even as a youth, Hegel was nicknamed "the old man." By the time he was forty, he conveyed the impression of profound antiquity, and in his fifties, he seemed to have attained the age equal to that attributed to a few of the Biblical patriarchs. His face was heavily lined, and there was little to indicate in his manner the astonishing profundity of his mind. When Hegel received his doctorate of philosophy in theology in 1793, it was noted by his committee that he was decidedly deficient in philosophy, and unsuited by temperament and appearance for the career of a popular theologian.

In spite of Hegel's personal peculiarities, or perhaps because of them, his philosophy, known as *Hegelianism*, exercised a powerful influence upon the German mind of the 19th century. Hegel's attitudes on religion are typical of his involved mental processes. There is a legend that he once remarked: "Only one person in the world understands me, and he does not." Hegel's respect for the life and teachings of Jesus was profound, and throughout his life this German philosopher was deeply concerned with the spiritual mystery at the source of life. Broadly speaking, he attempted to reconcile the ontolog-





GEORG WILHELM FRIEDRICH HEGEL

ical teachings of the Greeks with the psychological findings of Emanuel Kant. The broad foundations which he laid down have influenced many subsequent scholars and have contributed to the revival of classical learning in the contemporary world. Hegel distinguished clearly between what he considered natural and manmade theologies. He felt that the doctrines and dogmas derived from the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, if literally accepted by the mind and consciousness, placed upon man an unnatural burden of imposed morality instead of awaking from within him those intuitive ethical and spiritual virtues which, if disciplined and matured, should provide him with a proper philosophy for living. He would not accept such religious limitations as would tend to separate human living from the life of Nature. In other words, the world, its codes, creeds, and doctrines, must never be permitted to develop patterns which were opposed to the true, natural, and proper experience of the human spirit.

Greek ethics Hegel thought to be the more adequate for the fulfilling of man's spiritual needs. He adhered to the principle of cause and effect, which he believed man might, by his own actions, control and modify in accordance with his own psychological integration. Hegel regarded with high esteem the Hellenic recognition of the necessity for submitting to the restraints which Nature imposes upon man

in order to make him more aware of himself. In accord with the Greeks, he also felt that one of man's highest virtues lies in his ability to conquer Nature through self-imposed obedience to her demands. Psychologically speaking, this would eventually result in man's developing into a nobler being. Nature, at its source, is the vital substance of all things including the essence of man. It entails the unconscious, conscious, and super-conscious, of which man partakes. Thus by natural conformity to the laws of Nature, man releases the potentials comprising his essential being, and thus unfolds from the status of a rational animal to that of a divine animal.

What a man cannot triumph over, he must accept joyfully without rebelling against life. To rebel is to deteriorate, while to adjust and understand the causes of difficulties is to mature and expand in consciousness. This is the philosophic method of transmuting disvalue into value. Life, for Hegel, is a process of understanding that in Nature there is an organic unity of soul-activity in which all antagonism between man, his environment, and his universe, is finally dissolved. Antagonism is always subservient to man's understanding of the highest good. At the source of all things lies a perfected unity, an entirety of consciousness. Were this not so, man could never find peace and contentment; but inasmuch as contentment may be his, it becomes his responsibility to seek and find it. And this he does in the process of growing; this, in very fact, is the growth process.

Hegel called the greatest value, the cause of all, the *Absolute*. This power cannot exist apart from the world; and hence, it may be known by man as it is observed to operate in himself and in the world. It is "simply the conscious process of experiencing and thinking," and thus is inclusive of all manifestation; for every thing expresses or thinks in some manner and to some degree. The Absolute, then, is the sum total of mundane, human, and divine experience—the world-process revealing in its activity what there is to be known about the universe and itself.

In this process, there are endless instances of experience at every moment, at every place, and at every level of experience. The process is vital and living, and it is observed to express a universal plan which is inherent in its very being. This evaluation of the world-process is called by Hegel the working out of Absolute Idea. Man, in his experience of the plan, may be aided by many disciplines: art, science, theology, philosophy, literature, and psychology. Everyone grows as evolution expands consciousness, but by applying order and discipline to the process, its movement may be mildly and beautifully accelerated. The world-process is absolute consciousness manifesting in man as individual self-realization. "The Absolute Existence, which realizes



and makes explicit the Absolute Idea must, therefore, be conceived as a process of evolving self-consciousness, culminating in complete self-knowledge, or comprehension of the idea which its development sets forth."

The greatest accomplishments in personal development and knowledge become possible when the seeming difference between opposites, Absolute and individual, subject and object, mind and matter, are overcome. These apparent opposites are really one and the same, for *I am what I think*. In the understanding of this identity lies the possibility of advanced self-knowledge; and, for Hegel, this is the manner and direction in which man's psychology must develop. In the course of time this development leads to a gradual understanding of things more Absolute, and is directed by means of philosophic discipline, resulting in psychological insight. Hegel believed such discipline to be of the highest worth, enabling man to enlarge his consciousness beyond the purely mundane, while at the same time not disregarding its values. The process is not one of excluding any phase of life and its meaning, but rather a procedure of inclusion wherein all experience is built into a more complete and meaningful pattern. Religious and esthetic values come to be synthesized in a way that shows finite spirit to be not only a creation of, but also an evolving of, Absolute Spirit. Philosophic discipline, in its scientific and mystical meaning, accomplishes a gradual approach to an identification of the finite with the Absolute.

Hegel believed that one may, when adequately trained, commence with a form and trace its evolution from Nature to spirit. Or one may begin with the spiritual process itself and, by deductive reason, see how spirit, actualizing its ideas as Nature, evolves. It is not logical, according to Hegel, to look to any of the relative arts, sciences, or religions for a complete understanding of such identification, since they themselves are but relative phases of Absolute Spirit. One must acquire such knowledge as a result of philosophic insight which, when properly applied, has vision beyond the relative objective world to a more inclusive consideration of universal concepts.

Philosophic discipline leads to freedom. By reasoning, feeling, action, and reflection, the spirit of man can go beyond individual circumstances, although acting through and by means of the individual. Even while thinking by means of this human process, the spirit "occupies itself not with the particular but with the universal, and becomes impersonal or super-personal in its interest and its significance. We tend to lose consciousness of ourselves in contemplating the truth."

At such a time, man's spirit is conscious that it is free and independent of externality. This freedom is the beginning and the aim

of self-discovery; for when active in realizing freedom, spirit as consciousness can attain a high level of awareness, redeeming much of its unconscious. Then it perceives that its apparent restrictions are results which the soul itself has caused; finally it is seen that all depends upon, and is a projection of, spirit. There is nothing in the objective world which does not depend upon, or which is not the result of, an underlying spiritual Substance, and this principle finally transmutes and calls back all that it has projected. Perceiving that the spirit itself is enabled to exercise corrective authority over soul and body, the thoughtful man takes in hand the government of his life. Were it not for the inducement of freeing itself, this corrective authority would probably not be used, because this, while the proper labor of a life, is of all labor the most difficult. The capacity of soul in the relative world is not only the condition of its pain, but also the eventual means of its freedom, since every soul, after a time, will choose to become wiser rather than suffer pain endlessly.

In Hegel's view, life is both free and determined, so that free-will is of necessity limited by the soul's extent of self-knowledge. It is incompatible with predetermination and coercion by a foreign power, and thus not limited. It is determined by the self-characterized will of the intelligence to realize itself. But as soon as realization begins, certain steps must be taken; thus, it is limited. So in a certain sense, it may be said that true freedom is self-willed necessity. This was also the view of the Stoics, who maintained that man may establish his own destiny, but that once established it was inevitable. But one may ask if there is not another possibility. Namely, that inasmuch as spirit is in itself free, it may, if it is powerful enough, transmute any condition which the soul and body have established. In practice this would be most difficult to accomplish, while in theory it is entirely possible. The very nature of the law of cause and effect demands such conscious freedom; for if it were not possible, the cycle of the law could never be transcended, since each established condition would continue to produce an effect comparable to itself.

Every race has "a mission to perform in the divine evolution . . . providence or universal reason also makes use of the passions and private interests of individuals to realize universal ends." In the Hegelian philosophy, universal spirit thus attains freedom along with the individual. It also accomplishes its purpose through the philosophic experience acquired by its own evolution. The Absolute itself is regarded by Hegel as expanding in consciousness, and hence, in freedom. Great peoples and well-disciplined individuals are among the means by which universal spirit brings about freedom.



The end of this freedom, so often sought after but seldom possessed—namely, happiness—may be defined as a more vital life lived in accordance with duty. For as Hegel stresses, only when man acts by duty which follows universal law can there be freedom. Yet, there may be conflict here, since man's inclinations are not always identical with his duty, and repression or license may result. However, it is not wise to take individual conscience, rather than insight based on natural law, as a guide to life. To do so would place relative conscience above the general and superior, making opinion rather than wisdom the basis for determining right and wrong. It is necessary to see that individual action, based on fundamental requirements, is in conformity with a larger and more inclusive set of categories which must govern the entire purpose and direction of life. Such principles must grow out of a well-organized, idealistic, but practical concept of life.

It is precisely the duty of philosophy to determine what the condition of man *qua* man ought to be, not merely in theory, but through an understanding of what is best in practice. In governing man, philosophy must lead to proper usage, having as its purpose those ends which are associated with the good life. And this function of intellect, applied to philosophy, must result in all institutions being rationally conceived and following the idea of justice inherent in Nature.

Relative awareness gradually becomes more absolute, but the human soul does not arrive at the highest values by means of any finite experience. Self-realization demands a transcendence from relative awareness to a more complete consciousness of Absolute Spirit, or Idea. Toward this goal man makes progress by constantly transmuting his relativity and finite limitations, accomplished by accepting finitude while at the same time realizing the supreme potentiality of one's nature. In so doing, the force of reason is capable of actualizing within man a steadily enlarging capacity for the "whole truth, or Absolute Idea, which it is forever striving to encompass."

Hegel's analysis of the life of spirit shows that in its movement from relative concerns to general principles it has three special phases. These are the subjective, the objective, and the absolute states of existence. Awareness under the first, or subjective level, may be termed *animalistic* or *organic*. "These first sensations are feeling values in which the Spirit begins to sense its own being, without as yet attaining real self-consciousness." The objective level of being, that at which subjective impressions are distinguished, affords the spirit the foundation necessary for self-awareness. It is a stage indispensable to the emergence of man's self-realization. The highest value of spirit—namely, the Absolute—is that in which the perceived and the perceiver are, (as in the first subjective stage) no longer separated. But here, instead

of a dull awareness of the animalistic state, the self has outgrown individual existence in a broader consciousness which discovers itself to be Absolute Spirit in manifestation.

The result of such attainment is not an operation of the will only. The process is one of psychological evolution, or integration, demanding experiences and reactions in soul and body; for any significant change in the understanding must eventually result in a change in all of man's bodily, psychical, and practical affairs. The process is an actual growth natural to man, the result of which is an absorption of the world as an externality into the consciousness of the spiritual self. This is attained as spirit reflects upon its own activities and rationalizations, as it reveals to itself the stages and levels which it has experienced.

If one regards himself reflectively, he becomes aware of this ascending order of experiences as they build internal unity within his psychic life, although one must inevitably note how slowly the work proceeds. Yet, this is the function of spirit as in its progress the ego acquires new capacities and achieves greater attainments. It is a passage from one level of consciousness to an ever higher level, which brings to view more profound and impersonal vistas upon which to reflect. "The spirit now meditates upon the human race, rather than upon the individual . . . The result is the formation of philosophies, of society, of law, of morality, of history . . .," and their kind. This is the idealistic life to which Hegel's philosophy leads, a blending of all relative oppositions into ever more inclusive syntheses until some obvious contact with the Absolute is reached.

If we ask further about the process by means of which relatives approach the Absolute, Hegel answers that it is simply the structure of the universe that makes things as they are. This is the first condition of growth, and produces natural evolution to which man may add art and science by way of aids to the natural process. No force outside of Nature places things and beings into the states of expression in which they are found. All creations exhibit their specific actualization of potentialities as awareness of spirit manifesting in free action. Every being determines its own self-determination. Each thing establishes its own chain of cause and effect, and so sets the pattern which its potentialities must follow in becoming actualized.

The Hegelian holds that this process is a logical or dialectical one, and that it extends throughout the entire universe, applying not only to man, but to all things. The Absolute always expresses as subjective and objective spirit, a compound manifestation in which one part is relative to, and less perfected than, the other. This relation exists



within every existing thing or being and at every level of understanding. The dialectical process works in such a manner that at the moment opposites are reconciled at one level, a new challenge to conscious development appears at a higher level.

This further opportunity to greater consciousness always appears as a new set of opposites which must again be dialectically resolved. Thus it works by means of what Hegel refers to as *thesis* and *antithesis*, ever evolving the human psyche. Logically such series of opposites inevitably lead to an ultimate goal. Finally there is a supreme synthesis of opposites in which all apparent contradiction and opposition is resolved and explained. This achievement is not necessarily an evolvment in time, but a dialectical movement of reasoning, resulting in an expansion of consciousness. The Absolute Idea integrates seemingly conflicting elements into a Unity both understandable and understood. Henceforth, freedom is more nearly complete.

Thus Hegel's general philosophy directs man to a life comprising a universal process in the act of realizing and experiencing itself. This expression of life seeks to be nothing other than it is; it can only be what it is, and its goal is Itself which is the Absolute. Therefore, all value is eventually recognized to lie within. The Absolute realizes at any moment of its history exactly what it is at that moment, and the same must necessarily be so for any specific expression of this principle.

The Absolute life moves only for the love of moving, and is not to be discovered either from Nature or from man. This intelligence comprises the source of man's knowledge, his driving force, and becomes his object in life. It can only be a "knowledge of the immediate, and of what *is*." Thus, for Hegel, the far-off look toward the divine becomes an immanent conviction of consciousness, working toward its own improvement. The divine event is not distant, but occurs always and from moment to moment. "It is taking place in our midst. It has always been present, and in no future, however remote, will it be more present than it is *here* and *now*."



Blessed is he who has acquired a wealth of divine wisdom; but miserable he on whom there rests a darkening opinion concerning the gods. — EMPEDOCLES

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### *Horror Story*

According to the great German poet Goethe, "Nothing is more terrible than to see ignorance in action."

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Contentment is natural wealth; luxury is artificial poverty. — SOCRATES

# Research on the Law of Rebirth

## (PART II)

THE doctrine of rebirth, as now generally considered, is largely derived from the teachings of the great Indian philosopher, Gautama Buddha. It was an integral part of a vast concept which descended through a long order of Buddhist teachers, who variously interpreted and unfolded the elements of the doctrine. The essential design of this concept cannot be clarified apart from the philosophical structure which supports it, for upon this its ethical significance depends. Although Buddha recognized the universality of laws and processes, he was primarily concerned with the state of man. He therefore dedicated his ministry to the service of humanity, and to the enlightenment of the individual through self-knowledge. We cannot simply take a fragment of Buddhist philosophy and impose it upon a totally different religio-psychological pattern. To do so, is to be confronted with unsolvable inconsistencies. The doctrine is composed of a sequence of inter-dependent ideas, each depending for its validity upon the totality of the design or concept.

The Hindu has the term *atman*, a term which has been loosely interpreted as *soul*. But when the Buddhist teacher declared that the human being had no *atman*, he did not mean that man was soul-less. Thus, we must examine the word further. It might be a little nearer to say that *atman* means *spirit*, but this again vitiates the Buddhist statement. More correctly, *atman* may be translated *being*, in the sense of something primordial, eternal, inevitable, and unchangeable. To the Buddhist, the concept of *ever becoming* takes the place of *being*. The universe is in a state of *ever becomingness*. This means a state of constant growth, a timeless motion toward fulfillment. The archetype of existence is *ever growing*. Perfection is neither a primordial nor an ultimate static state. It is a perpetual dynamic, manifesting through constant change. For man, the normal motion of change is toward an enlightenment which is an *ever becoming* of truth or reality.

If the causal nature of the universe is *ever becomingness*, the same is true of man. The core of the human consciousness is not an *atman* or a being, but a pressure of *ever becoming* manifesting through a group of agencies called *skandas*. Buddha specifically described five *skandas* in his great sermon relating to this subject. The word *skandas*



means *aggregates*. This, in turn, signifies a collection of particulars brought together into a sum or totality. All of the *skandas* are essentially impermanent and non-substantial. Their aggregation, therefore, is something which has an appearance of being at a given time or under a certain condition. The *skandas* themselves are separately in the state of *ever becoming*, and their aggregate therefore must likewise be in perpetual qualitative motion from an inferior to a superior condition.

For our purposes, we will not list these *skandas* under their involved Oriental terms, but attempt to find some English word or group of words to represent them. The first *skanda* consists of material qualities which in their own aggregate compose the physical bodies of things. Being composed of mutable units, the body is therefore in a constant state of mutation. The second *skanda* can be suggested by the terms *internal sensation* or *feeling*. At any given time, sensations are aggregates of energies, and exist only because of their relations to other aggregates also in motion. The third *skanda* involves what we call *perceptions*, or *ideas*. It is the operation of abstract thought which is continually reflecting upon the symbolism set up in the various patterns of aggregates. It has no validity apart from the transitory patterns from which it abstracts characteristic signs or implications. The fourth *skanda* is an elaborate compound suggesting synthesis, activities, and such complexes of consciousness as arise from phenomenal existence. It includes what has been termed *plastic forces*, such as will, attention, faith, and predisposition. The fifth *skanda* means *soul*, as this relates to intellection, ideation, or thought. It also covers the higher patterns of emotion which we call love or veneration. Some scholars include the sensory perceptions under this term.

Western man regards the *skandas* as manifestations of a fixed and immutable principle. He identifies himself with them, and he identifies them with himself. According to Buddhism, four false attitudes can be held toward each of the *skandas*, and these together constitute twenty barriers, called mountains, which circumscribe the field of *Saṅkhara*. A person may say of any of the *skandas*: 1) This is I. 2) This is mine. 3) This is the essence of myself. 4) The essence of myself is in this. These false opinions result in the *Saṅkhara*, which suggests differentiation on the one hand, and synthesis on the other. Differentiation implies a motion toward separate existence; and synthesis, a motion toward collective existence; and, according to Buddhism, both are illusions. They arise from a misinterpretation of the testimony of the *skandas*, for from these also, through their infinite combinations, is engendered the will, which is not something apart from the psychological composite, but is the product thereof. Will,

or volition, is considered a dependency, for, as Buddha pointed out, if man were placed in a vacuum, the *skandas* could not operate. They would be held in suspension, because they are brought into function by the phenomenal world and its activities. In Buddhistic psychology, this phenomenal world is associated with the human body, which becomes, therefore, that upon which all the *skandas* are dependent for their stimulation and the release of their energies.

Let us see what this means in terms of the law of rebirth. The *skandas*, in the process of their own *ever becoming*, are forever urging toward conditioned existence. They cannot urge toward unconditioned existence because of their own essential characteristics. The *skandas* lead toward the acceptance of the reality of phenomena and the substantial factuality of the body and its functions. Theoretically at least, the *skandas* could continue in an infinite diversity of relationships, which, in turn, would be dependent upon an equally infinite sequence of embodiments. It is scarcely conceivable that the diversifying power of the *skandas* should ever be exhausted; nor is it assumed that these aggregates could ever of themselves achieve their own liberation.

At any given moment, the human being is therefore a focal point of intensities. He is moving through destiny today and tomorrow. He is negatively attached to the past, positively to the present, and hopefully or idealistically to the future. He is never able to experience himself as other than the sum of the *skandas*. He therefore gradually permits himself to assume that this mutable psychological compound is himself. He bestows upon it such considerations as would be appropriate to a being, and is therefore capable of inordinate attachments or unreasonable detachments. By degrees, this aggregate becomes for him an ego or self. He conceives it as an *atman*, and even projects upon it the attributes of the God-image. The moment he sensationally experiences the state of being, he convinces himself of universal being. By this action he invalidates his own right to change, and becomes a fixed internal creature, the self-appointed arbiter of his own destiny. He conceives of destiny as the projection of a static and unchanging self into a dynamic and ever changing future. To solve the inevitable dilemma which arises, he then postulates perfection as an ultimate state of his present experienced ego.

It should be evident, therefore, that it will be necessary to adjust a number of Western ideas before the doctrine of rebirth can be rationally understood in the terms of its original exponents. Embodiment, according to Buddhism, depends upon the instinctive gropings of the *skandas* toward phenomena. In simple words, life is the result of the desire to live. Conditioned existence is the result of the belief in con-



ditioned existence. This belief, in turn, depends not upon a single instinct, but upon an aggregate of psychic pressures, each justifying and sustaining the other, and all equally dependent upon the physical body and its functions. Buddha pointed out that the man who says, "I will live again," will be re-embodied, and the man who says, "I will not live again," will also be re-embodied. Both attitudes are equally dependent upon the *skandas*. It is perhaps comparatively easy for a mentalist to justify the first statement, but not the second. Why does the man who says, "I will not be born again," become re-embodied? The answer is polarity. The positive pole and the negative pole are both illusionary. The man who wishes to be re-embodied does so because he desires to return to this world. The other man desires not to return to this world. But desire controls them both, and desire must be reborn.

Why should a man wish not to be reborn? If he believes the world has hurt him, he is in error. If he believes that there is a better world, he is also in error. If he wishes to escape suffering, he is still acknowledging the full powers of the *skandas*. If he envisions some other sphere which, like Indra's paradise, abounds with happiness, bliss, peace, security, and joy, these are also equally attached to the *skandas*. In the first place, his joy must be defined. His concept of a better world must be integrated. He has nothing to accomplish this with but the *skandas*, and these, moving constantly into new patterns, can bestow upon him no permanent standard or valid definition of good or bad, happiness or misery, or for that matter, life or death. All the unreal can bestow is further unreality. There is a Buddhist fable of the good king who, because of his virtues, was not reborn on this earth, but in Indra's paradise. After he had been there a while, he said, "I am indeed fortunate to have merited this wonderful reward." Instantly illusion overcame him, and he was re-embodied. The moral is: the ill we suffer, and the good we hope for, are still only dreams, and we pass from one to another without achieving fulfillment or liberation.

In Buddhism, the conspiracies of the *skandas* result in a cycle of hindrances, or false and illusional concepts or beliefs, which must inevitably force the person back to physical incarnation. To a degree at least, these hindrances are habits, and rebirth is habitual. It is the habit of the human being seeking spheres of opportunity and function consistent with the pressure of the *skandas*. He cannot disobey them, but at the same time he is in servitude to the conditions which they engender. Belief in self, for example, must result in the perpetuation of self. Belief in possessions must bind the person to a phenomenal state in which possession is possible. Even the belief in

wisdom must draw the ego or psychic entity into a world in which the appearances of wisdom and ignorance exist. Like attracts like, and the worldliness in man binds him to the world. He is not bound only by his vices, as some believe, for the *skandas* produce many symmetrical and delightful patterns. In the end, however, there is nearly always conflict and confusion or what Buddha called misery. The love of life itself can only be interpreted by man as the love of living, for he can experience no life apart from living. He cannot realize the motion of *ever becoming*, which is equivalent to the Chinese concept of Tao—motion for its own sake, moving everything else. The successful man clings to worldliness because it has satisfied him. The unsuccessful man clings to it in hope of future satisfaction. In turn, the successful man is anxious for the protection of his goods, and the unsuccessful man is anxious because he lacks goods and is dissatisfied because others have more than himself. Anxiety and dissatisfaction can express only through embodiment. Thus they draw like a magnet and lead to rebirth.

Here the subject becomes very subtle. If every intensity of man is an intemperance of the *skandas*, how is escape possible? Buddha definitely taught that the bodhisattva required only one more embodiment to achieve the liberation. The term *bodhisattva* means the *enlightened self*. This sounds reasonable until we suddenly face the psychological implication of the self. We have already learned that it is nothing more than the focus point of the *skandas*. Does this imply that the qualities making up this aggregate can attain a state of enlightenment and then combine to achieve the aggregate of illumination? Such is not the Buddhist position. There are paintings, however, in which projections of the Buddha-form enter into symbolic patterns resembling the *skandas*, to redeem and purify them. The answer lies in the total experience of the law, in which the motion or direction of the aggregates is completely altered. The first step perhaps is to weaken the intimate relationship between the *skandas* and the body upon which they depend. To Buddhism, body is more than mere structure and function. It is the vehicle of desire. It is furthermore the focal point between the indwelling psychic organism and the external environmental sphere of living. As the body actually binds the *skandas* through the sensory perceptions, it indoctrinates them with the significance of the embodied state. The demand resulting from incarnation therefore becomes involved in the structure of the ego or aggregate personality. Release is substantially "letting go." It is the individual relinquishing those excessive attitudes by which powerful sequences of cause and effect are either generated or sustained. As the instinct to embodiments is a primary cause of rebirth, it is also the source of all consequences resulting therefrom.



Buddhist psychology seeks to evaluate the essential meaning of objective consciousness as it manifests through the body with its functions, powers, and attributes. The embodied person experiencing birth, must move through a pattern of events until the illusions that bring him into this world also cause him to depart. He involves himself in a cycle of attachments, purposes, ambitions, plans, and strategies. Each of these involvements has its own inevitable destiny, and these patterns ultimately come together to form another compound, which we term *collective consciousness*. This compound is almost a negative reflection of the *skandas*. It consists of attributes, and they cause what we call destiny. The word *destiny* merely implies the sum of consequences, for it can be in no way different from the separate elements which compose it and which unite, like rivers flowing into the sea, to distinguish the appearance of termination.

Buddha explained that men are bound to the wheel of birth and death only because they choose to cling desperately to its spokes or rim. They have only to let go, but they do not know how. They are not destined to live; they choose to live. They are not destined to be liberated; they choose liberation. It is true, however, that in the tragic course of the rebirth cycle, the human being gradually becomes increasingly aware of futility, and is moved to seek some kind of explanation which will solve his dilemma. There is a Buddhist fable that a certain prince, having passed out of embodiment, stood before the Keeper of the Records. The Keeper said to him, "Who are you?" And the disembodied one replied, "I am a Prince of India." Immediately the soul fell into re-embodiment. The very act of identifying oneself with the dignities of estate, temperament, and even the name of the earthly form, indicated bondage to illusion. It is therefore evident that even what we call a good life, or a noble resolution, or a powerful determination, will not and cannot break the cycle. It can only be actually broken at one point: through overcoming the illusion of egoism and accepting the recognition of *ever-becoming*.

In the Buddhist concept, karma is actually the harvest of actions. Therefore, it is called "the fruit of deeds." As these activities and their corresponding reactions become exceedingly complicated, even to the degree of being incomprehensible, Buddhistic philosophy recommended that the disciple should only accept the fact and act accordingly. He should not attempt to evaluate the detailed causes which led to his present state or seek to build his character upon his own interpretations of previous deeds and misdeeds. The chemistry of karma is described as one of the four inscrutable things about which the average human being should not brood or become de-

pressed, for if he does so, he is likely to fall into a further state of delusion, or bring upon himself some mental disturbance.

It is enough to know, or at least to devoutly accept, that karma leads to embodiment until its powers are exhausted. This introduces an interesting point for consideration. Because man is essentially nothing, because he has no immutable design within himself, and therefore is without essential limitations, it is possible for him to be anything and everything on a phenomenal level. One state is as near as another; all depends upon the dominating elements in the *skandas* or aggregates. Whatever impulse arises in the will and is nourished by intensity, desire, and sensation, leads inevitably to grasping or desire. Karma acts through and in the form of affinity. Each rebirth is the result of reaching out and taking hold of something that is desired in the realms of the *Saṅkhara*, or illusion. This desire, in turn, is called *thirst*, because it demands gratification, which is no more nor less than the fulfillment of ancient pressures. There is nothing that satisfies hunger but food, and the thirsty man is irresistibly impelled to quench his thirst. The worldliness in man stimulates the thirst for worldly existence, and this leads to re-embodiment in a conditioned state of some kind.

Buddhism recognizes three kinds of action; that which is good, that which is bad, and that which is partly good and partly bad. Good action leads to benevolent consequences of some kind—either real or illusionary—according to the degree of becoming which has been attained. Bad action leads to misfortune, which is also described as real and illusionary. In this case, misfortune is real only in the sense that it is a proper consequence—something lawful and inevitable because of its causes. The average human being bears a karmic burden partly good and partly bad, and this leads to sequences of events in the new embodiment which are partly pleasant and partly painful. It should be obvious that such graspings or thirstings as impel us to destructive courses of conduct are the most unwholesome and lead to the heaviest karmic indebtedness.

Personality is the totality of those processes which are focused on the level of sensation, and perception is the extension of sensation into the sphere of phenomena. Thus, the personality becomes the basis of acceptances, rejections, observations, and reflections. As the personality focus is constantly changing, the meanings of things perceived are likewise transitory and without essential and inevitable substance. By this thinking, it is not the man who is reborn, but the karma of the man. Only action leads to reaction, and it is this flowing of the former into the latter that causes the *skandas* or the aggregates to perpetuate themselves in a corporeal body.



Let us try to think this through in a more simple and direct manner. The human being, departing from this life, dies in a state of *grasping* or *thirst*. He is departing from a world, but the world is not departing from him. He passes out of life in the midst of a complex of desires and frustrations. Even though he might attempt to settle all his affairs before his death, he can accomplish this only in terms of environmental problems. He dies wishing he could live longer, or hoping that he will not live again. Either of these intensities indicates equally his involvement in the sphere of sensation. As the *Baghavat-Gita* points out, only the person completely free of pain and pleasure is fitted for a better state. Believing in the reality of his own objective focus, the dying person thirsts for reorientation in a familiar state of existence. He is not capable of thirsting after universality because he experiences himself only as conditioned being. Because he is conditioned, he must exist in a condition; being something, he must be somewhere. The inevitable instinct to prove that he is something, somewhere, forces him to seek a new body.

This body will then become the *vahan*, or instrument, for the continuance of the sensation and desire patterns, which have lost none of their intensity. This may lead to a rather natural question. Assuming that being someone, we desire to be somewhere—why not select a different abode? We might seek the perfumed air of Indra's Paradise, or the Golden City of Amitabha. In our dreams and holiest aspirations, we might desire a heavenly estate, or perhaps pass to some planet where beings are more enlightened. This is prevented by the *skandas*, which condition the thirst for life and the quality of attainable desire. Consider for a moment the average person's visualization of heaven or paradise. This is no more than a projection of the ego-focus. We cannot imagine a state of good contrary to our own inclinations, and, for most, the heavenly region is a sphere of fulfillment. As each person's concept of happiness is different, and there is little agreement on what constitutes essential good, we cannot exist in, nor are we attracted to, that which is inconsistent with concepts based upon sensation. Karma moves toward that which is next, and not immediately toward that which is ultimate. A good life within the pattern of sensation merits certain reward, but only within similar and appropriate patterns. The good deed a man does here, bestows upon him merits here, not elsewhere. Only complete detachment from sensation associated with physical objectivity can result in detachment from the material state. To pass from the patterns vitalized by the *skandas*, is to pass into a state of unawareness. We do not thirst after the inconceivable, and a superior state is inconceivable, except on a level of symbolism. What we call heaven is nothing but a refined projection of our concept of earth. Such a heaven may therefore be

created upon earth, as in the utopian dreams. That, however, which is not of the earth, can be estimated only by faculties that are not dependent upon sensation, desire, or perception. In substance, therefore, Buddhism teaches that material embodiment must continue as long as the karma endures. Debts must be contracted and paid on the same level. Otherwise the sequences would be meaningless.

It is technically wrong, therefore, to assume that a person reincarnates. Buddhism distinguishes between *person* and *personality*. *Person* would imply a permanent ego, or self, moving from one embodiment to another. *Personality* is an aggregate of pressures, forcing the continuance of itself through a sequence of births and deaths. The Western thinker identifies personality with person on the ground that a man is according to what he does. In Buddhist thinking, the personality is the cause of the person, and not the consequence thereof. What is carried forward, therefore, is a compound—an aggregate of aggregates. It should correspond very closely with the state of itself at the termination of the preceding life. Therefore, it is not Napoleon who is reborn, but the Napoleonic complex. This complex, taking over and molding the substances of the new embodiment, causes a new Napoleon to come into existence. It might seem at first that an ambitious dictator had merely passed from one embodiment to another. But this is of appearances only. The Napoleonic karma results in the re-manifestation of the Napoleonic thirst for, or grasping after, a further sphere of gratification. It may well be that karma of this kind will result in a miserable condition in which destructive tendencies and ambitions lead to sorrow and humiliation. This, however, is an exhaustion of karma, which punishes itself and, reacting upon the *skandas*, results in their forming a new group of aggregates modified by experience.

The exhaustion of the illusional and delusional attributes of the *skandas* leads in the end to the bodhisattvic state. It is said, herefore, that a bodhisattva is born immaculately and without desires. The diversities of sensations and desires have therefore been drawn into their final aggregate. Because they have ceased entirely either to thirst or to grasp, they are free of sensation and therefore can no longer cause karma. The ultimate focus is, according to Buddhist doctrine, the one and indivisible determination to achieve the liberation of all living things through the perfect service to the mystery of *becoming*. The bodhisattva, turning within himself, finds only unchanging peace. He stands in the presence of a great silence of unutterable goodness. He knows that by one further renunciation—that is, the final dissolution of the complex of self-existence—he will attain the mahaparinirvana. He has already suspended the self-focus above action, so that



it becomes what Sir Edwin Arnold described as "the dewdrop which is about to slip back into the shining sea."

Thus, in Buddhist philosophy, the end of rebirth is not the production of the super-man, or even of the god or the God-like person. It is complete victory over illusion, the perfect acceptance of the ultimate of things as motion rather than being—that very motion which is called *ever becoming*. It does not follow that the dissolution of the self-entity means annihilation, any more than it would follow that man's mind would cease if he corrected a serious error of thought or judgment. The end of illusion is the beginning of reality. The nature of this reality cannot be defined on the level of sensation, any more than a man born blind can experience the mystery of light. Beneath Buddhist philosophy is the conviction that the nirvana is actually an awakening from a troubled sleep. Man assumes these dreams to be true and clings to them and fears to be awakened. The universe which lies beyond the barrier of self is incomprehensible, not because it is a vacuum, but because it is a completely transcendent state. In this state itself, whatever it may be, there is a universality diametrically opposed to individuality. The motion from sensory consciousness to absolute consciousness is therefore the victory of reality over an infinite diversity of illusionary states and sensations.

Buddha did not assume that the contemplation of such an eternity could be immediately profitable. His ethical concepts were based upon a more obviously valid and observable circumstance. The disciple of the doctrine, by assuming or accepting the complete pattern, was impelled to the immediate moderation of certain glaring excesses which had burdened his conduct. To the degree that he slowly, gently, and quietly liberated himself from the tyranny of sensation, he became a happier, healthier, and more useful person. He found new patience and integration. He lived more comfortably and was of greater benefit to others. He was a better father, husband, and son, because he had chosen to sublimate the pressures which lead to irresponsible action. Being less selfish and less self-centered, he accepted instruction more readily. His very belief that there were values beyond material things made him more generous and discriminating in his attitudes. Thus, the entire doctrine led to a nobler and more mature appreciation of what constituted right conduct. It cannot be denied that the concept led to positive precepts which, could they be widely disseminated, would tend to remove the causes of war, crime, and social injustices, and therefore and thereby modify the operations of karma.

In the next article, we will study the state of the personality in the intervals between the embodiments.

*(To be continued)*



## In Reply

### A Department of Questions and Answers

*QUESTION: If it is each person's spiritual and moral duty to solve his own problems, and to grow by his own efforts, is it wrong to seek psychological counseling and assistance, and does this indicate weakness of character?*

**ANSWER:** As this question is stated on the level of generalities, it must be answered on the same level. Everything depends upon the degree to which the problems involved have already impoverished or debilitated the rational faculties of the individual. If the person has a problem, it is very likely that he can solve it himself, but if the problem has the person, the situation is much more complicated. Countless human beings have passed through critical situations successfully without psychological assistance because their internal resources were equal to the emergency. Common sense can cure many ills and, when combined with a fortunate degree of optimism and a resolution to succeed, is often a sufficient remedy. Unfortunately, however, negative mental habits have a tendency to undermine the resources necessary for their own correction. When the victim reaches that stage in which he can no longer recognize his own faults, and blames others for his misfortunes, it is very possible that he is in need of outside assistance. Of course, the more neurotic he becomes, the less likely he is to seek counseling, for he has already decided in his own mind the precise explanation of his misfortunes.

Self-analysis helps those who are still basically reasonable, but when the perspective has been seriously disordered, the sufferer is no longer able to evaluate his own condition. He may come to utterly fantastic conclusions which only contribute to further damage. Much



depends, therefore, upon the relation between the person and the problem. In matters requiring simple and direct decision, or involving traditional patterns where values are already clearly established, the individual must decide upon his course of action and accept the consequence of his decision. If, however, he has long sustained and protected bad mental and emotional habits, his resources are not likely to be adequate or suitable.

In most cases, disturbances of character do not arise suddenly in normal persons. There is nearly always a considerable history behind these cases. The apparent crisis is caused by an accumulation of factors which finally assume definite and diagnosable proportions. It is frequently a matter of bad habits long tolerated. The individual catered to the negative or weaker parts of his own temperament. It did not occur to him to take corrective measures until he became acutely uncomfortable. He may have enjoyed feeling sorry for himself, or found considerable ego-satisfaction in a critical and unpleasant attitude of mind. He may have been unfortunately conditioned by religion or the lack of it. He may have regarded it a sign of his own superiority to cultivate skepticism and reject the maturing influence of a constructive philosophy for living. In any event, he was addicted to false opinions of some kind. He tried to live by them, and they failed him.

Nearly all persons under psychic pressures are non-factual in their thinking. They are completely blind to objective realities obvious to their friends and associates. They are not necessarily weak, but they are so confused that they cannot organize their energies when need arises. It is seldom that we find a basically normal person with a heavy load of psychic pressures. The cases of extreme shock may be an exception, but even those should be carefully examined.

A woman, finding her husband unfaithful, goes to pieces, and sinks deeper and deeper into a state of morbid helplessness. There is nothing to live for, and all she can do is nurse a relentless hatred for the man who has deceived her. The longer she hates, the sicker she gets, until she finally contemplates suicide. She may insist that before the tragedy she was a happy and well-balanced person, but the chances are this is not true. Persons who knew her in the old days remember her as a selfish, self-centered human being, devoid of real charm or spiritual grace. Her marital misfortune did not cause her neurosis; it merely revealed the character deficiency which had been present since childhood. We are all inclined to blame obvious misfortunes for our psychological dilemmas. Frequently this is a false diagnosis, and because it is contrary to the facts, it has no solutional or therapeutic power.

If you sit down quietly by yourself and think back over your life and become keenly observant of your own instinctive reactions to the occurrences through which you have passed, you can gather a quantity of useful information. Do you feel that you had a forlorn childhood? Were you the one your parents did not understand? Were you hypersensitive and easily hurt? Was it your natural tendency to remember and re-live unhappy experiences and overlook the pleasant things which you enjoyed? Were you naturally critical, instinctively intolerant? Were you a class-conscious child who did not want to play with your social inferiors? Did you sulk and have temper fits? Did you resent parental discipline? Were you unhappy in school because other children were better dressed? Did you instinctively blame other people for your mistakes? If so, you were off on the wrong foot.

As you grew older, were you inclined to be deceitful? Were you adjusted with the young people of your own age? Were you snobbish, and did you go out only with the boy who had a good automobile? What was your attitude toward the future? Did you want to be useful? Did you enjoy making others happy, or did you only demand that they contribute to your comfort? Did you find it easier to lie than to tell the truth? And when you were wrong, did you try to bluff your way through? Were you resentful of those who excelled you? Were you jealous or revengeful? When asked questions like this, some folks will simply insist that they were miserable, and they will try to justify their complaints by the careful reporting of incidents which seem to support their negative attitudes. Altogether, however, the whole story indicates trouble ahead. The person did not have the instinct to make the best of things, to be happy in spite of reverses, and to learn the valuable lessons which come to us in so many different ways.

One person will say: "My life is ruined because I was raised in a broken home." Another will say: "Because my parents were separated and I suffered as a consequence, I am determined to build a good home for my children." If, looking back, you see your life as a dismal sequence of reverses, you should regard your own attitude as a symptom of personality insufficiency. Stop blaming anyone, and get to work on your own character while you have the strength and perspective to recognize your own mistakes. Life saves its heaviest burdens for those who have never mastered their own mental and emotional neurotic tendencies. If you have been able to make a reasonably honest diagnosis of your own needs, you may be faced with a decision. Have you the strength, will-power, continuity of purpose, and inner faith, to reform your own personality; or do you need out-



side assistance? One thing is certain, no unadjusted person can afford to remain as he is. Like all chronic ailments, psychological problems only become worse through neglect. There is little, if any, probability that a fortuitous condition will arise which will make self-discipline unnecessary.

Many persons feel that to seek psychological therapy is to admit some degree of mental sickness. They are proclaiming themselves as inadequate, immature, and incompetent. Actually, we seek counseling because we believe that special training and experience equips certain persons for certain professions. We do not hesitate to consult the attorney when we need legal aid, nor the doctor when we develop obscure physical symptoms. We lean on our friends and relatives, subscribe to various journals and reports bearing upon our activities, and seek skilled aid and assistance when building a house, preparing to buy an automobile, or planning a vacation. All we are admitting is that we cannot do everything, and we are consoled by the thought that we also have certain endowments and training which may be serviceable to our associates on various occasions.

By the time our psychic natures have been neglected for thirty or forty years, complications may have arisen which no private citizen can cope with adequately. We can only hope that we may find an adequate counselor whose judgment we can trust. Several considerations may arise at this time. Can we afford counseling? It is a long program, often entailing considerable expenditure. If we cannot, then we must do everything possible to correct our own mistakes. Sometimes well-selected reading will prove beneficial. If we need counseling, and can afford it, it is probably wiser for us to take advantage of the progress that has been made in this field. We should never, however, waste our own time or that of the counselor unless we really honestly and sincerely want to understand what is wrong and what can be done. If we are in no mood to face the facts, we will probably only become critical and discontinue the program.

Also, never forget that psycho-therapy is not the easy way to mental health. In the end, the patient must cure himself. Unless he is willing to work out his own salvation with all diligence, the therapist cannot succeed. The present trend in therapy is largely educational. The sufferer is caused to confront his own character and disposition. He is shown why and how he has broken natural laws of mental health. Through counseling, pressures are often diminished and a great part of the mystery of neurosis is clarified. The patient is no longer in the presence of unknowns which confuse and devitalize. He is still sick, but he understands not only his ailment, but the many ways in which he can contribute to his own improvement. The hon-

est individual gains strength from facts and, once understanding them, will act accordingly. There are many, however, who refuse, even under counseling, to confront their real selves, preferring to retire again into the morbid kind of sickness from which they are suffering. With broad condemnation and bitter cynicism, these persons will talk themselves out of the whole concept of psycho-therapy. Such cases are poor risks at best. I have known cases where distinguished mentalists have failed to attain any appreciable results, and other cases where far less skilled advisors have been more successful. All depends upon the patient's cooperation. Often the patient's own intelligence, once it is stimulated and directed, is more serviceable than the advice of the analyst.

For the psychologically disturbed, the most important decision is the recognition of their own symptoms. The mere fact that they will face themselves and decide firmly to seek help is the most encouraging of all signs. The individual is still open to improvement as long as he recognizes that he can learn, should learn, and must learn, if he wants to be healthy and happy. Having made a positive decision, he will gain a certain amount of support from the very decision itself. He is inclined to consider information to be valuable when he pays well to receive it. He is also encouraged by the fact that he is in the hands of a trained technician. He is no longer alone, fumbling with his own misgivings. He may also be interested in what he learns when he goes along. Statements are more real when he can experience their truth in himself. He also has someone to talk to. He can unburden his heart and soul. He is not likely to hesitate or feel that he is imposing on someone. By this time, his family has been wearied with his complaints, but to his psychologist, all his symptoms are meaningful, and he is an interesting case, if not an interesting human being.

If he has been fortunate in his selection of a therapist, he will be guided to certain conclusions which make sense. He will say occasionally, "I never thought of it that way before;" or, "It certainly sounds reasonable;" or, again, "Why did I not realize this before?" Such discoveries lead him to realize that the psychologist really does have at least a degree of knowledge and that his knowledge can be useful. No physician is infallible, but familiarity with similar cases does give certain advantages. As his confidence rises, the patient expects to recover, and is willing to make some effort in his own behalf. Even a constructive expectation is a tremendous step forward, especially if it follows years of embitterment and discouragement.

It is hardly likely that the average person consulting a psychologist will actually complete his course of treatment. He may, however, go far enough to get a new estimation of himself. As soon as he can



stand on his own feet, he will probably try to do so. If he only takes counseling long enough to realize that he is the victim of his own negative thinking, he has gained much. He may make new mistakes, but he will avoid some of the old ones. He may also continue his personal interest in the general subject, and, having experienced the technique himself, he is better able to keep abreast of progress in the field.

In the course of psycho-therapy, we learn that we do not have to agree with the psychologist in everything in order to receive assistance. We do not always choose our lawyers and doctors because they belong to the same sects, clubs, or schools of thought. We choose them because of their skill in a certain specialized endeavor. The psychologist may be a devoutly religious man, or he may be a profound skeptic, but the primary problem is: does he know how to unravel the tangled skein of the complex which is burdening our souls? We respect what he knows, and may at the same time privately sympathize with his ignorance. We can, however, remember the words of Emerson when he insisted that every man could teach him something. We might give our psychologist lessons in Platonic philosophy, but perhaps he can help us to put together a broken home. This rather liberal attitude is useful because it prevents us from evading counseling on the ground that the counselor is not of our spiritual or intellectual persuasion. Once he has clarified the immediate confusion in ourselves, we can continue to grow and build and learn according to our noblest dreams and aspirations. There have even been cases where the patient became a wonderfully inspiring power in the life of the physician.

The detached and objective attitude of a skillful counselor can be most valuable to a confused and involved person. There is a growing tendency for counselors to stress the importance of non-directive methods. The psychologist is not actually attempting to dominate the mind of his client. He creates a kind of mirror in which the patient sees a more accurate reflection of himself. When seeking advice from friends and relatives, we often receive consolation or criticism which is itself highly conditioned by personal opinions, prejudices, or ill-considered sentimentalities. No one can follow all the advice received haphazardly from a circle of acquaintances. Even if the advice happens to be good, it might not be appropriate to the occasion or the immediate need. We do not grow merely by accepting recommendations or admonitions. There must be some kind of a personal experience by which we come to know why we have made mistakes and how we can correct them.

Even though a counselor may only bring to our attention facts that we already surmise to be true, this objectification may influence

us constructively. Some fear that counseling will burden the life with confusing complications. It may be like opening Pandora's box, which can never again be closed. Actually, however, the contents, whatever they may be, must be objectified or they will continue to cause disturbances. We must have the courage to face ourselves if we hope to gain practical help. In sober truth, mystery is always the greater enemy, for it causes us to arrive at fantastic conclusions which may appear fearful or terrible. Very few persons are as badly off as they seem to be. A reasonable amount of intelligent common sense will work wonders. As in medicine, a correct diagnosis is two thirds of the cure. We are miserable because we have made mountains out of molehills, exaggerated our misfortune, and demoralized our resources with self-pity. We are more frightened by our thoughts than by the troubles which have engendered them. The moment we can bring the facts out of the shadows of illusion and delusion, they lose much of their power to destroy our peace of mind. The counselor can help us to understand this to the degree that we actually know that we have been foolish or self-deluded. No person wishes to remain in such a condition, and therefore will instinctively cooperate once he has been convinced.

We read books because we hope to find information that is valuable. We go to school in order to equip ourselves for a trade or profession. We are not ashamed to seek knowledge on countless subjects. It is even more important that we seek knowledge about ourselves—especially when we realize this to be necessary. The moment problems become unmanageable, we must pause and think. It is not the magnitude of the situation, but the inadequacy of our solving power that is important. To solve a problem, we must become in some way factually superior to that problem. We must outgrow it. We grow by experience. Therefore, whatever we do that enlarges experience, stimulates practical understanding, and brings us a clear objective focus, will ultimately have beneficial results. Counseling is not a panacea for all the woes of the world, but if a good relationship is established, it can clarify proper courses of action and liberate us from the tyranny of psychological demoralization.



When God is about to call a man to some great work, He first tests his resolution with suffering, wearies his sinews and bones with toil, exposes him to extreme poverty, and obstructs his enterprises. By these means Heaven stimulates his mind, hardens his nature, and supplies his deficiencies. — MENCIOUS



## Celebration in the East

THE year 1956 is being celebrated throughout the Buddhist nations of the East as the 2500th anniversary of the birth of Gautama Buddha. Between 1954 and 1956, an important Buddhist Congress, known as the Sixth Congress, has been held in Rangoon, Burma, and delegates of many Buddhist nations and groups have attended. An extraordinary revival of interest in the teachings of this great Eastern saint and sage has been notable in recent years. It reveals that the East, like the West, is seeking to deepen its spiritual foundations and to restore in spirit, and perhaps even formally, those institutions of sacred learning which have long been associated with the Eastern way of life.

Gautama Buddha, the greatest citizen of Asia, was included by the historian H. G. Wells in a group of six persons whom he regarded as humanity's greatest benefactors. As Prince Siddhartha, or Gautama, the man who was to be remembered simply as the Buddha, was born as the son of Suddhodana, King of Kapilavastu, in the remote land of Kolasa. There is some dispute as to the exact year, but it was approximately the date (563 B. C.) that has now been selected. In 1895 A. D., the true place of Buddha's birth, which had hitherto been unknown, was established by the discovery of a column erected by the Emperor Asoka, the Constantine of Buddhism. Kapilavastu, of which some ruins remain, was in the southern part of Nepal, a short distance north of the boundary of India. The young Prince attained Buddhahood at Bodh Gaya, and his ministry continued for more than 45 years. He passed out of this life, or attained the parinirvana, shortly after the eightieth year of his age. Soon after Buddha's transition, 500 Arhats or Great Monks, assembled during the rainy season at Rajagriha to unify and systematize the teachings. Later, about 380 B. C., there was another important convocation of Buddhist monks and teachers at Vesali. In the 2nd century A. D., there was a grand religious congress held at the royal palace at Kusana, in Kashmir. Through these several convocations, the essential doctrines of the great teacher were reduced to the form in which they are now known.

After the 8th century A. D., Buddhism declined in India. This was partly due to the mingling of numerous Buddhist sects with the mystical groups rising in the structure of Hinduism. Buddhistic power in India lasted for approximately 1,000 years and its final

obscuration was hastened by the rise of Islamism as a political force in Indian affairs. By this time, however, the teachings had been carried by monks and scholars to the most remote parts of Asia, and in these other and distant regions, the religion continued to exercise a large influence. Today it is second only to Christianity in numerical power. During the last 25 years there has been a phenomenal growth of Buddhism in Asia, and a noticeable increase of interest in the teachings of Buddha among Western nations. There are several possible explanations, the first and most obvious being the critical situation existing in modern society. This has caused a rapid growth among Western sects. People have a tendency to turn to religion in an emergency, and we are now living under a perpetual emergency. Eastern nations have also sought the consolation of their faith, and all of the major religions of the world are becoming more vitally concerned with plans and policies for the general security of mankind.

Another equally valid, if not as generally known, explanation lies in the peculiar nature of the Buddhistic philosophy. In its original form, it was a powerful teaching—highly psychological, and essentially non-theological. Its rationalistic presentation of a concept of an ordered universe ruled by immutable laws is compatible with the essential findings of modern science. There is no excessive dogmatism, and education in all fields is not only endorsed, but highly encouraged. Many of the doctrines which modern people object to in other faiths have never been present in Buddhism. It fought no holy wars, forced no conversions, and never persecuted non-believers. Its essential program of teaching was by example. It also emphasized strongly the responsibility of the individual to others and to himself. Its ethical platform was simple and direct, though possibly austere. It appealed equally to the mind and the emotion, recommended self-control, set forth a practical method for personal integration, and took a strong stand on fundamental principles. It taught what we call evolution, as applied to the internal life of the individual, more than 2,000 years before the birth of Darwin. It had a simple and natural regard for all life, considering the lower kingdoms as younger brethren for which man has a real and inevitable responsibility.

Among the essential principles of Buddhism can be mentioned absolute equality between the sexes; the right of all children to education; the importance of a socialized non-competitive industrial concept; the arbitration of national disputes without war; the importance of international conferences on all problems relating to the common good of humanity; racial equality; universal tolerance toward all other religious beliefs; the inalienable right of the individual to grow and



improve himself; universal education; the founding of schools and universities, and the establishment of libraries; the creation of hospitals and clinics; the training of veterinarians, and the building of asylums and hospitals for animals. There are many more points of interest and value, but these will give the general picture of the situation.

As my personal hobby is stamp-collecting, I want to introduce this subject because it has a direct bearing upon the 2500th anniversary of Buddha's nativity. In connection with this highly significant event, Buddhist nations are issuing special postage stamps to commemorate the occasion. Stamps have long been used as a means of spreading information of various kinds. They have had strong influence on the level of propaganda, but they are also highly educational inasmuch as upon them are depicted persons, places, occasions, celebrations, and other pictorial data by which foreign powers come to a better understanding of the history of independent states, their religions, philosophies, sciences, crafts, trades, natural resources, and outstanding citizens. As we might expect, Eastern stamp-issuing countries are showing a strong tendency to unite in graphic representations of the life and teachings of their great spiritual and cultural leader.

Let us see what this means in the larger theater of better human relationships. It is now estimated that there are in excess of 20 million stamp collectors. It is the largest hobby in the world, with the possible exception of photography. Of these collectors, a great many are young people. In the United States alone, millions of boys and girls are collecting stamps. The boy Scouts of America give a merit badge for proficiency in stamp collecting. Some schools are encouraging students to use stamps to illustrate their essays and to choose the subject material on stamps for research projects. Microfilms of stamps are used for educational purposes in England, and the entire field is growing with incredible rapidity. Young people especially take a keen interest in the subject matter on stamps, and the historical events to which the various designs have reference. The Cardinal Spellman collection of Christian religious stamps is outstanding and beautifully arranged on hand-illuminated pages resembling medieval missals. It has also been proved that young stamp collectors excel non-collectors in their ability to answer questions of broad interest on radio and television contests. These young people are especially adequate in their knowledge of important political changes taking place within governments or leading to the rise of new states.

We know, therefore, that within the next year several million young Americans are going to know more about Gautama Buddha than ever before. First of all, they are going to realize that over forty



#### STAMPS COMMEMORATING THE BIRTH OF BUDDHA

Upper row, India; second row, Ceylon;  
third row, Burma; fourth row, Laos.

nations of the Eastern world are uniting to honor this wonderful man who wandered along the dusty roads of India twenty-five centuries ago. They are going to find on the stamps commemorating this occasion many symbols of Buddhism which will intrigue their curiosity. Various journals devoted to stamp collecting, and stamp columns in the daily press, will bring this information to collectors and non-collectors alike. The story of Buddha will travel around the world through the courtesy of the Universal Postal Union, which was brought into existence in the service of communication.



Looking back in terms of philately alone (*philately* is the formal name for stamp-collecting), several interesting points are immediately noticeable. Up to very recent years, the only country which directly honored Buddha with postal paper was Japan. Other countries included pictures of Buddhist temples, but rather from an archeological standpoint than in terms of religious or philosophical significance. All this was changed with the breaking up of the British Empire in Asia. This resulted in new stamp-issuing states, and a general change in policy in connection with stamps of British colonies. A similar circumstance followed the establishment of the French Union, by which the Kingdom of Laos and the Kingdom of Cambodia gained the privilege of issuing their own stamps. The trend toward Buddhism on stamps is now strong and definite and will penetrate among all the religious areas of the world. Every country, regardless of its faith or its policy, includes enthusiastic philatelists.

We are reproducing herewith a few of the earliest stamps to reach the stamp trade in the United States, dealing with the 2500th anniversary of Buddha. They are indicative of the program now under way, and before this article reaches print, other countries will probably have joined in this tribute on stamps. India has issued two in the denominations of 2 annas and 14 annas. Both of these feature trees and are inscribed "2500th Buddha Jayanti." The tree has always played an important part in stories of the life of Buddha. He was born under the "Sorrowless Tree" (Sal-tree) in the beautiful gardens of the Lumbini Grove while his mother was reaching up to pick a blossom from one of the lower branches. It would appear that the 2 anna stamp represents the Sal-tree, surrounded by a nimbus in the form of a lotus leaf. On the 14 anna stamp, there is another tree. This may well be the sacred Banyan at Bodh Gaya, where the young Prince seated himself on the occasion of the illumination. Here Gautama, meditating upon the sorrows of the world, was dedicated to his ministry by an assembly of spiritual beings. Here also he overcame the powers of illusion and was transformed from the simple truth seeker to the Buddha, the Light of Asia. At the time of the Great Decease, when the law revealed that the Buddha was to leave this world, he caused his couch to be spread in a Sal-tree grove at Kusinagara. It is said that the tree bloomed out of season and scattered flowers over the place where he rested. On the 14 anna stamp of India there is also a chakra, or radiant wheel, containing the symbols of the Buddhist doctrine. It is interesting and significant that these stamps do not carry any likeness of the teacher.

Ceylon commemorates this occasion with an issue of four stamps, two of which are here represented. One denomination shows the



#### STAMPS HONORING BUDDHA AND BUDDHISM

Upper row, Hyderabad; second and third rows,  
Japan; fourth row, Dutch East Indies.

hand of Buddha rising from a lotus. The first finger touches the end of the thumb in what Buddhism calls the *mudra*, or hand-posture, of instruction. Beneath is the special inscription "Hand of Peace." The implication is inevitable. Through instruction by which each individual becomes a self-responsible human being, with a clear concept of his duties and opportunities toward all life, man can come in the end to peace and security made possible through integrity. Dimly behind the hand is the outline of the wheel with eight spokes, the symbol of the noble eightfold path. Another stamp, of the denomina-



tion of 15 cents, shows the world globe with the Eastern hemisphere exposed, surrounded by the eight-spoked wheel called in Buddhism "the wheel of the law." The eight spokes are called the eight virtues, and these, in a way, correspond to the moral codes of Western man. They were anciently likened to the eight petals of a lotus. As each petal opened, it told its story, and at last the golden heart was revealed. The eight virtues of the wheel are right belief, right aspiration, right speech, right conduct, right mode of livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right meditation. By the practice of these, error and illusion, sin and death, are dissolved in universal consciousness. It is a powerful symbolism indeed to show this wheel circling the globe, uniting men in the service of truth.

The Union of Burma issued four stamps, of which one is reproduced here. The one we have selected is an aerial view of the great Shwe Dagon pagoda at Rangoon, one of the most remarkable of all Buddhist monuments. The central shaft of the Shwe Dagon, or Golden Dragon, pagoda ascends in graceful curves to a height of 370 feet above the pagoda platform. Around the central shaft are hundreds of smaller pagodas and temples testifying to private and public worship. The perimeter of the central pagoda at the base is 1365 feet, and at the top is an umbrella, or canopy, composed of iron rings, gold-plated, and hung with gold and silver bells. The entire crown is encrusted with jewels. The monument has been completely gilded, and shines like a flame in the sky. It can be seen for many miles. The form of the Shwe Dagon begins with a base in the shape of an inverted begging bowl. From this rises a column in the form of the conventionalized folds of a turban, from which springs a double lotus blossom. The tall point of the pagoda ascends in the shape of a plantain bud. It was built over the sacred relics of four buddhas, including eight hairs from the head of Gautama. As a modern touch, the pagoda is now lighted by electricity.

The fourth and last country on our present list is the Kingdom of Laos in northwestern Indo-China. Formerly a territory of Indo-China, Laos attained autonomy as an Associated State of the French Union in 1949. It first issued its own stamps in 1951, and recently issued a magnificent set of large pictorial stamps devoted entirely to historical images of the Buddha now within the new kingdom. The stamp pictured herewith is one of a set in various colors and denominations, but all identical in design. Priests and devotees are bringing their offerings to a seated image of the Buddha represented under a flowering tree. The treatment of the figure is in the approved tradition of the region.



### BUDDHIST IMAGES AND SYMBOLS ON STAMPS

Upper row, Laos; second row, Ryuku Islands;  
third row, Korea and Tibet; fourth row, Cambodia.

We have mentioned that in addition to the special anniversary issue, there has been a tendency to celebrate Buddhism and Buddhistic events in recent years. The kingdom of Cambodia has included in recent stamp designs the serpent balustrade leading to the great temple of Angkor Thom. Numerous Buddhist images can be seen supporting the body of the great seven-headed naga, or serpent-guardian. Nepal, an independent kingdom lying between India and the Soviet Union, has issued stamps showing ancient Buddhist temples. Japan reproduced the Great Buddha of Kamakura some years ago, and it is



shown again on the very dramatic airmail stamp now in use. Korea has one stamp showing a Buddhist image, and the imperial symbol of Tibet is the lion-dog of Buddha. During the Dutch administration of the Dutch East Indies, the famous temple of Boro Budur appeared on one of their stamps. This has been called "the universe in stone," for with its numerous terraces and elaborate friezes, it unfolds the whole story of Buddhist philosophy. An illustrated article describing this monument appears in my book, *The Phoenix*.

It is interesting that although more than thirty of the feudatory states of India issued their own postal paper, Buddhism plays no part in the designs. Of course these states were dominantly Hindu or Moslem. The Nizam of Hyderabad issued a set of pictorial stamps, one of which shows the entrance to the wonderful Buddhist Caves of Ajunta. China, for centuries a powerful Buddhist nation, has been markedly amiss in honoring Buddha, although it devoted a series of stamps to Confucius. The airmail stamps of the Ryuku Islands represent a traditional Buddhist angel floating through the sky in graceful robes, with mountain peaks and clouds below. This is a very beautiful series of religious designs. It would seem that there is a strong trend toward these art motifs in the East, and that the West is also feeling this influence strongly in the decorative arts.

From the above, it is obvious that stamp collectors will be exposed to considerable Buddhism in the near future. Innocent little pieces of paper serving a completely utilitarian purpose can thus become messengers of good will and understanding. Distant places are close to us when we appreciate the spirit that moves human beings in their search for spiritual and temporal security. The birthday of Buddha is an event of world significance. There is scarcely a culture that has not been influenced to some degree by the teachings of this inspired and inspiring man. His doctrines came along the ancient caravan routes, and reached Europe along with the shipments of spices, silks, and brocades. It is said that Buddhist monks introduced the drinking of tea so that they might not become sleepy during their long vigils. There are strong traces of Buddhism in the teachings of the Greek philosophers, especially Pythagoras and Plato. It is right and proper, therefore, that regardless of our sects and creeds, we should give honor where honor is due. Buddha lived for the good of mankind, and his wisdom has merited the gratitude of hundreds of millions of human beings who have lived according to his laws and have found solace and peace through his words. The day of East and West is rapidly coming to an end. We are living in one world, and the wisdom of all peoples must be shared and appreciated by every thoughtful person.



## Happenings at Headquarters



The fall activities of the Society will open with Mr. Hall's trip to Chicago, where he will present a series of eight lectures at the Walco Building, 32 West Randolph Street, beginning September 16th and extending to October 2nd. The talks will be given on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at 8:00 p. m. and Sunday afternoons at 2:30. Subscribers and readers who have friends in the Chicago area are invited to notify them of this opportunity to hear Mr. Hall personally. The subject for the opening lecture will be "The Secret of the Untroubled Mind," a matter of wide interest and deep concern to thoughtful persons.

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The fall program at Headquarters opens with a series of five Monday evening classes by Mr. Henry L. Drake, our vice-president, on "The Meaning and Value of Philosophical Psychology." This will be followed by a course given by Mr. Ernest Burmester on "Studies in Esoteric Psychology," beginning Monday evening, November 19th and continuing for five weeks. Mr. Hall's seminars will be on Wednesday evenings, and he will present studies in "Spiritual Healing," beginning October 17th, and "Symbolism of the Great Operas" starting November 21st. The Friday evening courses will be opened by Mr. Byron Pumphrey with a special discussion course "Introduction to the Humanities," which will extend from October 19th through November 16th. This will be followed by Mr. Drake, who will conduct a seminar on "Principles of Self-Counseling," from November 23rd to December 21st. All these classes are given at Headquarters at 8:00 p. m. Mr. Hall's regular Sunday morning lectures at the Campus Theater (Vermont Avenue at Santa Monica Blvd.) at 11:00 a. m., will begin on October 14th and continue until the Sunday before Christmas. Los Angeles friends are invited to send in for programs covering these events.

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We acknowledge with deep appreciation the gift of three fine books to our Library. The first is "Paintings of the Ajunta Caves;" the second is entitled "Egypt;" and the third, "The Life of the Buddha." These are fine folios, magnificently illustrated, with many plates in full color. They are available to our readers through the kindness of a thoughtful and generous friend.



On Thursday, May 24th, Mr. Hall spoke for Elysian Lodge No. 418 F. & A. M. on the subject of Masonic Research. He discussed the relationship between modern Masonry, the ancient Greek and Egyptian Mysteries, and the medieval Guilds. On June 7th, he spoke for Glendale Lodge No. 544 F. & A. M., choosing as a theme "Masonic Symbolism Through the Ages." He emphasized the ancient origin of the familiar emblems and rituals of the Craft.

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An interesting letter accompanied by a clipping and a contribution to the Friends Fund is worthy of mention. In her letter, Mrs. Addie Bowersock who has just celebrated her 96th birthday, suggests that she may be our oldest friend and supporter. A spry and active lady, she has attended our lectures for many years. We extend our congratulations on this festive occasion.

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Our compliments also to Mrs. Matilda Johnson, who writes: "I am going to celebrate my 90th birthday—coming July eighth, by treating myself to 'HORIZON' for two years, beginning with 'Spring 1956.'" We are hoping that Mrs. Johnson will like the magazine and will take advantage of our 5-year renewal in 1958.

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The Friends Committee hosted an Open House at Headquarters on August 26th. At this time, the Library exhibited a rare collection of Tibetan woodblock prints from the great Monastery archives of Urga in inner Mongolia. Refreshments were served, everyone was happy, and the Society deeply appreciates the wonderful cooperation of the Friends Committee.

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The Philosophical Research Society acted as co-sponsor with Dr. Frederick Waller, Consul-General of the Republic of Austria, in presenting a concert at the Wilshire Ebell Theater in Los Angeles on July 27th, 1956, celebrating Mozart's 200th Birthday. Mr. Murray H. Bois-Smith contributed his services as concert chairman, and Mr. Walter Loesser acted as musical director. An outstanding group of concert and operatic artists generously cooperated to make this program an important event in the Los Angeles music season. The program consisted of arias, duets, trios, and quartets, from *The Magic Flute*, *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan Tutte*, and *Marriage of Figaro*. In addition, those parts of the Requiem actually written by Mozart and selections from his Lieder combined to form a well-balanced representation of the works of this great composer. The proceeds of this concert, above the actual cost of presentation, which were held to a minimum by the generous cooperation of those participating, were donated to the Building Fund of our Society.



PLATO'S OLIVE TREE

Through the kindness of a friend who attended the recent Pythagorean festival in Greece, we are able to reproduce herewith a photograph of the Olive Tree under which Plato taught his disciples more than 23 centuries ago in Athens. It is interesting and significant that from the ancient trunk a live tree is growing, which may well symbolize that the teachings of this great philosopher live in the modern world as a constant source of enlightenment and inspiration.



We have many requests every year for Christmas cards that express constructive idealistic sentiments consistent with our program of teaching. Considerable thought has been directed upon this subject, and Mr. Hall has decided upon a special Christmas publication which can combine the sentiments of the season with an interesting and informative discussion of the deeper meaning of this festival. It is a thirty-two page essay entitled, "The Story of Christmas," and includes the history of the celebration, the symbols associated with it, and what it can and should mean to each of us today. You will find an ad in this issue of HORIZON which tells more about this unique Christmas remembrance.

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During the spring and summer, four collections of original material from the archives of the Library of our Society have been exhibited in various branches of the Los Angeles County Public Library System. Japanese prints were shown at the Temple City branch in February and March, and at the Norwalk branch from April through June. An Egyptian exhibit was at the Willowbrook branch in February and March, and in the Temple City branch from April to June. A group of unusual books was shown at the Temple City Branch in February and March, and the San Fernando branch from April to June. Tibetan material was shown at the San Fernando branch in February and March and at South Gate branch from April to June. We appreciate the cooperation of the County Librarian and his Assistant in helping to make unusual books and manuscripts available for public showing through the County Library System. Further exhibitions are contemplated.



#### *The Do-it-yourself Department*

A popular spot in Canton, China, is The Temple of Unfortunate Women. This was the rendezvous of those having marital difficulties. The unhappy wives made small paper figures of their husbands and hung them upside down in the temple. It was believed that by inverting the effigy, the husband would change his ways.

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In the next issue of HORIZON, Mr. Nakamura will be with us again on "A Matter of Some Importance."

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## Local Study Group Activities

It is always a pleasant opportunity to report progress in the Study Group Department. We are very happy to announce that a new Local Study Group was recently established in New Orleans, Louisiana. The leader is Mrs. Aimee P. Wilt, and she will be glad to hear from those interested in participating in these activities. She can be reached by addressing a letter or card to 6524 Louisville Street, New Orleans. We wish for her group a fine expanding program of usefulness and friendship.

Soon after the fourth of July, we received word that a new Local Study Group has been organized in San Francisco. The leader is Mr. Milo Kovar, and we are certain that our many friends in the San Francisco area will want to cooperate with him to make the new group an outstanding success. Mr. Kovar can be reached by addressing him at 930 Green Street, San Francisco, California. Our congratulations to this new Local Study Group. We know that the members will serve faithfully the principles to which we are all dedicated.

This is to let you know that two additional tape recordings of Mr. Hall's lectures are now available for Local Study Group rental. One of the most popular of Mr. Hall's recent talks was "Pythagorean Disciplines for Modern Living." This we can recommend to all serious students. On a very practical level, his lecture, "What is Incompatibility? — the Great Crisis in Modern Living," presents many thought-provoking suggestions and recommendations dealing with problems of human relationships. If you would like these recordings, please place your reservation at least a month in advance, as we have numerous requests. If you will write to the P. R. S. Study Group Department, we can supply additional information on recordings which have been previously announced.

Incidentally, Mr. Hall's lecture "How Belief in Rebirth Can Enrich Your Life" is now available in printed form, and is especially suitable for study group discussions.

Several friends interested in forming Local Study Groups have asked us to advise them of a simple and practical manner of introducing this idea to their associates. One way would be to gather a small group of interested persons and let them listen to a tape recording of a talk by Mr. Hall. We have one especially appropriate for this purpose



entitled, "The Destiny of Man." This can be followed by a brief explanation of the Study Group plan. If you will write the Study Group Department giving the details of your plan to form a Local Study Group, everything possible will be done to assist you.

The following questions, based on material in this issue of HORIZON, will be useful to P. R. S. Local Study Groups for discussion in their meetings, and are also recommended to readers in general for thought and contemplation:

ARTICLE: ON PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING BY MANLY P. HALL

1. Would you be embarrassed to seek counseling if you realized that you were suffering from a psychological disturbance, or at the recommendation of your physician?

2. Why do we say that even with the aid of counseling a patient must ultimately effect his own cure?

3. What is implied by the statement that counseling assists the patient to develop an objective attitude? Why is objectivity especially necessary in cases of neuroses?

ARTICLE: LEARNING FROM OUR LIKES AND DISLIKES  
BY MANLY P. HALL

1. Examine the problem of environment, and estimate its importance in the development of character.

2. What is meant by a mature sense of values, and how would you philosophically interpret good taste in terms of art, music, and literature?

3. Discuss ways and means for adjusting harmoniously with persons of different temperaments. Can you apply your ideas to your personal problems?



STUDY GROUPS

DR. KERAL CARSEN — P. O. BOX 35, CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA  
L. EDWIN CASE—8421 WOODMAN AVE., VAN NUYS, CALIFORNIA  
RALPH F. CUSHMAN — 5622 LAUREL CANYON BLVD., NORTH HOLLYWOOD.  
MRS. JACQUES DANON—2701 LONGLEY WAY, ARCADIA, CALIFORNIA  
ELAINE DE VORE — 3937 WAWONA ST., LOS ANGELES 65, CALIFORNIA  
JOHN C. GILBERT — 15 N. W. 12TH AVE., MIAMI 36, FLORIDA.

JUDSON HARRISS—2602 AIKEN AVE., LOS ANGELES 64, CALIFORNIA

MILO KOVAR—930 GREEN STREET, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

MR. AND MRS. DONALD MACRURY—6279 VIRGO ROAD, OAKLAND, CALIF.

RUTH F. MORGAN—14801 MILLER AVE., GARDENA, CALIFORNIA

WILFRED F. ROSENBERG — 318 BLUE BONNET BLVD., SAN ANTONIO 9, TEX.

H. ERNEST STEVENSON—2179 HURON DRIVE, CONCORD, CALIFORNIA

CARL WAHLSTROM—PHILOSOPHICAL CENTER, 2956 24TH ST.,  
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

AIMEE P. WILT—6524 LOUISVILLE ST., NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

P. R. S. HEADQUARTERS GROUP — L. EDWIN CASE.



## THE CHRISTMAS ISSUE OF HORIZON

The next issue of our quarterly journal will be mailed approximately December 1st, in accordance with the postal regulations regarding Christmas deliveries. We believe this will be an unusual magazine, and will feature a beautifully illustrated article, "The Face of Christ." The earliest traditional portraits of the Savior, and the stories associated with them, should be of outstanding interest to students of comparative religion and thoughtful persons generally.

Part III of Mr. Hall's article, "Research on the Law of Rebirth," contains much information not otherwise available in his writings. There will be an appropriate editorial, emphasizing self-help, entitled, "The Secret of the Untroubled Mind." The question and answer department will include a discussion of the Dead Sea Scrolls and another stimulating topic analyzing "Art as an Index to Man's Moral and Spiritual Development." There will be the usual departments, and Mr. Hall will contribute another short story dealing with the adventures of Mr. Nakamura.

Altogether, the Winter issue of HORIZON is a highly suitable Christmas gift. Be sure to renew your own subscription and secure additional subscriptions for your friends. See inside front cover for subscription rates.



## A Tribute to Max Mueller

AMONG the memorabilia in the archives of our Society is a battered little pamphlet held together with a length of string. Tucked into this shabby package, is a faded old photograph of a distinguished-looking elderly gentleman with standing collar, four-in-hand tie, and an elegant Prince Albert coat. There is also a folio sheet with pictures of this distinguished personage from his third to his seventieth years. A handsome youthful likeness, from a photograph taken by the late Archbishop of York, is both charming and sentimental. There are luxurious sideburns, and the professor's coat is held together by a sprig of flowers through the buttonhole. Nor should we fail to mention the remains of a folded program bearing the following inscription: "An Offering of Sincere Gratitude to My many Friends and Fellow-labourers For their good wishes on the First of September 1893. The Fiftieth Anniversary of my receiving The Doctor's Degree in the University of Leipzig And on the sixth of December 1893, My Seventieth Birthday."

All these souvenirs introduce to us Professor Friedrich Maximilian Mueller, Knight of the Order of Merit, Knight of the Order of Maximilian, Knight Commander of the Northern Star, Knight Commander of Albrecht der Baer, Knight Commander of the Crown of Italy, etc., etc. Better known to the world of letters simply as Max Mueller, this distinguished Anglo-German Orientalist and comparative philologist was born in 1823, and had the honor of having Felix Mendelssohn for his godfather. Although an outstanding scholar, Max Mueller originally intended to make music his career. He might almost as well have chosen poetry, for he was a person of unusual mystical sensitivity. It may be difficult to reconcile the sober professor of the University of Leipzig with the following lines from his little book, *Memories*: "Childhood has its secrets and its mysteries; but who can tell or who can explain them! We have all roamed through this silent wonderwood—we have all once opened our eyes in blissful astonishment, as the beautiful reality of life overflowed our souls. We knew not where, or who, we were—the whole world was ours and we were the whole world's. That was an infinite life—without beginning and without end, without rest and without pain. In the heart, it was as clear as the spring heavens, fresh as the violet's perfume—hushed and holy as a Sabbath morning."



FRIEDRICH MAXIMILIAN MUELLER

Photograph taken on the occasion of his 50th anniversary as Doctor in the University of Leipzig.

It is not our present purpose to attempt a comprehensive biography. In 1841, Max Mueller began his studies of the Sanskrit language. In 1844, he approached the classical Persian, and his researches into comparative religion began to take form. It was Schelling who stimulated Max Mueller's interest in metaphysical subjects, and in 1846 he visited England, where he was introduced to Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort, and from that time on, his career was closely associated with the University of Oxford, where he held a professorship. He hoped to secure the chair of Sanskrit in 1860, but the position was given to Dr. Monier-Williams, possibly due to the circumstance that Max Mueller was rather too liberal in his comparative religious and philosophical views. He came into his own, however, in 1868, when he was given the newly established chair of Comparative Philology. He retired from active labors, to devote his time and attention to the editorship of *The Sacred Books of the East*, which task was finally



completed in fifty-one volumes. Max Mueller wrote extensively on Oriental philosophy and numerous other subjects, and after his death, his library was purchased by the University of Tokyo. He was one of the pioneers in the cause of East-West understanding. In due course, he became a naturalized English citizen, was sworn to the Privy Council, and enjoyed the freedom of the royal court. Visitors and scholars from all parts of the world made pilgrimage to his home, and he was noted for his hospitality. Max Mueller died in 1900, leaving a rich heritage of original works and translations.

One of his lesser known, but perhaps most intimate, little writings is his *Memories*, a simple and beautiful love story which tells us much of the inner life of the man himself. In this work, he writes: "Still, I must acknowledge I do not share this great admiration for the 'German Theology,' although I owe the book many a doubt. To me there is a lack of the human and the poetical in it, and of the warm feeling and reverence for reality altogether. The entire mysticism of the fourteenth century is wholesome as a preparative, but it first reaches solution in the divinely holy and divinely courageous return to real life, as was exemplified by Luther. Man must at some time in his life recognize his nothingness. He must feel that he is nothing of himself, that his existence, his beginning, his everlasting life are rooted in the super-earthly and incomprehensible. That is the returning to God which in reality is never concluded on earth but yet leaves behind in the soul a divine home sickness, which never again ceases."

The gentle sad romance set forth in the *Memories* reveals the basic incentives for a scholarship which sought ever to learn by growing and to grow by learning. Max Mueller was not merely seeking to amass knowledge for its own sake. He was sincerely striving to discover those foundations of security which warm and enrich the heart of the soul. He writes: "The first fear of the human heart arises from God forsaking us; but life dissipates it, and mankind, created after the image of God, consoles us in our solitariness. When even this consolation and love, however, forsake us, then we feel what it means to be deserted by God and man, and nature with her silent face terrifies rather than consoles us . . . There is no retreat for the soul, which feels itself alone and forsaken even among the stars, or in the heavenly world itself. One thought brings us a little consolation: the repose, the regularity, the immensity, and the unavoidableness of nature. Here, where the waterfall has clothed the gray rocks on either side with green moss, the eye suddenly recognizes a blue forget-me-not in the cool shade . . . Still more, when we strain our weak eyes, and, with superhuman power, cast a more searching glance into the secrets of nature, when the microscope discloses to us the silent laboratory of

the seed, the bud and the blossom, do we recognize the infinite, ever-recurring form in the most minute tissues and cells, and the eternal unchangeableness of nature's plans in the most delicate fibre. Could we pierce still deeper, the same form-world would reveal itself, and the vision would lose itself as in a hall hung with mirrors. Such an infinity as this lies hidden in this little flower."

So often when we read of men of letters, deep scholars, and those learned in strange and difficult subjects, we think of them merely as intellectuals. We admire their minds, but fail to recognize that even the learned professor is still a human being dependent upon his inner resources for the vision to labor and the courage to perfect the work which he has chosen. There is a creativity behind outstanding scholarship, especially in fields so essential to the common good as comparative religion. Max Mueller, a translator and editor, was merely the extension into this mortal sphere of a strong but devout human soul seeking to share ideals and convictions with the streams of students that came under his influence. They regarded his words and probably stumbled through his classes, but they were touched also by the man, and it is probably for this reason primarily that his works have lived. Even in the most complex and difficult of his productions, the spirit of gentleness and complete dedication are everywhere evident. This peculiarly equipped him to serve as a channel through which the sacred writings of many Eastern peoples first flowed into the English language.

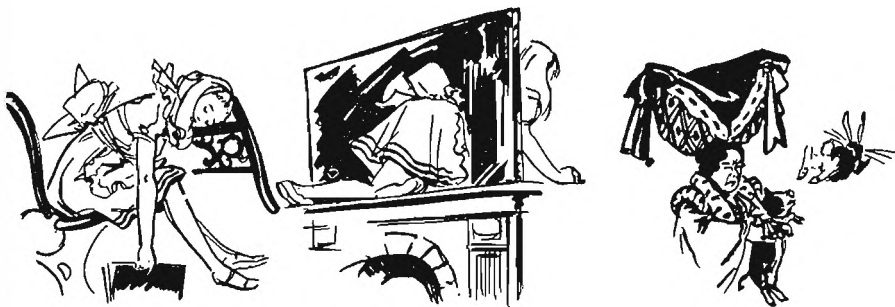
Max Mueller called some of his works "Chips from a German Workshop," but they were more than this—they were fragments of himself. No matter how careful, authentic, and reliable a text may be, there are always those places where delicate judgment is required in order to convey fuller and deeper meaning. If the translator does not have spiritual sincerity and a measure of vision, he cannot choose such phrases as best convey the mystical and philosophical overtones. Some have questioned Max Mueller's translations, and other scholars have made new renderings of many of these books. Max Mueller, however, was often strangely and wonderfully right, for he was not a servant of words, but their master.



### *The Good Deed Department*

Robert Quillen is the source of the observation: "It is a great kindness to trust people with a secret. They feel so important while telling it."





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## Curiouser & Curiouser

A DEPARTMENT DEDICATED TO ALICE IN WONDERLAND

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### Simon the Magician

In the eighth chapter of the Acts, verses 9-24, there is reference to a certain man called Simon, who had bewitched the people of Sumaria. It states that he was baptized, perhaps by Philip, and that later his sincerity was challenged by Peter. The repentance of Simon is intimated and after this episode, he disappears from the Scriptural writings, but not from the legendry and lore of the early Church. Around this Simon, called *The Magician*, there gradually developed a symbolical situation in which he came to represent the very embodiment of those heathen practices which threatened the ministry of the apostles and their followers. Of the historical Simon very little is actually known, for his enemies were his biographers, and they were not impelled to treat his name or memory with much charity.

In the course of time, Simon Magus has come to be recognized as the moving spirit behind Syrian Gnosticism. This sect, which was later to flourish in North Africa, must be recognized as an important mystical-philosophical movement which flourished between the first and third centuries of the Christian era. It drew to itself a brilliant company of scholars and transcendentalists who sought to restore the universal religion of antiquity. These men derived their inspiration from the streams of Eastern metaphysics that flowed along the caravan routes between Asia, the Near East, and North Africa. From what can actually be restored from the fragments of their learning which

have survived, it would seem that their teachings were essentially noble, liberal, and at the same time profound. The very nature of Gnosticism opened it to the antagonism of the early Church Fathers, who rejoiced in branding it not only heretical, but infernally inspired for the purpose of discrediting the Christian ministry. Beneath all the recriminations, one can dimly recognize the conflict between schools of belief, all sincere but, on the level of debate, completely irreconcilable. Simon became the embodiment of the adversary, a thorn in the flesh to all believers, and, worst of all, a worker of miracles and therefore in open competition to the wonder-working of the apostles.

It is now generally acknowledged that the Simon of the Fathers and, for that matter, the Simon of the later legends, is an almost complete fabrication suspended from the simple reference in the Acts of the Apostles. Popular dislike for Simon has gradually subsided as a result of critical scholarship, and it is acknowledged that in all probability he is to be included among the wandering teachers and professors of theurgic arts who were not uncommon at the time and under the prevailing trend of beliefs. Such statements of Simon's philosophy as have been preserved include the following definition of God: "I say there are many gods, but one God of all these gods, incomprehensible and unknown to all . . . . a Power of immeasurable and ineffable Light, whose greatness is held to be incomprehensible, a Power which the maker of the world does not know." This would scarcely suggest an evil or corrupt person. From this universal principle, there emerges, as from invisible inapprehensible silence, a mysterious triad of that which stood, stands, and will stand. This triad, Simon described as the Principles of incorruptible form, universal mind, and the great thought. From this thought emerge aeons or powers—seven creating deities or spirits. These ultimately bring forth the lower regions or worlds, which are generated by the great thought, and upon which it moves, bringing forth mortal creation. Thus, the aeonology of Simon corresponds to that of the Orphites, and is indebted strongly to the teachings of Pythagoras and Plato.

The most fantastic of the many legends concerning Simon is contained in the apocryphal "Acts of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul." The origin of this work is uncertain. Some parts are considered to be early, others are most certainly comparatively late. A translation of a portion of this apocryphal book appeared in 1490, and Dr. Tischendorf examined six manuscripts, the oldest of which dated from the 9th century. We may therefore have certain reservations concerning the authenticity of this account, not only because it was probably compiled after the legend of Simon had passed through numerous cycles





SIMON MAGUS SUPPORTED IN THE AIR BY DEMONS

Part of a fresco by Giunta Pisano.

of embellishment, but also because it was obviously written to discredit the magician in every way possible.

The account makes both Peter and Paul involved in a mortal conflict with Simon. The magician attempted to win Nero away from the Christian cause. The intimate association between Nero, Simon, Peter, and Paul is historically absurd and contrary to all historical records. Be this as it may, Simon offered to ascend to heaven in the presence of the assembled multitude if Nero would order a great tower to be made of wood. Simon explained that the angels would not descend upon the surface of the earth and mingle with sinners, but they would come to him upon the heights of this tower. Nero then ordered the tower to be built in the Campus Martius, and the Emperor ordered both Peter and Paul to be present.

Simon ascended the tower and, facing the huge gathering, stood crowned with laurels. He stretched forth his hand and immediately began to fly, floating in the sky without any visible means of support. Nero then turned to Peter and Paul and inquired if they still doubted the divinity of Simon. In this extremity, Peter looked steadfastly against Simon, and ordered the angels of Satan, who were carrying Simon in the air so as to deceive the hearts of the people, to release the magician. Immediately the demons let go of Simon, who fell from the great height into a place called Sacra Via, and by some accounts he is said to have perished, and by others, to have had his legs broken.

Nero, taking the attitude that Peter and Paul were responsible for Simon's disaster, and considering the whole episode a competition in magic, ordered Peter and Paul to be put in irons. The accepted version of the account relates that the emperor hoped for a time that Simon would be restored to life or recover from his injuries. When such

events did not take place, he ordered the execution of both Peter and Paul, according to the traditional account of their martyrdom. About all that Simon actually proved was that he may have possessed the same magical powers attributed to Eastern conjurers and wonder-workers. From what we can learn historically, it would appear that Simon himself was unaware of the wondrous circumstances, and continued to teach in the regions around Sumaria, where he later died and was buried. The tale of Simon's levitation intrigued the minds of artists, and a typical representation of the magician floating through the air, sustained by imps of darkness, is included herewith. The moral lesson seems to be that when the wrong persons perform miraculous actions, miracles are not proof of sanctity.



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By  
MANLY P. HALL

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BODHIDHARMA, 28TH PATRIARCH OF ZEN

## Library Notes

By A. J. HOWIE

### THE ZEN BUDDHISM OF DAISSETZ TEITARO SUZUKI

In reviewing books and subjects embraced by the Library of the Philosophical Research Society, there has been no pretense of my being an authority in any sense of the word. I have acted only as a curator enumerating the materials available and the nature of the treatment. It is only with such a qualifying limitation that I discuss the subject of Zen, and the Suzuki books in particular. Some five years ago I did a paper on the Zen anecdotes. I have never been able completely to forget the impact of the reading at that time; and I have felt that the subject deserved further presentation with more mature reflections.

Western minds have grown familiar with the name of Buddha, if only from the frequent use of the figure for incense burners and

decorative motifs. Buddhism seems to be vaguely identified with other Oriental faiths as popularly described by Christian missionaries—always as existing among overpopulated primitives characterized by ignorance, poverty, and depravity. There is little mention, let alone emphasis, on the early high cultures that produced these noble theologies and philosophies. There are economic, political, and human factors that have defeated the constructive cultural benefits and that have contributed to the present state of the East, but this is not the paper in which to discuss them. But it is necessary to recognize the fact that there are vast differences between the ancient beliefs of the Hindus, Buddhists, Islamists, and the modern corruptions of yoga, Tibetan Tantra, asceticism.

We shall concern ourselves only with a group of books that describe the magnificent tradition and history of Buddhism as taught by a single sect. After 600 B. C. approximately, the Buddhist system rapidly disseminated, evolved in complications the simple teachings of Buddha, expanded its interpretation, and spread from India, Ceylon, Burma, to China, Tibet, Korea, Japan.

In China, one of the modifications of Buddhism has come to be known as Ch'an (Japanese, Zen) Buddhism. Because so little is generally known about Zen Buddhism, the name may not arouse particular recognition beyond the vague idea of Buddhism. Yet it is a most remarkable system of awakening the mental and spiritual faculties of man. There are but few direct parallels to be found in Western religions or philosophies to compare with Zen. The same is true even of other Eastern systems. Zen defies all traditions and proceeds contrary to most accepted ideas, Eastern and Western. Any paper on Zen Buddhism is difficult because there are no precise definitions. Even the use of the word "is" with any description or terms is used with reservations.

There are not too many books in English that treat the subject of Zen, but for the present paper we shall examine only the writings of Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, D. Litt., Professor of Buddhist Philosophy in the Otani University, Kyoto. Born in 1869, Dr. Suzuki has written a dozen or more books in English on Zen; and according to Christmas Humphreys, editor of the reprint series of the books, Dr. Suzuki has written at least eighteen works in Japanese that are yet unknown to the West.

The Suzuki books on Zen do not lend themselves easily to a glib presentation. In fact, the foreword by Dr. Carl Jung to *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* upset any ideas of a nice easy review by submitting pertinent quotes.



*An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (1934) is the publication in book form of articles which earlier appeared in the *New East* after 1921. Dr. Suzuki states that he decided to republish the articles because they represent a more popular presentation of the basic ideas developed in the *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, First Series (1927). And as Dr. Jung notes for reasons which he develops: "It is therefore not a matter of chance that this foreword is written by a psychotherapist." Dr. Jung's foreword should be studied carefully, preferably before attacking any reading in Zen. He states reasons why a Western mind can respect and be interested in Zen theories; but also he cautions the Western enthusiast that this method of transformation is not particularly for occidentals.

Dr. Jung concludes his foreword: "I should like to warn the attentive and sympathetic reader, however, not to underestimate the spiritual depth of the East, or to assume any kind of cheapness in Zen. The zealously nurtured attitude of literal credulity towards the oriental treasure of thought is in this case a lesser danger, as in Zen there are fortunately none of those marvellously incomprehensible words, as in Indian cults. Neither does Zen play about with complicated Hatha-yoga techniques, which delude the physiologically thinking European with the false hope that the spirit can be obtained by sitting and by breathing. On the contrary, Zen demands intelligence and will-power, as do all the greater things which desire to become real."

Zen belongs to the Mahayana school of Buddhism, but it is a sect that claims to transmit the essence and spirit of Buddhism directly from its author, and this not by means of secret documents or mysterious rites. The name is derived from the Chinese transliteration of *Dhyana* (ch'an-na; zenna in Japanese). Personal experience is the important element of Zen. No intrinsic importance is attached to sacred sutras or the commentaries on them. Personal experience is strongly set against authority and objective revelation. While it is highly speculative in theory, its disciplines are methodical and practical. Zen to be understood must become a part of the everyday life of the student.

Zen is not a philosophy in the Western sense because it has no concern with logic or analysis. Nor is Zen a religion, for it has no God to worship, no ceremonial rites; nor does it teach that there is a soul whose immortality is of concern. In short, Zen as such has no doctrines, dogmas, or like encumbrances; any such that are entertained by Zen students are held by the individual on his own account. Zen does not attach any particular sanctity to the images of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in their temples. The Zen teacher is striving to make the student experience the original spiritual wholeness of himself. Zen be-

lieves in the inner purity and goodness of man; and anything added or torn away injures that wholesomeness.

On the affirmative side, Zen literature does not help too much to state simply what Zen *is*. Suzuki quotes the following answer which was given anciently to the question, "What is Zen?":

"It is presented right to your face, and this moment the whole thing is handed over to you. For an intelligent fellow, one word should suffice to convince him of the truth of it, but even then error has crept in. Much more so when it is committed to paper and ink, or given up to wordy demonstration or to theological quibble, then it slips farther away from you. The great truth of Zen is possessed by everybody. Look into your own being and seek it not through others. Your own mind is above all forms; it is free and quiet and sufficient; it eternally stamps itself in your six senses and four elements. In its light all is absorbed. Hush the dualism of subject and object, forget both, transcend the intellect, sever yourself from the understanding and directly penetrate deep into the identity of the Buddha-mind; outside of this there are no realities."

Dr. Suzuki states that it is impossible to comprehend Zen through intellectual speculations. Zen abhors media—even the intellectual medium; it is primarily and ultimately a discipline, an experience which is dependent on no explanation. The idea of Zen is to catch life as it flows. When you are practicing, living Zen in everything you do, no wordy discussions are necessary, no explanations.

In his second series of *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, Dr. Suzuki outlines the factors determining the Zen experience.

1. There is a preliminary intellectual equipment for the maturing of Zen consciousness.

Zen is not sentimental or devotional; it is rather highly impersonal and matter-of-fact. The Zen disciplines seem not to be concerned with "trespasses," "repentance," "forgiveness." The *koans* are not answered by abstractions, logic, analysis. The early Zen masters were invariably students of philosophy in its broadest sense before their attention was directed to Zen. The study of genuinely inspired sacred books awakens with the reader an urge to come in direct touch with the truth itself. What one reads is always qualified by being "of" or "about" the subject and does not give us the thing itself. However, it is an acquaintance with the sacred books that points the way to look for the thing itself. The Zen aspirant has been searching for something that would give mental peace and harmony; he generally manages to have an intellectual understanding of some sort concerning himself and the



world; but he usually is impersonally detached from the activities thereof.

2. There is a strong desire to transcend the limitations that are imposed upon him as an individual being. The biographical records of Zen do not give much information regarding the circumstances and events that led those who became its leaders to become interested in Zen. There are just hints of the questing, disappointments, failures, effort, persistence, that preceded the dramatic events recorded of the culmination in success.

3. A master's guiding hand is generally found to open the way for the struggling soul. A master is needed not only for encouraging the student to continue his upward steps, but to point out to him where his goal lies. Zen has its own methods of pointing the way and of confirming the genuineness of the results. In spite of the apparent irrational, unpredictable, and contradictory answers to the *koans*, Zen seems to have its own orthodoxy of transmission.

4. A final upheaval takes place from an unknown region, which goes under the name of *satori*.

*Satori* is the name given by Zen to the awakening to the Zen viewpoint. This *satori* is the object of all Zen discipline. Naturally, then, the question arises: "Can not Zen be so explained that a master can lead all his pupils progressively to enlightenment through explanation? Is *satori* something that is not at all capable of intellectual analysis?"

Dr. Suzuki says that no amount of explanation or argument can communicate the experience of *satori*. Any *satori* is no *satori* if it is amenable to an analysis so that it becomes perfectly clear to another who has never had it. For a *satori* turned into a concept ceases to be itself and will no more be a Zen experience. All that can be done in Zen in the way of instruction is to indicate, suggest, how one's attention may be directed toward the goal. The attainment must be accomplished by the individual; no one else can do it for him. All the causes, all the conditions of *satori* are in the mind waiting to be matured. Nothing is concealed; all that the student has wished to see has been there all the time. Hence, there is in Zen nothing to explain, nothing to teach that will add to your knowledge.

"The Way transcends both knowledge and no-knowledge. Knowledge is indifference. When you really arrive at the point where not a shadow of doubt is possible, it is like vastness of space, empty and infinitely expanding. You have no way either to affirm or to negate."

*Satori* is not a mere intellectual discipline; nor is it a dialectic whereby contradictoriness becomes logically tenable and turns into a

reasonable proposition. *Satori* is not conclusion to be reached by reasoning, and defies all intellectual determination. Those who have experienced it are always at a loss to explain it coherently or logically. When it is explained at all, either in words or gestures, its content more or less undergoes a mutilation.

*Satori* is not a state of mere quietude; it is not tranquillization; it is an inner experience which has a noetic quality. There must be a certain awakening from the relative field of consciousness, a certain turning-away from the ordinary form of experience which characterizes our everyday life. By this the entirety of one's mental construction goes through a complete change.

No amount of logical argument can refute the results of *satori*. Being direct and personal it is sufficient unto itself. All that logic can do here is to explain it, to interpret it in connection with other kinds of knowledge with which our minds are filled. *Satori* appears thus as a form of perception, an inner perception which takes place in the most interior parts of consciousness.

And the annals of Zen support the reality of the *satori* transformation, an abrupt awakening, fruition, to a new spiritual outlook.

"Retire within your inner being and see into the reason of it. As your self-reflection grows deeper and deeper, the moment will surely come upon you when the spiritual flower will suddenly burst into bloom, illuminating the entire universe. The experience is incommunicable, though you yourselves know perfectly well what it is."

"Being so, do not waste your time with words and phrases, or by searching for the truth of Zen in books; for the truth is not to be found there. Even if you memorize the whole *Tripitaka* as well as all the ancient classics, they are mere idle words which are no use whatever to you at the moment of your death."

But in spite of all this belittling of the writings on Zen, it is through these records that the student can hasten the awakening of his understanding. Dr. Suzuki quotes liberally from an ancient work, *The Transmission of the Lamp*. He has drawn his material from little-known original biographies, sermons, letters, and manuscripts with such interesting titles as *Eyes of Men and Gods*, *Aids to Breaking Through the Zen Frontier Gate*, *Po-shan Admonitions Regarding the Study of Zen*, *Book of Peace and Happiness*, and many others. But Dr. Suzuki clearly states and repeats many times that the words profane the realities and are never to be mistaken for them.

Bodhidharma was not concerned with method or system when he brought the form of Buddhism to China that has come to be known



as Zen. He found venturesome and original minds in which he was able to awaken the first-hand experience which is now called *satori*. There was a spontaneous response among the early disciples—though only the successful ones are remembered, and those who failed are forgotten and uncounted. The fortunes of early Buddhism in China rose and fell, but Zen Buddhism continued to interest increasing numbers of students.

The sayings of the masters were remembered and spread by word of mouth and in writing; their lectures and sermons were preserved by busy brushes; and notes were preserved on the questions asked and the answers that had been found acceptable. Biographies and histories of the patriarchs came to be written. But in the growing literature differences of viewpoint became observable around which distinct schools of thought developed. Suzuki's own words are most apt:

"No doubt, in these long years of Zen history there was a genuine growth of Zen consciousness among Zen followers, but at the same time, as in everything else, there was a tendency which made for the evaporation of Zen experience into conceptualism. If things were allowed to go on much further in that direction, the genuine experience might entirely die away, and all the literature consisting chiefly of the sayings of the Zen masters would become either unintelligible or a matter of philosophical discussion.

"This degeneration, this departure from life and experience, is a phenomenon everywhere observable in the history of religion. There is always in the beginning a creative genius, and a system grows out of his experiences. People of lesser capacity are gathered about him; he endeavors to make them go through the same experiences as his own; he succeeds in some cases, but failures generally exceed successes. Because most of us are not original and creative enough, we are satisfied with following the steps of a leader who appears to us to be so great and so far above. The system thus gradually becomes ossified, and unless there follows a period of revival, the original experiences rapidly die away. In the Chinese history of Zen, this period of decline, we can say came with the invention of the *koan* exercise, although it is quite true that this invention was something inevitable in the history of Zen consciousness.

"What the *koan* proposes to do is to develop artificially or systematically in the consciousness of the Zen followers what the early masters produced in themselves spontaneously. It also aspires to develop this Zen experience in a greater number of minds than the master could otherwise hope for. Thus the *koan* tended to the popularization of Zen and at the same time became the means of preserving the

Zen experience in its genuineness. Aristocratic Zen was now turned into a democratic, systematized and, to a certain extent, mechanized Zen. No doubt it meant to that extent a deterioration; but without this innovation Zen might have died out a long time before. To my mind it was the technique of the *koan* exercise that saved Zen as a unique heritage of Far-Eastern culture."

The *koans*, *goroku*, sayings of Zen literature provide intriguing and baffling reading. Apparently contradictory, irrelevant, rude, they seem to contain an elusive significance that holds the interest. And this apparently was just the intent of the Zen masters.

Zen is not a religion; neither is it a philosophy. Yet it definitely is a system of thinking about values that are not of the physical world. To this extent it serves for certain types of minds the same purpose as religion or philosophy, even though its methods are incompatible with them. Further, it does not intrude or conflict with practical daily living. Zen is aimed at understanding the identification of abstract principles with everyday affairs.

Zen does not profane the Infinite with a pretense of knowing and teaching the purposes of God. There seems to be neither affirmation nor denial of a belief in a Supreme Being or a future life. There was nothing we could find in Dr. Suzuki's presentation of the subject of Zen that savored of hypocrisy or dishonesty; and the sense of values indicated would dignify any faith.

Zen as described by Dr. Suzuki is quite an impersonal affair. It is directed and dedicated to ends that are foreign to all material values. Zen seems to be disinterested in individualities or personalities; there is no emphasis on respect of person, station, or dignity. The tendency seems an intent to guide the development of the student's own understanding. There is little evidence of a missionary spirit. In fact, Suzuki even disparages argument as being an effort to convince others against their wills. The Zen student is taught the dignity of honest labor in even the most menial task as being necessary to justify the food he eats.

The foregoing is an inadequate introduction to, or presentation of, a series of thought-challenging books filled with ideas that could well help orient any student in his own special field. You do not have to become a Zen disciple to benefit by the Zen inspiration.





# THE STORY OF CHRISTMAS

BY MANLY P. HALL

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