

ESOTERICA

PHILOSOPHY • SCIENCE • SPIRITUALITY

FREE COPY

WINTER 2012 VOL 3 NO 4



The Journal of the Foundation for Theosophical Studies

THE ECSTASY OF ST TERESA (Front cover)

Giovanni Lorenzo BERNINI 1598-1680

On the front cover we see one of Bernini's greatest masterpieces **The Ecstasy of St Teresa** (1652). This marble sculpture forms the centerpiece of the Cornaro Chapel in St Santa Maria della Vittoria in Rome. This work features in Dan Brown's recent book and film *Angels and Demons*.

In this sculpture we see St Teresa (Teresa of Avila) swooning in ecstasy as an angel lifts the divine spear of illumination to penetrate her soul with the love of God. We see Theresa in both an ecstasy and rapture as she describes her experience "...the experience left me utterly consumed by the great love of God. The pain was so severe that it made me utter several moans. The sweetness caused by this intense pain is so extreme that one cannot possibly wish it to cease, nor is one's soul content with anything but God. This is not a physical but a spiritual pain, though the body has some share in it..." This excerpt was taken from Teresa's autobiography *The Life of Teresa of Jesus*. Other important works by her include: *The Interior Castle* and *The Way of Perfection*.

There had been a flowering of mysticism in Spain during the 16th Century with St Teresa, St John of the Cross, St Ignatius Loyola as well as the *Alumbrados* all searching for a mystical union with God through various practices and spiritual exercises. In Teresa's autobiography she identifies the ascent to God in four stages:

1. Mental prayer in devout contemplation and concentration
2. The deep prayer of silence where the individual listens for and becomes absorbed in God so that God's Grace begins to flow into the soul.
3. At this stage there is such devotion and love that the individual begins to experience Union with God and achieves a supernatural and ecstatic state of being.
4. State of Rapture where the individual becomes so focused in the spiritual that a state of consciousness is achieved where the individual becomes unaware of the physical body.

Later in *Esoterica* we see another great sculpture by Bernini. He has produced two of the most outstanding works in Western Art. Both were produced during the Catholic Counter Reformation period when they were using art to re-connect to their congregation as a reaction to the Protestant Reformation that had banned the use of imagery in their churches. Both these works transform marble into another form that appears to be a distillation of life itself.

Bernini was both a devout Catholic and attended church every morning before he started to work. He followed the mystical spiritual exercises of St Loyola. In his work we see a fusion of both the spiritual and the temporal. This alignment of very high spiritual states of experience and using the language of the physical world has confused many later commentators who find it difficult to believe the two can exist side by side.

Barry Seabourne

Image courtesy of Wikipedia

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Here in the UK we have been quite literally deluged for months with rainfall levels the likes of which have not been experienced for one hundred years. My heartfelt sympathies go out to those who have suffered flooding in their homes, losing valuable items but most of all losing tokens of treasured memories. For many of us *the past is not what it used to be*. I notice an advert in a local shop which says *"Arks built to order. Must have own mountain."* Well at least we can find some humour in most situations.

We note the sad loss of two of the theosophical movement's most dedicated and loved people; **Professor Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke** and **Marlene Brown**. Servants both and workers whose Dharma was uppermost in their lives. They leave us the poorer by their passing.

In this issue we have articles on the theme of **'The Secret of Life'**.

Ron Wallwork's article takes a largely Gnostic line and aptly describes life as a ride. Ron says - *"We are spiritual beings having a human experience"*, an observation that I would fully agree with.

Sarah Jane Boss has provided us with **'The Art of Discovering the Meaning of Life'**. **Sarah** tells us about the illumination of **Ramon Llull**. Llull was a 13th – 14th century artist who believed that his art was a system for discovering the answers to all questions – that is, all questions concerning physics, metaphysics, theology, and morality: A fascinating character to be sure.

I have contributed a short piece taken from my Summer School talk and called **'The Secret Life of a Monad'**, which takes you through a journey from monadic spark to divinely conscious being.

The art theme for this issue revolves around sculptures that aim to express spiritual and sacred moments from European history and culture. On the front cover of this issue of *Esoterica* we illustrate one of the most important sculptures in the world: **Bernini's 'The Ecstasy of St Teresa'** finished in 1652. **Barry Seabourne**, who is now recovering from a serious illness two months ago, has kindly written the synopses on the sculptures for this issue as well as contributing the article **'The Secret of Life'** that deserves more than one reading.

On your behalf I wish Barry a speedy return to full health and thank him very much for his continued support for *Esoterica*.

As I write we are 27 days from the end of the Mayan calendar – 21st December 2012. Many people are very excited about this; some fearing the end of the world, some fearing the end of the world as we know it, others talking of a shift for the earth to a new consciousness – from head centre to heart centre, some say that humanity will experience such a shift and even talk about ascending into a fifth dimension. What do I think? Well, everyone has a right to their opinions and I like to think that we live in a world where all voices can and should be heard, but for me the 21st December 2012 is just the end of a calendar. Present day calendars will end on the 31st December. I'll look forward to meeting up with many of you in 2013, shift or no shift.

Either way, I wish you joy on your journey.

Eric McGough,
National President

THE SECRET OF LIFE

Barry Seabourne



Our Universe was created by the energies that existed in the Cosmic Mystery before the Big Bang. At the initial creation this Cosmic Energy divided into the radiating Cosmic Force and the strong attracting force of gravity and Cosmic Magnetism pulling the sub-atomic matter into the myriad of forms that exist in cosmos. These two forces, and the Cosmic Energy that created them, continue to move mysteriously and powerfully through the Universe, our Sun, our planet and the organic and inorganic forms on our planet as well as ourselves.

We sense and respond to these energy forces both consciously and unconsciously as a quantum energy integrating and fusing with other life and electrical energies. The resulting effects vary from individual to individual. In the Cosmic Hierarchy there are the Cosmic Forces and Energies that emanate down to the various Levels of Humanity and fuse with the forces and energies of the planet and humanity. At the level of Cosmic Humanity and the true Inner Circle we have individuals who are in touch with energies of the cosmos as well as the energies of life. We can call some of these individuals enlightened or self-realised.

In the early 1900's, Max Planck and Albert Einstein moved the frontiers of science into a new understanding of the Cosmos with their revolutionary ideas on quantum theory and relativity. More recently the Universe has been seen as the manifestation of unseen cosmic energies and a myriad of forms, light and interstellar matter. Many cosmologists now consider that our Universe has been in existence for around fourteen billion years and estimate that it has about another six billion years before it dies. This gives an approximate life span of twenty billion years. The human organism has a possible life span of around 100 years. Everything has its birth, life, death and re-birth into a similar or different form. The Universe returns to what can be called the Cosmic Matrix, Cosmic Void, Cosmic Spirit, Cosmic Energy or Godhead. What form or spirit we return to is a question that each religion has its own answer including varying concepts of Heaven and Reincarnation.

Most world religions and philosophies promise immortality in one form or the other to satisfy their adherents and attract new followers. Scientists are also looking at the possibilities of prolonging life by finding the gene that programmes death. Most thinking people are agreed that the physical body joins the planet and eventually the Universe at the end of human life. Atheists, humanists and many scientists believe that when we are clinically dead we cease to exist. They believe that the only way we extend our lives beyond the point where the brain ceases to function is through the creation or discovery of something important and memorable. For many others continuance of life is only possible through our children.

Embedded deep within the human psyche are desires and needs that protect, guide and motivate all that we do and think about. Apart from the basic physiological and safety needs there are five fundamental needs at the human core from which all others emerge. They are the desires to be happy, stay alive, free and the avoidance of pain and physical death. Many other higher needs could be added but originate from these five.

Our lives are lived in a mix of mystery, knowledge and varying experiences and beliefs as we try to understand the fundamental questions of life. Some are comforted and accept answers given by respected authorities and those they trust. Others search to find answers from within their mind, soul and life experiences. Ultimately the deeper questions as to why

we are here and many other complex existential life issues are a wonderful and at times perplexing mystery with occasional revelations. The whole cosmos and creation can be considered as a series of levels that can be called the **Cosmic Hierarchy**. This Hierarchy has five realms – **Divine, Creation, Galactic, Human and Quantum**.

COSMIC HIERARCHY

DIVINE REALM

The Divine realm consists of The Cosmic Mystery, the Absolute, Cosmic Void and the Cosmic Matrix. The Mystery is a Latin term that points to the supreme mystery underlying the origin of our Universe and life itself. How the Universe operates and how it relates to our existence and evolution is also a profound mystery. Humanity tries to understand and experience this ultimate state but in the end there remains a sacred mystery. The Cosmic Void suggests the sense of absolute space that must always be present in all creative processes. This Cosmic Matrix is present at all times. It was there at the beginning from the period before the creation through to the current period. It is an energy field and the source from where all known matter and energy are created. Ultimately all will return to this Matrix. The Cosmic Matrix and the forces of radiation and magnetism have many other names and are also called Cosmic Energy, Cosmic Force Cosmic Spirit or God. The term God may be misinterpreted as the cultural and sometimes anthropomorphic concepts of god. In this new and abstract concept gender becomes irrelevant as we see that the ultimate Cosmic Creative Energy must be a union of both and it is this ultimate force of cosmic energy that creates everything that we can call GOD or the ABSOLUTE.

CREATION REALM

From the cosmic energies of the Divine Realm the Creation comes into being. This moment has been called the Big Bang. This is where the two energies, the Cosmic Force and the Cosmic Magnetism (also called Cosmic Gravitation) are created. This is the outgoing Cosmic Force of radiating energy and the inner and magnetic cosmic energy of gravity that was created at the Big Bang and are the invisible forces that create the Universe. Cosmic Magnetism draws the disparate energies together and fuses the elements creating the galaxies, stars, planets and other interstellar material. These two forces contain and emit many kinds of Cosmic Energy including sub-atomic and quantum forces. The three forces permeate all parts of the universe including all life forms on our planet.

UNIVERSE REALM

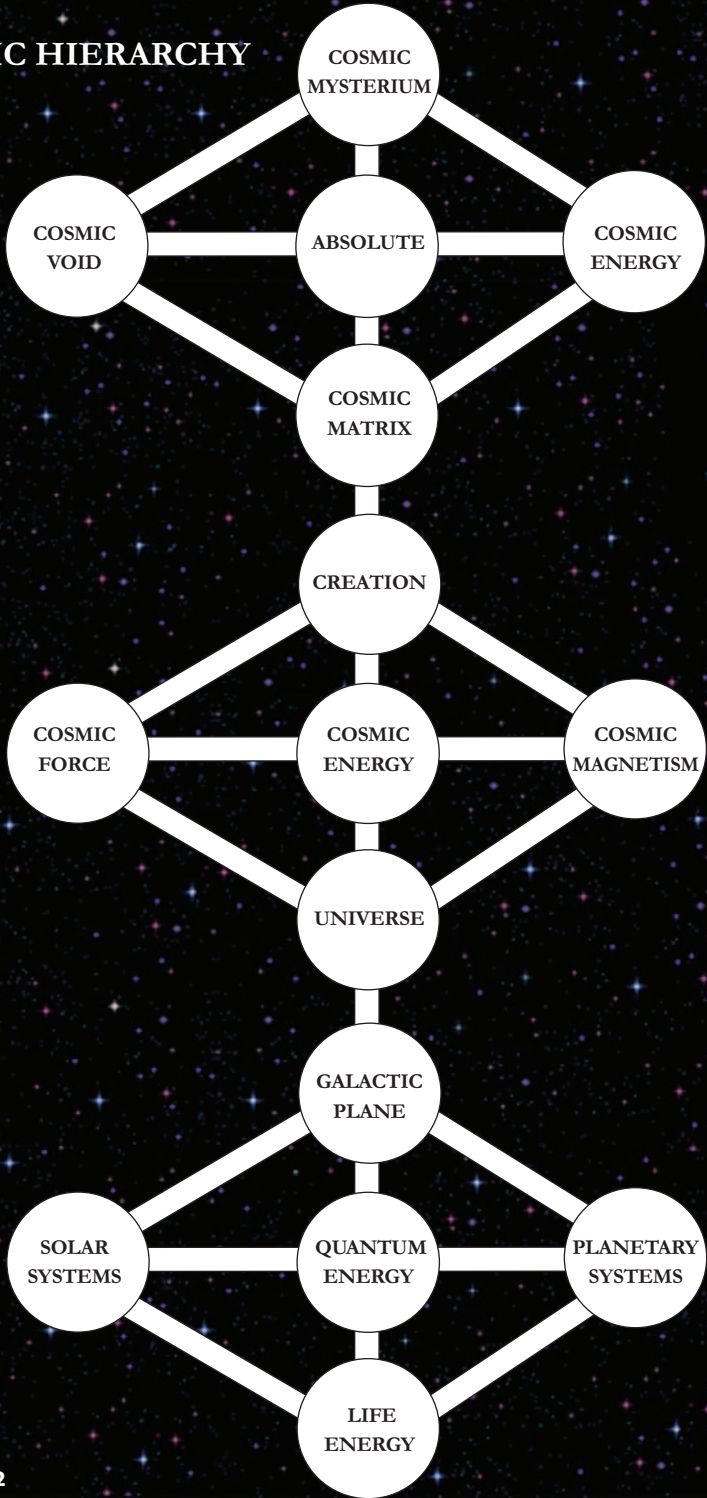
There are billions of galaxies which form a level of materiality from which Solar and Planetary systems and other cosmic manifestations have their life and form. Each system emits Cosmic Forces and Cosmic Magnetism which affect life on our planet. At the level of SOLAR SYSTEMS and PLANETARY SYSTEMS we see the part of the Universe that maintains our planet. Without this level in the Universe there is no possibility of life as we know it on our planet. The sun gives our planet life through its warmth, light and different forms of energy in the

cont'd on page 8

COSMIC HIERARCHY

The diagram on the following page illustrates the interrelationship of three of the five realms – Divine, Creation and Galactic. The fourth Human Realm and the fifth Quantum Realm will be included in a forthcoming book on *The Art and Philosophy of Illuminism*.

COSMIC HIERARCHY



maintenance of nature and all life. Its magnetism holds our planet in its cyclical orbit. At the birth of our solar system it provided the chemical elements and other material from which our planet has evolved.

HUMAN REALM

Humanity has been evolving from the start of the Universe and each of us could trace our own evolution back to this beginning. After billions of years of Cosmic and Planetary evolution complex biological forms were created in the Universe. The whole world and Universe is made up of different yet similar forms of radiant and magnetic forms of atomic and sub-atomic matter and energy in one form or another. We are essentially a form of energy that needs other forms of energy to survive and grow.

Humanity operates at many levels of consciousness and functionality. The interaction between the Cosmic Forces and Matrix, the Mind, Heart and Body of humanity and the individual DNA genes and genome create a core central area that can be called the Soul. One of the ultimate life aims for an individual is to move to the highest level of consciousness as possible and to help the progress of planetary and human evolution.

There are four main levels of humanity with further divisions in each. These levels are listed below and contain higher and lower levels. The higher aim of humanity in Levels 3 and 2 listed below in the **Four Levels of Humanity** is to move to the higher levels. In the lower levels of the Outer Circle there is the need to survive at any cost in a competitive, sometimes violent and chaotic environment towards the higher levels of law and order, prosperity, security and civilisation. From here it may be possible to develop higher levels of spirituality, knowledge, intelligence and understanding and move into the higher esoteric level. Higher levels allow the study and influence of higher human activities and pursuits such as philosophy, religion, science and the arts.

FOUR LEVELS OF HUMANITY

COSMIC HUMANITY - Some members of the human species have achieved a state of cosmic consciousness where they are in tune with the finer vibrations of the Cosmic Energies. Here there is a sense of Union with the Cosmos. These individuals move with the Way of the Universe, sense true immortality and fulfil their higher destiny but also contribute to life itself. Within this level there are four types.

INNER CIRCLE OF HUMANITY (*Esoteric*) - This is the level of preparation for spiritual and intellectual transformation, transcendental and cosmic consciousness. Certain religious and spiritual practices are given to individuals in religious and esoteric groups. The Inner Circle contains three further levels based on their position on the Path. There are five Primary Types and fifteen Secondary Types.

OUTER CIRCLE OF HUMANITY (*Exoteric*) - This is where the mass of humanity live. Different philosophers and psychologists give this state of being different names. Most people are locked into a destiny in life that has been pre-ordained in the sense that they are conditioned to follow the life they have been born into. This is then further influenced by the ancestral heritage passed on through the genetic structure, parental belief systems, cultural, economic and social situation, natural ability and chance. People are further locked into their beliefs and life aims by their type – spiritual-intuitive, intellectual-thinking, emotion-feeling, physical-sensing.

LOWER LEVELS - At this level we find humanity who through a variety of reasons and causes become violent, destructive and hostile to other innocent human beings. Their behaviour echoes a level of ignorance that leads to extreme levels of aggression that can lead to innocent people being killed or abused in such a way that can destroy their lives. The way society deals with these people will influence the overall development and evolution of humanity.

It is at the level of Cosmic Humanity that we find people such as Albert Einstein and many other luminaries and illuminists. Einstein's unique mix of creative imagination, intelligence, supreme intellect and wise intuition is an inspiration for each of us. He integrated his mystical vision of the Universe with the search for scientific truth for the benefit of the human race. In Einstein's book *Cosmic Religion* (1931) he says "everything that the human race has done and thought is concerned with the satisfaction of deeply felt needs and the assuagement of pain. One has to keep this constantly in mind if one wishes to understand spiritual movements and their development. Feeling and longing are the motive force behind all human endeavour and human creation."

He goes on to describe his vision of religion as fulfilling three kinds of human needs. "The first religion is based on fear as mankind attempts to call on a God that will help prevent sickness, hunger and death. With primitive man it is above all fear that evokes religious notions. These fears are based on the survival instinct. The second religion is based on the human need for social acceptance and the desire to be loved, supported and guided by someone or something that is in some way superior and can protect. Thus individuals create a social and moral conception of God."

To Einstein the most important religion includes these two approaches but also transcends them. He calls this the "third stage of religious experience which belongs to all of them, even though it is rarely found in a pure form: I shall call it the cosmic religious feeling. The individual feels the futility of human desires and aims and the nobility and marvellous order which is revealed in nature and in the world of thought. The religious geniuses of all ages have been distinguished by this kind of religious feeling, which knows no dogma and no God conceived in man's image."

There have been other enlightened figures from the past that have been receptive to this higher form of cosmic energy. This pure form of energy gets translated and interpreted through the human mind-prism of the particular individual. The pure light is coloured by their culture, personal genetic code and psychological profile. Throughout history there have been many prophets and visionaries who have claimed to have been inspired by a being that is outside of this world as we know it. Sometimes the message is said to have come from God or other divine source. Moses received the commandments from his God from the top of a mountain. Plato identifies higher perfect forms that can be received by humans who are suitably 'pure'. Other groups receive communication from variously named Secret Chiefs or Ascended Masters. These higher experiences and how they have been interpreted have had a profound effect on the evolution of humanity.

THE SECRET

The use of words such as illumination, cosmic consciousness, re-birth, revelation, gnosis and enlightenment refer to psychological experiences that are at the core of the human search for ultimate meaning, happiness and fulfilment. These experiences can occur at different levels of intensity, length and clarity. The effects on the individual can vary from a sense of

well-being to a life transforming experience where the destiny of a person's life can dramatically change.

Illumination is the union of the Cosmos with the Human Soul. Each person may have a different path to tread at higher levels of consciousness. The refinement of consciousness and awareness from **self-awareness** to **life-awareness** towards a state of **cosmic-awareness** is essential for spiritual and life progression. This should always be balanced by the appreciation of the human experiences of beauty, love and the search for truth, perfection and the sacred. In addition to the three main types of awareness states identified above other effective spiritual exercises include prayer, external and internal awareness, silent and active meditation, creative intuition and envisioning.

The Secret of Life needs to be experienced experientially as well as understood by the mind, felt in the heart and lived so that an individual achieves a state of Self-realisation. It is by working to improve the levels of consciousness and energy centres within that it becomes possible to begin the transformation towards Cosmic and Life Consciousness. Within the energies of the Cosmic Matrix it is possible for some highly attuned, developed, sensitive and conscious individuals to hear and interpret some ideas and energies that are operating in the highest level of vibrational frequencies. At the same time energies can be transmitted to this Cosmic Matrix and other unnamed energies.

The human brain was created from the universe and when suitably prepared can communicate with the mind of the Universe, whatever its nature may be, and other mind-brains operating on the same 'frequency'. Prayer can have a positive and proactive effect on the individual's mind, emotions and body. In a state of prayer, meditation and contemplation it can cut out other disruptive frequencies from the environment and allow the individual mind and system to operate within its own parameters to heal, identify needs and desires and bring an individual into the present moment to tune into the flow of the cosmic flow and energy force to discover higher destiny. Discovering methods to access the subconscious and unconscious levels inside the mind can mean that an individual can begin to transform their life. Infinite wisdom, infinite intelligence infinite happiness and miraculous curative forces are within yourself when you ask in the right way.

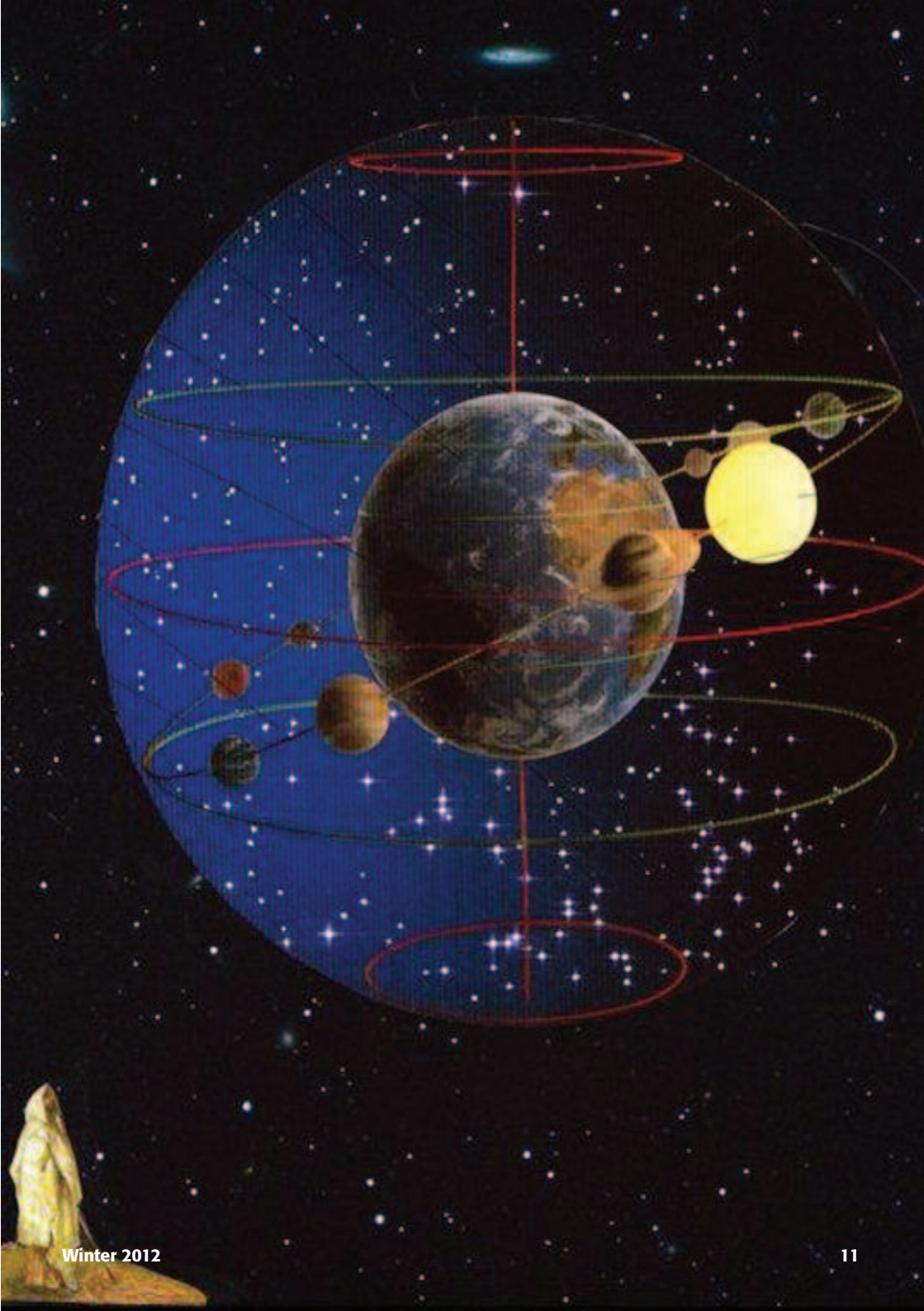
CONTEMPLATING THE COSMIC HIERARCHY – Julia Still (2012)

*The work shown on the next page is one of the creative
Soul Montages by the artist Julia Still*

Julia lives and works in Wells a few metres from Wells Cathedral. Julia creates a new language in bringing together images from varying cultures and spiritual traditions. She skilfully blends images of beauty, power and subtlety that combine to create a rich and magical world where imagination, fantasy and vision combine to produce evocative works. Her work is original and exciting in its range and archetypal importance.

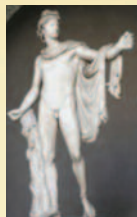
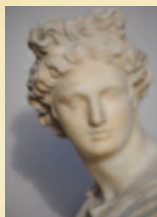
Julia Still describes herself as a self-trained artist delving into different expressions of the unconscious and the Divine and a lover of symbols and archetypes and applying them to all of life's adventures. To see more of Julia's work please visit www.whispsofvision.blogspot.com or www.facebook.com/Journeyart

Artwork courtesy Barry Seabourne



APOLLO and DAPHNE (*Opposite*)

Gian Bernini 1625



Apollo was very important to the religions of ancient Greece and Rome. He was the prophet for the sacred site of Delphi. To the Greeks and later the Romans Apollo represented the perfect male and complemented Venus who was considered to be the perfect female.

He was the son of Zeus who was considered to be the head of the Gods but Apollo was a powerful and complex God capable of both acts of goodness and destruction. He is primarily the God of the Sun, Truth, Light, Music, Poetry, Medicine and Healing as well as being able to visit ill health and deadly plague on those who deserved punishment.

Apollo most famous representations were as seen in the ancient sculptures of Greece and Rome. He was either sculpted as a handsome portrait as in the inset above or full length figure as a muscular athletic looking young man.

Opposite we see the superb marble sculpture Apollo and Daphne (1625) by Bernini that is in the Borghese Gallery in Rome. Bernini's exquisite skill can be seen in every minute detail as Bernini shapes the marble as though it was alive.

The iconography for this sculpture is taken from a Greek myth that was later retold by Ovid and other Roman authors. In the myth, according to Ovid, the Olympian God Apollo insulted young Eros. Angered by Apollo Eros took two of his arrows one of gold the other of lead. The golden arrow made people fall in love while the lead arrow made people hate. He shot the gold arrow into Apollo's heart and shot the lead arrow into Daphne. Apollo fell desperately in love with Daphne who could not fall in love with anyone.

The sculpture illustrates the chase and the moment when Apollo catches Daphne. At the same moment Daphne cries out for help from the gods who oblige by turning her into a laurel tree. On close examination it is clear that Daphne's legs, feet and hands are transforming into leaves and branches. In the myth she is changes completely into a laurel tree.

There are many interpretations but it is obvious that here is a commentary on the power and strength of unrequited love and the conflict with purity and chastity. Daphne's change into a laurel tree seems to be eternal and as such Apollo then takes this tree as his sacred symbol of purity and ideal love and has it carved into a laurel wreath that became his emblem.

Synopsis and inset portrait by Barry Seabourne and the Apollo full figure (above) and image opposite courtesy of Wikipedia



THE SECRET LIFE OF A MONAD

By Eric McGough

Like the prodigal son we left the safe comforts of our home – the safety of the loving embrace of our mother and father - to go naively into untold danger, pain, pleasure, and fear: To be rich, to starve, to be desired, to be hated, to be trampled on, to be abandoned, and to be saved: To be all of the things we could possibly be, to learn and to grow, to become all that and more. ***To develop the latent Godhood deep within us.***

You were a spark of the divine fire thrown far from the warmth of the mother flame. You descended through time and space into the depths of darkness, not the darkness of the all-embracing deep, but the darkness of cold materiality. After inconceivable ages you came to rest in the bondage of stone. As magma flowed white hot and finally cooled you were wrapped in its unyielding embrace. Oceans broke your bondage into dust, and there you lay, washed by wind rain and tidal ebb and flow, you settled in sediment and earth.

Through all of this forces deep within you responded to the diverse nature of others around you in the union of like monads – kindred sparks, and so you bonded with them to form sometimes stable and at other times volatile relationships. Spiritual forces ushered your energies into gross elements and rare elementary particles. Meanwhile, some deep unknowable source within you compelled you to be the best of what you were capable of. The immense potential of your divine nature and the latent capacities mirroring those of the all-embracing spiritual fire of which you were a spark – though buried deep – would not be denied.

Outwardly your efforts ran their due course, yet deep within you slumbered, unable to act beyond the cyclic boundaries of time and necessity. You rested, your energies coiled ready to respond to more subtle, flexible growth and form. Ages came ran their course and past away. The far distant stars called to you, drifting your name on interstellar tides. While around you, the tides of the earth flowed deep, shallow, angry, and calm. You slept until the time came to move on.

Around you now things moved - you moved; growth now like never before, freedom, stretching, branching, wind and rain, light and dark. You knew what it was to dream. Kissed by the sun, you thrilled with the joy of unbridle growth. Verdantly you reached up to the heavenly light above, your roots seeking the firm host of the mineral wealth that was your very self in the dim reaches of a past so long gone yet somehow still very present. In sheer joy you spread your tendrils across an entire world, reaching forms of leaf and bow born in the wildness of your dreamscapes. Your diversity gave you the companionship of the many - but also the strife of competition as you fought for space of earth and light.

Survival was the imperative writ deep across your dreaming group souls. Strategies were formed, ingenious and diverse; the casting of your seed to the causes of your own kind. Your inventiveness knew no bounds as you contrived organic compounds from chemical potency. Yet still the call from within to reach out – to push your limits - to be the best.

You slept the dream filled sleep of a new-born and in time – in those dreams - you leaped and ran, running free from the mother earth herself yet pulled to her by her ever present love. Your dreams became ever more real giving you glimpses of a joy beyond knowing. And so, as the cycles came and the tides of life turned to new phases you broke free of your earthly

mantle, with its restricting root and stem, to reach upwards into new forms. You were stirring – no longer just a dreaming awareness but a waking up. You awoke to a new reality as you roamed the worlds forests, fields, mountains, valleys, and seas.

This was freedom; freedom of a kind that you had never thought possible – not even in your wildest dreams. But there was still this drive to survive at all costs, and among your fellow beasts you needed brute strength and a sharp alertness as in turn you became prey and predator, provider and scavenger.

You're waking brought realisations to mind; of the urge to mate, to cast your seed in new ways. Social grouping and even pairing became an imperative as the herd and flock and shoal became the way of the new groupings of soul. The manifold life forms that were yours to dwell in were masterworks of muscle, sinew, and bone. There was an endless succession, from the simple celled simple minded to the brain powered creatures of sense organs and refined responses.

You learned to build, to arrange the world around you to your special needs; Nesting, burrowing, colonizing. You developed behaviour patterns that ensured you're flourishing in the earth, on land, in air, and water. Now you were the crest of your planetary life-wave. The earth was yours - you were king of the jungle, the plains, the valleys and the hills and you were competing fiercely to be the best and to survive at all costs. But as your awareness surfaced, in the fullness of time, you became ever more awake to possibilities beyond your mere instinctive patterns. Some part of you deep within was calling faintly in the darker areas of your growing mind. Gradually, the herd mentality and the routine dependant ways were becoming too automatic. There were other ways to be, other ways to grow – to stand apart. Thoughts flickered into being that were unbidden; ideas that were not common but were attractive and brought more sense of being something unique – something more than just one of many. You were starting to glimpse a new feeling – a feeling of your own self. There was still the company of others, of family groups and such, but more and more there was social order to take account of. Self-interest became the way to success.

There was hierarchy within groups, a pecking order to be contended with. You pushed yourself up the social ladder even as you were being pushed down it by others. Leaders and matriarchs took the best of what was available; the rest got what was left or what they could compete for. And the imperative to survive in the dangerous world of tooth and claw demanded that you be the best you could possibly be.

And so the eons passed and the awareness of self grew stronger. Eventually - without choosing - you were cast off from the group mind. This was like when you were cast from the divine flame all those cycles ago as a mere spark, though you could not remember that distant past – nevertheless here you were again cast out from a collective unity, cast into a new life-wave as an individual. You were no longer just a consciousness sharing spark but now a flaming self-aware being, lonely and fearful, cast adrift into a new world where fear and wonder mixed freely in your newly self-aware mind – a mind that now had new movements and patterns swirling and pushing, eager to surface – thoughts that had as yet no reality in which to be expressed.

There was a new force deep within you now, a force so powerful that you could not even begin to comprehend it. Deep within, you had received a jolt of power from the will of the logos itself. You had been thrown from the divine flame all those time defying cycles ago as a very tiny spark. You had glowed ever so dimly at first in your elemental responses and later in mineral incarceration and then flickered into life in the night-dark dream-world of root and

stem to then flare into flaming vitality in the stirring, waking, day-light of awareness. You were now burning bright - a fire in your own right; a fire that demanded fuel of the highest kind. And that fuel was nothing less than human self-consciousness with a full range of mind and a potential that is nothing short of awesome, yet needing still to traverse a whole chain of worlds to grow into fullness. Even so, here you now are, and whether you realise it or not, you are capable of burning as brightly as the mother flame from which you were cast.

Your divinity is now yours to claim. No more the needing to be the best because you were struggling for space, for light, and of sheer necessity. No more the competition for your share of lush, verdant growth. No more the dire need be the best in a world of bestial instincts to survive where fear stalks the shadows, where the weak are consumed and discarded. No more the need to be the best in a human tribal existence where hierarchy is one of power and privilege and the best raise themselves above the madding crowd of the mundane and the ordinary. It is time for us to outgrow the primitive and the fear-based self-concerns of ignorance and become a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of all life – *without exception* - custodians of our world. Yet only those of us who see or intuit the divine flame within us and can cast off the need to be the best in the old context and adopt a newer, higher context of this prime directive. It is time for us to be the best that we can be – not to gain individual advantage or for self-survival – but to realise the vast potential of humanity as a whole. The best for us now and in the future is to reach our full power as a collective; a brotherhood of co-operating individual souls. For as humanity strives to be the best it can be we can soar into the dizzy heights of conscious union with all life. Ahead of us – in the fullness of cyclic time – lies the glorious divinity which is, and has always been, our true purpose; a purpose that will finally bear fruit after eons of vast cycles wherein the tiny spark has journeyed blindly searching for the divine light of true self-conscious spiritual awareness.

Inspired now by those who have gone before us we aspire to become the very best of our life-wave, the torch bearers of the divine flame itself, destined – in a far distant cycle - to be the guiding light to another new, younger humanity in our turn.

The Monad finally returns home, not as a tiny spark but in glory, and every angel rejoices.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

International Headquarters: Adyar, Chennai 600 020, India

President: **Dr Radha Burnier** Vice-President: **Linda Oliveira**

The Theosophical Society was formed in New York, 17th November 1875, and incorporated at Chennai, 3 April 1905. Its three declared Objects are:

- * to form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.
- * to encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.
- * to investigate unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man.

The annual subscription in the English Section of the Society is £40

(£20 concessions). **Financial hardship shall not be a barrier to membership.**



The background of the entire page is a large, intricate illustration. It features a central figure, possibly a deity or a spiritual being, seated on a throne and surrounded by a radiant, golden light. This central figure is flanked by two large, winged figures, likely cherubs or angels, who are also radiating light. The entire scene is set within a large, ornate frame that resembles a stained-glass window or a tapestry. The colors are predominantly warm, with a lot of gold, yellow, and orange, creating a sense of divinity and mystery.

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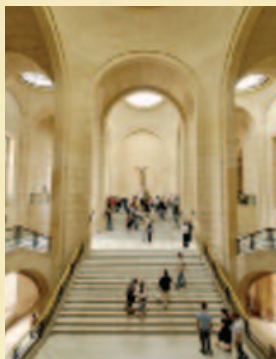
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WINGED VICTORY OF SAMOTHRACE c 190 BC (*Opposite*)

Louvre, Paris



The *Winged Victory of Samothrace* is one of the most celebrated sculptures in the world. It is also called the *Nike* (the ancient Greek *Goddess of Victory*) *of Samothrace* but experts fail to agree on which actual sea battle the Winged Victory was sculpted to celebrate. A partial inscription on the base of the statue has the word 'Rhodios' indicating that the statue was commissioned to celebrate a naval victory by Rhodes, who was at that time one of the most powerful maritime states in the Aegean Sea.

The triumphant sculpture has stood in the Louvre Museum since 1864. It was created around 190 BC and the Victory is seen as an iconic depiction of triumphant spirit and of the divine momentarily coming face to face with humanity. It is possible, however, that the power of the work is enhanced by the very fact that the head and arms are missing as this enhances the flow and abstract sense of uplift. It appears as a giant angel lifting off into the air in celebration.

The style of the work illustrates a new feeling of movement and flow when compared to the earlier period where there is an emphasis on stillness, symmetry and facial beauty. Here there is life and movement and this echoes another famous work of the same period the Laocoön and his Sons. In the inset image above we see the Victory in the Daru Staircase set high on its plinth so that it can be viewed from a distance and framed by arched architecture.

Notes by BS and images courtesy of Wikipedia



THE SECRET OF LIFE

Ron Wallwork

It's only a ride!

Dear Friend, "You are on a ride, don't worry, it's just a ride, it goes up and down and round and round and is brightly coloured but it is just a ride and sometimes someone says don't worry - you are OK It's just a ride", and we kill those people and let the demons run amuck. A lasting legacy of the American comedian Bill Hicks.

But many a true word is spoken in jest, and this is part of a universal truth, "We are spiritual beings having a human experience". The journey from our spiritual origin into this manifestation and the evolution back again is common to all esoteric and mythic philosophies. The Hymn of the Pearl from the Acts of Thomas translated by G.R.S. Mead as *The Hymn of the Robe of Glory* - being a particularly fine example.

Mankind has an INTUITIVE understanding (a gnosis) of the infinite and eternal providing he or she does not try and understand it intellectually. Many a suicidal mathematician would testify to this warning, but strangely enough mankind cannot settle for anything less than the permanent, eternal or infinite.

If something or someone promises an answer or solution, eventually you will find that boundary and push beyond it, until we find something to replace it and the next thing momentarily may satisfy our needs until we find the next boundary and so on. We cannot ever be satisfied until we reach that final boundless land. That is our spiritual nature. "Basilides" a Gnostic teacher is made to say in "The Seven Sermons to the Dead" (written by CG Jung,) that ;

"The multiplicity of the gods equals the multiplicity of men. Countless gods are waiting to become men. Countless gods have already been men. Man is a partaker of the essence of the gods; he comes from the gods and he goes to God". Likewise from Logion 50 from the Gospel of Thomas (50) Jesus said, "If they say to you, 'Where did you come from?', say to them, 'We came from the light, the place where the light came into being on its own accord and established itself and became manifest through their image.' If they say to you, 'Is it you?', say, 'We are its children, we are the elect of the living father.' If they ask you, 'What is the sign of your father in you?', say to them, 'It is movement and repose.'"

So we may have an idea of the journey we are undertaking but what of this world, this cruel, harsh, beautiful world, as William Blake put so aptly

*TIGER, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?*

The Buddhists refer to this world as suffering caused by attachment to this fleeting, impermanent and imperfect manifestation. We must only seek the permanent and the real. The reason for this is the nature of this world.

An understanding that the Gnostics had, that was often termed pessimistic. But if you have travelled far and wide on this earth you may have experienced some of its tragedies. There has been continued conflict and war from the beginning of modern man's existence. Even in the twentieth Century after two World Wars, men, women and children are being

horribly slaughtered in Syria as you read this article, one of the oldest civilisations we know.

This is not just limited to the misguided selfish ambitions of man, some of the perverted and twisted antics of nature belies belief, some insects can only survive on this planet by burrowing into the live body of another creature and eating it from the inside, what sick mind thought that one up.

In the Gospel of Thomas Logion (56) Jesus said, "Whoever has come to understand the world has found (only) a corpse, and whoever has found a corpse is superior to the world."

No, however alluring and beautiful this planet might seem, it is not a home, it is an arena, a death planet, and our bodies are prisons of the soul. Pessimistic maybe but ultimately liberating as time is not wasted in trying to create heaven on earth.

We should of course have compassion and love for others, universal brother & sisterhood and try to improve this world through service but unfortunately most people view this world through rose coloured glasses and will get totally disillusioned at some point, with any luck.

It is funny, that one can blaspheme other people's gods with impunity but criticise their world and they are up in arms. "It must be real, I have invested all my time and money in it, shut him up "

This is not a cheerful message for society at large; basis on which to build a utopia, but all utopias ultimately fail.

When you are ready to understand the real nature of this world you may be in a position to move on. You move from the Psychic nature (mind) The Hall of Learning i.e. this world, to the pneumatic nature or spiritual, The Hall of Wisdom that is not dependant on this world. This may take a number of life times to realise and can be a very hard a very long and lonely journey as Plotinus said, "Life is the flight of the alone to the alone." or in logion (49) Jesus said, "Blessed are the solitary and elect, for you will find the kingdom. For you are from it, and to it you will return."

This is a necessary step to salvation, a salvation knowledge, enlightenment or transformation, the ultimate reason we are here are to find the boundaries of this existence and move on, we must continue our ride back to the boundless land from whence we came.

See fig 1. The Valentinian Gnostics had a very interesting cosmology, that spoke of the fullness known as the pleroma where all the dualities or (syzygies) balanced each other out. Here all the archetypes for this world exist in harmony. Outside this fullness (the small circle at the bottom of the diagram) is a place called the hystherima or (deficiency or lacking) this is the cosmos in which we live. From this material world we must ultimately transcend and return to the pleroma. This is a diagram that appeared in the May edition of the "Lucifer" magazine in 1890 and illustrates this Valentinian cosmology. The area outside, the background is known as the "sige" meaning the silence, this equates to the Chaos. Undifferentiated spirit, The pleroma contains the Theos (Aeons) always shown as pairs. Outside but attached to the pleroma is a small circle set below, which is the Cosmos.

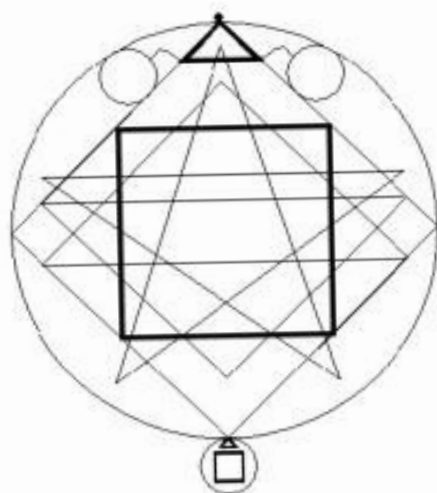
This equally equates with the Valentinian three spiritual levels within man as the microcosm,

Hylic (meaning the material) equates with the Cosmos; the material world. Psychic (meaning mind) equates with the Theos. - Spiritual beings. Pneumatic (meaning spirit) equates with the Chaos; the undifferentiated background to all.

The most critical understanding which is at the route of everything, is unity. There being only The One. The One as so elegantly expressed in the first proposition of the Secret Doctrine. Unless this is grasped and held as a mantra nothing else can or will make sense.

This has far reaching consequences, it means that the unity can't exist without me, or you

CHART IV
CHART OF THE PLEROMA ACCORDING TO VALENTINUS.



First the • (Point), the Monad, Bythus (the Deep), the unknown and unknowable Father. Then the \triangle (Triangle), Bythus and the first emanated pair or Duad, Nous (Mind) and its syzygy Aletheia (Truth) Then the \square (Square), the dual Duad; Tetractys or Quaternary, two males $||$, the Logos (Word) and Anthropos (Man), two females, their syzygies, $=$ Zoe (Life) and Ekklesia (the Church or Assembly), Seven in all. The Triangle the Potentiality of Spirit, the Square the Potentiality of Matter; the Vertical Straight Line the Potency of Spirit, and the Horizontal the

Potency of Matter. Next comes the Pentagram \star , the Pentad, the mysterious symbol of the Manasaputras or Sons of Wisdom, which together with their syzygies make 10, or the Decad; and last of all, the Hexalapha or interlaced Triangles \star

the Hexad, which with their syzygies make 12, or the Dodecad. Such are the Contents of the Pleroma or Completion, the Ideas in the Divine Mind, 28 in all, for Bythus or the Father is not reckoned, as it is the Root of all. The two small circles within the Pleroma are the syzygy Christos-Pneuma (Christ and the Holy Spirit); these are after-emanations, and, as such, from one aspect, typify the descent of Spirit to inform and evolve Matter, which essentially proceeds from the same source; and from another, the descent or incarnation of the Kumaras or the Higher Egos of Humanity.

From "Lucifer" For May, 1890.

or anything, nothing is separated. Things only appear separate in this manifestation but it is only an illusion. You would not debate as to what part of the body you prefer, this right arm or that left leg it would be absurd but we tend to do it with this world which is equally absurd.

The All is one life and connected together as one, when one is enlightened or becomes a Pneumatic you are also connected to this infinite neuro-network outside of time for an instance and you know (have gnosis) that takes away any fear of the unknown. You are immortal and it's OK it's just a ride. When you have experienced the unity everything else falls away as mere commentary.

Einstein eloquently expressed this;

"A HUMAN being is part of a whole, called by us the "universe," a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separate from the rest—a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few people near us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty." Or as (Sen T'sen) put it. "When the Ten Thousand things are viewed in their Oneness, we return to the Origin and remain where we have always been".

So in conclusion: I find this life exciting, challenging, tragic, sometimes sad, sometimes rewarding and value the great gift and privilege of meeting gentle souls along the way, but have no illusions about this world, it is an arena, not a home.

When I walk in the beautiful garden of life and smell the flowers, I know that behind the shrubs in the deep undergrowth there is always a monster looking out with a beady eye.

I must continue this great adventure, places to go, beings to meet I must go now, as I am on a ride and oh! shhh! by the way, so are you, see you around.

Namasti

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VENUS DE MILO 120 BC **The Goddess of Love and Beauty**

Louvre, Paris, France

This famous ancient Greek sculpture was produced around 100 BC was originally called Aphrodite of Milos but has become better known as the Venus de Milo. Venus is the Roman (and Greek) Goddess of Love and Beauty and represent the philosophical aims and system of both Plato and the Neo-Platonists. A central tenet for Plato was that physical beauty equated to absolute Truth.

The arms and original plinth were lost when it was discovered. This archetypal work was sculpted in marble and has become one of the enduring Western symbols of love and the feminine.

It now stands in its own large room in the Louvre Museum in Paris.

A similar and earlier work The Aphrodite of Knidos by the famous Greek sculptor Praxiteles of Athens (4th century BC) shows the same pose with the arms in place.

Both works represent the Venus Pudica which is the Modest Female which symbolized the Pure Woman. This was seen as the spiritual complement to the Sensual Woman. Recent construction studies suggest that the original arms followed the positioning of the Botticelli's painting Birth of Venus. The iconography in Botticelli's work was taken from the Florentine Neo-Platonist group led by Marsilio Ficino.

Notes and image by Barry Seabourne



THE ART OF DISCOVERING THE MEANING OF LIFE

Sarah Jane Boss

In the year 1274, a Mallorcan nobleman by the name of Ramon Lull (1232-1316) went to contemplate God in the seclusion of Mount Randa, a hill on the south side of the island of Mallorca. While he was there, he received an illumination from God, by which he was shown the method and form of the work which he would call the *Art*, and which he devoted the remaining four decades of his life to perfecting and promoting. Lull believed that his Art was a system for discovering the answers to all questions – that is, all questions concerning physics, metaphysics, theology, and morality. As this suggests, the Art is based on the assumption that God, humanity and the rest of creation constitute an integral unity, so that the same principles of investigation can be applied to answering questions about, say, astrology, medicine, or – with appropriate variations – the being of God. The Art is a technique infused with the conviction that there is nothing that lacks meaning, because God makes himself known in all things. One Lullian scholar, Amador Vega, has written: ‘This art of seeking and finding the truth in the meanings of the world is an art of encountering God.’

In any of its various manifestations, Lull’s Art is highly elaborate, and scholars in many disciplines have ignored it altogether. Yet amongst more esoteric schools of thought, it remained of interest for many centuries. Most notably, the Art was studied by alchemists, including such luminaries as Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), and by some philosophers, including Leibniz. A number of alchemical works were attributed to Lull (though he was not their author), and so-called Lullian alchemy was the dominant form of alchemical practice in England, where the author of the Art was known as Raymund Lully. From the sixteenth century, however, there is a distinct change in scholars’ approach to the Art; for whilst Lull’s own concern was with helping people to know God, occult practitioners such as John Dee (1527-1608) saw the Art as a system by which human beings might gain power over the world. Yet Lull himself was not interested in manipulating the physical or the spiritual world, but in learning from it, and in teaching others what one has learnt. That learning may well be put to the service of such professions as medicine or law, but these are callings which should make their practitioners servants of God; they should not be means for acquiring power.

At the heart of Lull’s system is the idea that there are divine *Dignities*, which we might perhaps think of as attributes of God. They participate in God from all eternity, and, being divine, they are infinite. The Dignities include such qualities as Greatness, Goodness, Truth and Wisdom, along with very many more. The created world is composed of these qualities, which, in creation, are called *Principles*, and these Principles are distinct from the divine Dignities (but nonetheless continuous with them) in that they make up the world of time and space, and so are not infinite. Different aspects of the world exhibit the various Principles to greater and lesser degrees. A worm might be seen as being strongly characterised by the Principle of Humility, for example, and less by the Principle of Beauty, whilst Beauty might be the dominant Principle of a rose. Both the worm and the rose participate strongly in Goodness, since everything is good in so far as it exists at all; but the worm may have the advantage here, since it has animal qualities which the rose lacks.

Now, if we can come to know the Principles that are present in God’s creation, then we are a step closer to coming to know God. According to Lull, human beings were made to know and love God, and the purpose of his Art is to help us to do that. It is in knowing and

loving God that we find the meaning of our existence, and Llull thinks that this is not difficult, since God is present in the very being of things. He writes:

God our Father, Lord of all that is! If one who comes upon a precious stone rejoices greatly at its finding, it is because it is beautiful and one knows that it is very good. It is with good reason, therefore, that we, who know that you are in *being*, rejoice in your being, since it is in being and not in privation. It would be a great wonder for one who rejoices at the discovery of finite things not to rejoice at the discovery of something infinite.

You know, Lord, that one who finds a treasure rejoices greatly even though that treasure cannot give life or ward off sickness. And so, one who judges in thought that you are in being, that you give life and ward off sickness, is a great fool not to rejoice more over you than over the treasure that has been found.

Men and women frequently fail to recognise God in the world, and the purpose of the Art is to help us to open our eyes so that we can see the truth that is evident.

Llull believed that the Art was very easy to learn, and he wrote simplified versions of it for the use of busy laymen and for women, who would not have received earlier education in philosophy. Yet there is something curious here; for although Llull himself believed that his Art was straightforward, his contemporaries often found it very difficult, or puzzling, as do most modern readers. And this is surely because of a difference between the esoteric and the exoteric which Llull himself failed to appreciate. It is as though Llull's own revelations, and his continuous closeness to God, seemed so easy to him that he assumed that an account of them to other people would be sufficient to enlighten those others in the way in which he himself had been enlightened. In reality, however, Llull's experiences were of a kind that usually follows a long period of study, and requires a heightened state of spiritual sensitivity. When Llull had his illumination on Mount Randa, he had, in fact, spent a number of years engaged in just such study, but it seems likely that he did this in a piecemeal, or informal, way, and thus had not had a teacher to tell him of the new state of spiritual understanding into which he might emerge. Hence, he underwent an experience of esoteric initiation without realising that this was what it was. So he did not understand that this new awareness, which, once it was revealed, seemed so obvious, could be learnt only by a long process of study and meditation. His Art could never be exoteric. It would lead men and women to discover the truth about God and creation, and thus to know and love God and to find the deepest meaning of their lives, but it would do this only for those who would devote themselves to the project wholeheartedly, over a number of years, making full use of their spiritual faculty.

Llull sometimes refers to what he calls a 'transcendent point'. Usually, this means a point at which the soul gains understanding of something that is beyond the scope of ordinary rationality – something of spiritual significance that cannot be explained in terms of everyday reason. It is probably true to say that one needs to attain a transcendent point in order to get the meaning of much that goes on in Llull's Art. But the intellectual and spiritual discipline that is necessary for this will certainly be rewarded.

Further reading:

Doctor Illuminatus: A Ramon Llull Reader, ed. and trans. Anthony Bonner, Princeton University Press, 1993
Amador Vega: *Ramon Llull and the Secret of Life*, trans. J.W. Heisig, Crossroad Publishing Company, 2003
sarah.boss@roehampton.ac.uk

THE RONDANINI PIETÀ

Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475 – 1564)



Michelangelo was one of the three great Masters of the High Renaissance (c. 1500-1520) alongside Leonardo de Vinci and Raphael Sanzio. During his lifetime his contemporaries considered him to be the greatest living artist considered during his lifetime. As such he received one of the most important commissions of his life to decorate the Popes private chapel the Sistine Chapel which he completed between 1508 and 1512.

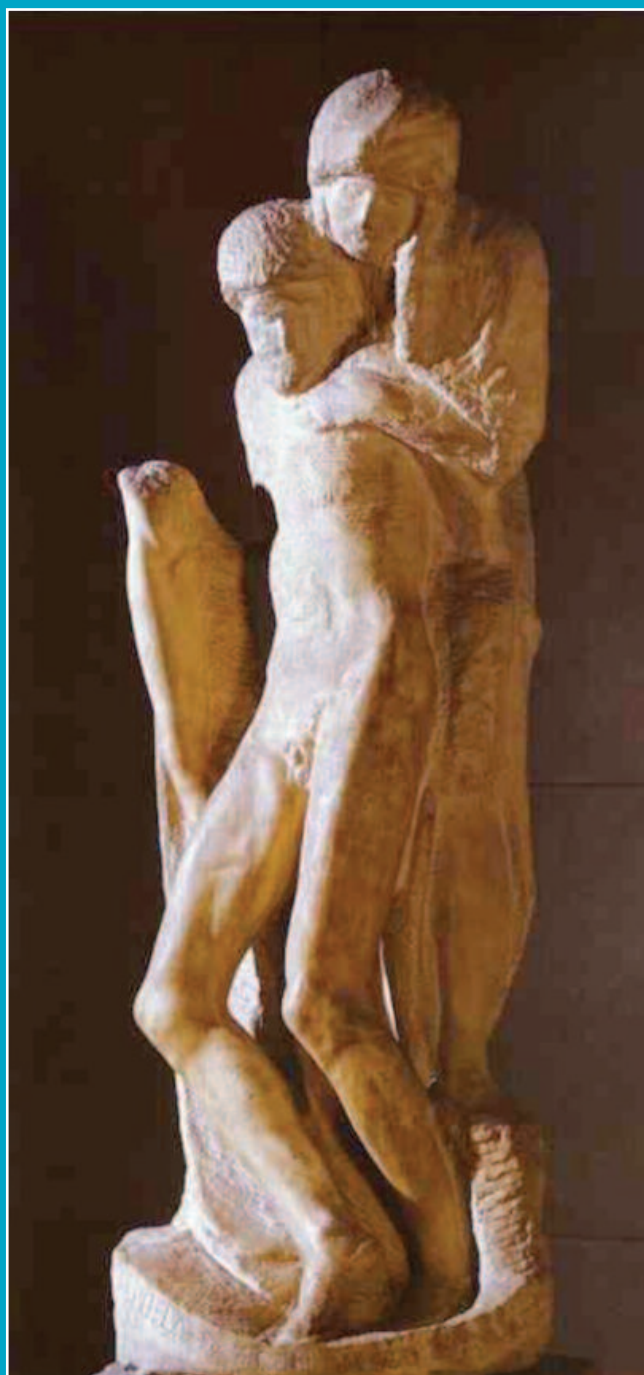
Much later towards the end he became extremely devout and focused all his attention on the approach of his death and the doing of good works to ensure a safe passage into heaven. Here in one of his last sonnets he communicates his deepest feelings with poetic pathos:

*The course of my long life hath reached at last,
In fragile bark o'er a tempestuous sea,
The common harbor, where must rendered be
Account of all the actions of the past.
The impassioned phantasy, that, vague and vast,
Made art an idol and a king to me,
Was an illusion, and but vanity
Were the desires that lured me and harassed.
The dreams of love, that were so sweet of yore,
What are they now, when two deaths may be mine, -
One sure, and one forecasting its alarms?
Painting and sculpture satisfy no more
The soul now turning to the Love Divine,
That opened, to embrace us, on the cross its arms.*

He worked on the Rondanini Pietà for his own tomb from 1550's until his death in 1564. Unfortunately the sculpture wasn't finished in time. It is housed in the Castillo Sforzesco in Milan. No photograph can adequately convey the power and deep sense of sadness and love between the Virgin Mary and her dead son, Jesus Christ. Michelangelo seems to invest his own sadness into the work to create a truly spiritual and transcendental work of art.

As he neared to the time of his death he gradually grew weaker. During these late stages he made a major change to the design. He miscalculated and the changes were so great that he didn't have time to complete the work. What we are left with is poignant and more spiritual image of a mother with her dying son as two abstracted figures who hover in a private and sacred space separate from the rest of the world. It is interesting to compare the two pietas by Michelangelo from two widely differing stages in this life. The inset above was finished in 1499 and is now housed in St Peters Basilica in the Vatican. Compared with the 1564 version it is highly polished and realistically carved.

Synopsis Barry Seabourne and images by courtesy Wikipedia



OBITUARIES

NICHOLAS GOODRICK-CLARKE

15 January 1953 – 29 August 2012



1. The untimely death of Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, at the age of 59, as a result of cancer is a terrible loss. He will be greatly missed, firstly, of course, by Clare Goodrick-Clarke his devoted wife and colleague, by the Staff and Students at the University of Exeter where Nicholas was Professor of Western Esotericism and Director of the Exeter Centre for the Study of Esotericism (EXESESO), and also by his friends amongst whom we would include the Trustees of the Blavatsky Trust.

The relationship between the Trust and Nicholas has its roots in the early years of the new millennium. It had been a few decades beforehand that Geoffrey Farthing in conjunction with Christmas Humphries QC, had founded the Blavatsky Trust, an educational charity, part of the purpose of which is to give Theosophy its rightful place within the world's philosophical traditions. Geoffrey Farthing understood that a proper academic recognition was both justified and necessary, though he initially expressed doubts as to the existence of anyone capable of leading such an enterprise. Within weeks, however, of talks having commenced at Lampeter University, Wales, where the project initially started, Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, an eminently qualified academic and theosophist, emerged. Nicholas proposed a Masters programme under the title 'Western Esotericism' which would include Theosophy alongside the other Western Esoteric Traditions. The project was moved to Exeter University in 2005, where with the financial support of the Blavatsky Trust a Professorship was established. Today we can say, with some justification, that Western Esotericism is a recognised study in its own right, and Nicholas has played an undoubted and significant part in this achievement.

There are numerous warm and heartfelt tributes on the Internet from colleagues and friends within academe. One such can be found at the aptly named Phoenix Rising. A very moving and personal obituary is on the website of the European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism (ESSWE). These tributes recognise Nicholas's devotion, energy, and commitment to bringing Western Esotericism to its rightful place in Academia. From amongst these we repeat some words of Hereward Tilton (University of Exeter) and Wouter Hanegraaff (President of ESSWE), who echo our sentiment that "With his passing we have lost a wise and much-loved teacher, an incisive scholarly mind and a jovial and kind-hearted friend."

Nicholas was author of several books on modern occultism and esotericism. These include *Helena Blavatsky*, one of the Western Esoteric Masters Series and described by a past student as 'the best introduction to Madame Blavatsky currently available.'

It is with a heavy heart that we write this for we have also lost a warm-hearted friend. The words 'gentleman and a scholar' are rather a cliché but they are entirely apt. His kindness, humour, and enthusiasm not only for academic Esotericism but for the philosophy's everyday relation to people, regardless of academic or social standing, was self-evident. He was a tremendously gifted individual but he treated each that he met as his equal. He was a true theosophist.

Our sincerest condolences go to Nicholas' wife, Clare. The best we can do is to remember him and - as has been observed by others on the Internet - we can each play our small part in continuing what he started, each according to our ability. The Trust, and its Trustees, is committed to doing so. May he rest in peace and live on in our memories.

2. To write an obituary which does justice to someone of the stature and manifold human qualities of Professor Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, who died of cancer on 29 August, in Torquay, is a difficult task. To his students and many friends he will be remembered for his warmth and generosity, his great charm, sense of humour and sparkling personality. The world of learning will remember him for his great contribution to the field of Western Esotericism through his many books and through his initiative, with the support of the Blavatsky Trust, in setting up the Exeter Centre for the Study of Esotericism at Exeter

University – EXESES – and the corresponding professorship of which he became the first incumbent. The programme offered by EXESES has made it possible, for the first time, for students all over the world to take a course by distance-learning leading to an MA in the field of Western Esotericism, with the PhD as an additional option. Since the programme began in the autumn of 2005 many students have successfully completed the course and some have gone on to pursue academic careers in the field. All his students will remember him as a great teacher.

Nicholas always seemed to be destined for an academic career. Born in 1953, he was educated at Lancing College and Bristol University where he obtained a triple first with distinction in German, politics and philosophy. Moving to Oxford, he took a DPhil in 1978 on the modern occult revival and Theosophy at the end of the 19th century. His thesis which later became his book *The Occult Roots of Nazism* was first published in 1985 and has been continuously in print ever since, and it has been translated into twelve languages. Prior to taking up a university post, he worked as a banker, and a highly successful fund-raiser for Oxford University. After a brief collaboration with the University of Lampeter, he was appointed to the newly created Chair of Western Esotericism at Exeter University in 2005.

Today esotericism is becoming increasingly firmly established as a field of academic study, with a growing number of university programmes devoted to it. Among those who brought this about Professor Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke stands high. He will always be an inspiration to those who have known him and we owe him an enormous debt.

MARLENE BROWN

An Appreciation

Marlene made a huge contribution to local and national Theosophical endeavours and her loss is a blow to her many friends and admirers as well as the Society.

Marlene was a President at Basingstoke Lodge for many years after it was initially established by Helen Gething. Marlene thoroughly enjoyed the friendly informality of the group.

She also an enthusiastic member of the Camberley Lodge and was librarian, a committee member and general helper in any way needed. She and her husband Peter also served on the Southern Federation and they were familiar faces at many Theosophical gatherings over the past twenty years, particularly enjoying the Summer and European Schools and gatherings of the Northern and Southern Federation at Tekels Park.

Peter and Marlene also led a Thursday meditation group at Tekels Park for many years and were part of an Intuition Group of the Southern Federation that was held at No 17 in Tekels Park.

She visited Naarden with fellow Theosophists and her great interest in the work and life of St Francis of Assisi lead her to compile a fascinating and informative lecture of his life and work.

Marlene was not only highly respected by all who met her; she was loved dearly by friends and family. She was devastated by the loss of her beloved husband Peter two years ago and gradually suffered ill health, finally being cared for by her son Martin. Marlene was a Cornish woman who met Peter in the West Country while he was serving in the Merchant Navy. They married in Cornwall but went to London where Peter worked as an engineer for a Swiss company. It was then they became aware of the TS and began attending meetings at headquarters. When they moved to Hook in Hampshire, Marlene went back to nursing and eventually became senior sister at Odiham Cottage Hospital.

She had many interests and was a talented quilt maker, showing her work at exhibitions. She leaves two daughters and her son.

Marlene was a long-term member of Basingstoke Lodge, and had been serving as its President for several years until she became seriously ill. She had particular empathy for Saint Francis of Assisi. This was apparent not only in a talk which she gave about Saint Francis but also in a certain heart quality which she evinced throughout her time as President and which left its mark on the Lodge itself. She was an enthusiastic member of the Lodge's Secret Doctrine study group, and in fact Marlene was someone in whom qualities of heart and mind were well-balanced.

SUMMER SCHOOL 2012

Fiona Hughes

I was very apprehensive before attending my first Summer School at the University of Warwick but need not have worried. Everyone was very friendly and welcoming and I soon felt at ease. The lighting of the candle of harmony every morning and the short reading and meditation were very calming and set the tone for the day. The theme of the school this year was 'The Olympic Vision', very topical as the Games were taking place during that week (the huge outdoor television screen on the university campus showing the Games was a bonus). I found the talks very inspiring and thought-provoking and learnt so much from the study groups and workshops. There was a good variety to choose from, although difficult to decide as I would have liked to have done all of them. In between there was plenty of time to chat and make new friends and to take advantage of the surroundings of the University grounds with its beautiful landscaping, lakes and wildlife, very conducive to thought and reflection. One phrase that stuck in my mind came from Teresa Keast's talk on 'Right Relations' - 'love is the experience of connection'. This seems to me to sum up the summer school experience, the feeling of well-being that comes from being with like-minded friends in a loving and accepting environment. I returned home fired with enthusiasm to keep the theosophical flame burning. Thank you all, I will be back, and to anyone reading this who is thinking about attending, I would say 'just do it, you won't regret it'.

E. Barbara Winter

It was most fortuitous that this year's Summer School was held at Warwick University, as it is virtually on my doorstep. I was pleased to be able to attend for the first time, at least for part of the course. The varied and packed programme offered something for everyone in a convivial atmosphere.

The Blavatsky lecture, delivered by Erica Georgiades, illuminated the idea of universal 'unity' by comparing Hellenic perception of 'brotherhood' with theosophical concepts of individual and global interconnectedness.

In another talk, an analysis of the ancient Greek athlete's aim of physical perfection linked to the cultivation of virtues highlighted the importance of creating a balance between outer and inner attainments.

One day, as the sun beamed down, it was great to see a group enjoying practising Chi Kung outdoors in one of the lush green spaces of the campus.

On Wednesday, Wayne Gatfield's citations from philosophers' reflections and his recitation of poetic verse cast a spell over the audience. On the last afternoon, Jenny Baker took us on a three thousand year journey, comprised of examples of the quest to understand the essence of human existence, while tracing the roots of Western Mysticism back to the ancient Egyptian Mysteries.

The final evening proved to be an upbeat social event that included poetry readings as well as musical and singing performances, drawing the week to a fitting end.

LONDON PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

JANUARY - MARCH 2013

SUNDAYS (courses, lectures & workshops)

50 GLOUCESTER PLACE, LONDON W1U 8EA

Theme: THEOSOPHY: THE UTOPIAN DREAM

*All 6 pm lectures can be ordered after the event on CD or audio cassette from Barry Thompson –
books@theosoc.org.uk or 020 7563 9816*

*Please note: The opinions of the speakers do not necessarily represent the views of the
Foundation for Theosophical Studies nor the Theosophical Society*

Sunday 20 January, 2 pm

THE ART OF TAROT AND SCIENCE OF ASTROLOGY

Israel Ajose

For thousands of years there has been an undeniably powerful link between tarot and astrology. In this workshop, Israel Ajose will show how the symbols and imagery of the tarot intertwine with the archetypes of the 12 Zodiac signs and planets, and demonstrate how the planets and signs of the horoscope correspond with each of the tarot cards. Students will hopefully gain a deeper insight into the tarot, and as a result experience an enriched life. The presentation should be beneficial to all - from beginners to advanced, enabling each to give provide readings for oneself, friends and family. It's a case of where the insight of the tarot cards meets the wisdom of the cosmos.

Israel Ajose was born into a family with a long and deep history of spiritual readers and esoteric works. In India he learned Vedic Astrology, in Israel he studied Kabbalistic Astrology, and in his native Nigeria, he was initiated into the priesthood/Shamanic ways of life. In London, he gained his D. Psych. Astrol and honours in medical astrology. For the past decade he has practiced Tarot in conjunction with Astrology.

£15, £10 concessions

Sunday 20 January, 6 pm

EVOLUTIONARY THEOSOPHY: 2012 PERSPECTIVE

Mike Hill

Even if 2012 never was not the apocalyptic year predicted by some it has been, nevertheless, a time of great change. Theosophy itself rests securely on the concept of the precession of the equinoxes with the corollary that planet Earth and its inhabitants are part of an evolving phenomenon. This talk considers the shattering effect economic and political chaos will have on long standing

institutions over the next few years and examines the role discoveries Quantum Physics and developments in Artificial Intelligence will play in ushering in a major shift in consciousness. Mike Hill is President of Tunbridge Wells Theosophical Lodge.

£7, £5 concessions

Sunday 27 January, 6 pm

THE KEYS TO THE MYSTERIES

Michael van Buren

The secret mysteries exist hidden in outer religious forms, yet share common themes, symbols and methods. This talk will explore some of these universal themes in antiquity and the inner (esoteric) meaning of the Christian story. Michael van Buren is a consultant psychiatrist working in a practice in the West Country. Michael joined the Theosophical Society in 1975 and is, at present, Bishop in charge of the Liberal Catholic Church Grail Community in north Devon.

£7, £5 concessions

Sunday 3 February, 6 pm

THEOSOPHY: THE UTOPIAN IDEAL.

Colyn Boyce

"Unity is a fact of nature" so we are told in core theosophical teachings. In the human realm this manifests as the ideal of universal brotherhood, where every man is my brother and every woman is my sister. In view of the current conflict unfolding in Syria, one might question how such a brotherhood is ever possible. It might be helpful to take to heart the observation by the famous Russian writer, Alexander Solzhenitsyn that 'as long as man is at war with himself, there will not be peace in the world'. Colyn Boyce has been a member of the Theosophical Society for more than 40 years. He is Office Administrator of the Foundation for Theosophical Studies and for 25 years was its publicist.

£7, £5 concession

Sunday 10 February, 6 pm

REMOTE VIEWING OF DISTANT EVENTS: IN SCIENCE, ESPIONAGE and THE OCCULT.

Michael Gwyn Hocking

Expert level Remote Viewing involves a controlled vivid-daydreaming state which cannot be dismissed as hallucinations. It has provided useful information in chemistry and physics and has also been successfully used by the CIA and others to obtain covert intelligence information. This talk describes two easy but unconventional methods, which give a seamless transition from waking to a self-conscious dream-state suitable for Remote Viewing. Evidence for the existence of God will also be presented. Such evidence is deduced from a significant number of people who recall living in previous lives in other countries and different races, which avoids the "cellular memory" alternative theory that such memories can be dismissed as inherited from their parents at birth. Michael Gwyn Hocking was Professor of Materials Chemistry at Imperial College, University of London until 2002. He has published 150 scientific papers, and a major reference book.

£7, £5 concessions

Sunday 17 February, 2 pm

ACCESS YOUR INNER LIGHT

Dr Susan Jamieson

'The Lightdoctor', Dr Susan Jamieson, will explain the ancient healing theories, and teach a series of gentle exercises that use movement, breath and colours to help participants to connect to the innate energy of the Earth and boost the flow of Chi to five key organs in their bodies: the heart, lungs, spleen, kidneys and liver. As well as energizing our vital organs, this workshop will teach us how to process emotions such as anger or grief. This is the subject of Susan's latest DVD, elements of which will be highlighted in the workshop. Further details of Dr Jamieson's work can be seen on www.lightdoctor.net. Susan is a doctor, Findhorn Press author, and an integrative health specialist. Having worked in the far East for 24 years, she is fluent in blending Western and Eastern Philosophies.

£15, £10 concessions

Arranged by the Theosophical Society

Sunday 17 February, 6 pm

WE'VE LOST THE LIGHT

Dr Susan Jamieson

Tonight's presentation is a journey through ancient philosophies and spiritualities that were better acquainted with the reality of Light than we are today. This is the light of our beings, our eternal soul, secrets of life and death which explain why we are here – mysteries that we humans have sought to explain for millennia.

Modern science is finally catching up with the ancient world of Light: observing that - radiating thousands of photons per second - the heart emanates many times

more light than the brain, and being, as physicists describe it 'like a super black hole'. This talk will include some experiential work on embodying Light. Susan Jamieson is a physician, specializing in combining modern medicine with ancient healing traditions. She is author of Findhorn Press's '*Medical to Mystical, Bring Light Into Your Life*'.

£7, £5 concessions

Sunday 24 February, 6 pm

THE DRAMA OF DUALITY IN THE TAROT AND SHAKESPEARE

Clemens Brenan

This colourful talk shows a remarkable correlation between Shakespeare's vision of human nature and that of the Tarot. Eleven spectrums of duality make up the backbone of the Tarot de Marseille, juxtaposing complementary poles of life experience. Each spectrum is confirmed, explored and thrillingly dramatized in one of the seminal plays of Shakespeare. The interplay of masculine and feminine qualities in the story of a dynamic character such as Hamlet, Cleopatra, Othello or Juliet forms more than a theme or motif. It becomes a fateful driving force of their destiny. Learn from the Tarot and Shakespeare how these dualities seek to unite and resolve themselves. And how they drive our own personal story. Clemens Brenan is a professional Tarot reader and a lover of literature, cinema and theatre.

£7, £5 concessions

Sunday 3 March, 2 pm

MAGIC, THEOSOPHY AND QABBALAH

Finian Heavey and Sally Singer-Fraser

This workshop aims to answer comprehensively two essential questions: what is Magic and what is the Qabbalah? The afternoon explores the two forms of Qabbalah – the Jewish and Hermetic and focuses on the basics: including the Hebrew alphabet, and the Tree of Life diagram. Qabbalah is concerned, in the main, with four main elements: God, the Creation of Angels and Man and Man's destiny, the nature of the Soul and the esoteric power of the Hebrew letters as magical tools. The workshop will examine the Qabbalah as a part of the Ancient Wisdom, which is Theosophy and consider the Qabbalah as it relates to H. P. Blavatsky and "The Secret Doctrine." We will look at contrasts between the Book of Genesis and the Book of Dzyan and see how the idea of Qabbalah as a 'Yoga for the West' links with Eastern ideas of yoga and Spiritual psychology. Finian Heavey has been a student of the Ancient Mysteries for over 40 years and holds a degree in Comparative Religion. Finian trained as a Scientist (Applied Chemistry). Sally Singer-Fraser has studied Hinduism and Vaishnavism for many years and in recent times has become interested in the "old ways" folk tradition.

£15, £10 concessions

Arranged by the Theosophical Society

Sunday 3 March, 6 pm

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY GOD?

Finian Heavey

What is the Nature of your God? Is he or she, personal or Impersonal? Does God work within or beyond History? Is God a god of the Tribe or Universal? This evening we investigate Eastern and Western Ideas and examine Avatars in the East with the 'Incarnation' in the West. The teachings of Lord Krishna, Christ and the 'Noble Silence' of the Buddha are contrasted and Judaism and the Dharma are compared.

The views of H. P. Blavatsky in the Secret Doctrine about 'God' are explored and contrasted with those of Annie Besant and Alice Bailey, considering the concepts of The Heart and the Monad and the 'god' within. The President of Nottingham Theosophical Lodge, Finian Heavey holds a degree from London University in Education and Comparative Religion

£7, £5 concessions

Sunday 10 March, 6 pm

THE UNIVERSE WITHIN - MIRRORING THE UNIVERSE WITHOUT ARE CROP CIRCLES THE INTELLIGENT LINK?

June Kidd

The talk is based in part on the book by Vera Stanley Alder, "From the Mundane to the Magnificent". When your body is injured, white cells (the guys in the white hats) come to help healing. We do not hear the s. o. s. that must flash throughout the body. We are not aware of the universe within answering the call. So imagine if planet Earth (think of it a huge cell in the universe in which it spins) abused beyond endurance, has sent out a cry for help and we, as theosophists with broad minds, are some of the guys, in the white hats, here to help steer mankind out of victim mode. Crop circles; many of which appear in broad daylight, are more than stunning works of 'art'. They should be viewed as an intelligent, not invasive, way to encourage humans to lift their eyes to the heavens and remind us that we are not alone - and that we are all co-creators of the quality of life on this planet. Author and international lecturer.

£7, £5 concessions

Sunday 17 March, 6 pm

SHAMANISM AND THE ROOTS OF THEOSOPHY.

Victor Ball

Writing in Isis Unveiled of her encounter with a Tartar Shaman, Madame Blavatsky describes Shamanism as 'that strange and most despised of all surviving religions - "Spirit-worship... or belief in the immortality of the souls . . . a practical blending of the visible with the invisible world'. The oldest known spiritual discipline in the world, Shamanism utilises ancient practices of altered states of consciousness to contact the gods and spirits of the 'other world' and bring their blessings to mankind. In recent times there has been a resurgence of interest in

'the way of the Shaman' and many 'New Age' groups have incorporated techniques and exercises drawn from the ancient tradition into their practice. Victor Ball teaches Philosophy and Religious Studies and is currently President of the Newcastle upon Tyne Lodge.

£7, £5 concessions

Sunday 24 March, 6 pm

A PLANETARY AWAKENING.

Kathy Newburn

Many people understand that we are passing through a period of tremendous change and upheaval in our world. This talk will focus on helping us understand what is going on, by looking at the deeper, subjective factors underlying outer events and preparing us for a planetary expansion of consciousness. We will explore the importance of this period in planetary history and what we can do to contribute towards the process of change. Topics considered include the Aquarian Age, the planetary centres, the teachings of esoteric astrology, the seven rays, spiritual initiation, and the techniques of raja yoga meditation. Kathy Newburn worked for many years at the Lucis Trust and the Seven Ray Institute in New York. She now lectures in the US, Europe and South America to bring knowledge of the Ageless Wisdom to wider public notice.

£7, £5 concessions

BLAVATSKY LODGE OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Thursdays 7 - 9 pm:

31 January

THE ARCHETYPAL COSMOS

Keiron LeGrice

The modern world is passing through a time of critical change on many levels: cultural, political, ecological and spiritual. We are witnessing the decline and dissolution of the old order, the tumult and uncertainty of a new birth. Keiron Le Grice positions the new discipline of archetypal astrology at the centre of an emerging world view that reunifies psyche and cosmos, spirituality and science, mythology and metaphysics, and enables us to see mythic gods, heroes and themes in a fresh light. Keiron Le Grice, Ph.D., is a guest lecturer in Jungian and Archetypal Studies at the Pacifica Graduate Institute, California, and adjunct faculty in the Philosophy, Cosmology, and Consciousness programme at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco. He is the founding editor of Archai: The Journal of Archetypal Cosmology.

£5, £4 concessions

INTRODUCTORY COURSE ON THE AGELESS WISDOM

Sunday afternoons at 4.45 – 5.45 pm
with Edward Archer

THEOSOPHY: HIGHWAY TO SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

20 January – 24 March

Informal sessions in which the basic teachings of the Divine Wisdom are explored and discussed. Everybody on this planet is in the Great School of Life - of spiritual development. Over the weeks we shall look at the great hidden truths which make sense of our lives and which gives them purpose. This is a basic grounding in the Eternal Mysteries, and it has absolutely no strings attached! The book *The Key to Theosophy* is recommended for newcomers.

Leader: Edward Archer
Free admission

WEEKNIGHT THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY MEETINGS

50 GLOUCESTER PLACE, LONDON W1U 8EA

ISIS UNVEILED Study & Discussion Group MONDAYS 7.00 – 9.00 pm

21 January – 25 March

Isis Unveiled, published in 1877, is H.P. Blavatsky's first major work on Theosophy, examining religion and science in the light of Western and Oriental ancient wisdom and occult and spiritualistic phenomena. This study group will systematically read and discuss *Isis Unveiled* - a key text for all those who are seeking spiritual knowledge.

Leader: George Wood is a former teacher of Religious Education who has regularly led courses on Gnostic Christianity.

Free Admission but donations welcomed

THE SECRET DOCTRINE

22 JANUARY – 26 MARCH

TUESDAYS 7.00 – 8.30 pm

Leader: Victor Hangya

In the midst of today's materialism and the ruins of old religions join us in our 'mining' of the perennial wisdom. Our sourcebook is the Secret Doctrine, which claims 'logical coherence and consistency' and should be treated as a 'working hypothesis'. The SD sheds light on some of life's greatest mysteries.

Dhyana Centre of the Theosophical Society

THE JOY OF MEDITATION

Tuesdays 7 - 9 pm:

8 January – 19 February; 26 February – 9 April

Sundays 11 am – 4 pm

27 January, 17 March

The Dhyana Centre holds regular introductory courses for beginners on weekdays, dovetailing with weekend intensives that cover the same ground in a truncated form. Courses teach the theory and practice of meditation as a spiritual discipline.

Leader: Alan Perry. Admission free, donations welcome.

For details of retreats and other events, go to Error! Hyperlink reference not valid. or info@dhyanacentre.org.

THEOSOPHICAL GALLERY TOURS

With George McNamara

London's Galleries and Museums are a storehouse of the world's culture, much of which has meaning from a spiritual perspective. Though I am not an expert in any of these topics, I hope that a small group can pool our understanding and sensitivity to art and history (and have a nice cup of coffee too)

I am leading another short series of visits to galleries for members of the TS, enquirers or friends (or indeed anyone interested in "cultural studies") to investigate the following ideas:-

We will meet at 2pm at the relevant main entrance. For dates of meetings and more information please **phone George McNamara on 078 8181 3242** or email George on **george@whatever-will.be**.

I sought my soul but
my soul I could not see.

I sought my God
but my God eluded me.

I sought my brother
and I found all three.

Anon

THE FOUNDATION FOR THEOSOPHICAL STUDIES

The Foundation is an educational charity and its aim is to:

"Help people understand and discover the essential truths at the heart of all philosophy, science and spirituality, especially the fundamental unity of all people".

As well as holding a regular programme of activities at our London headquarters, the Foundation runs a National Speakers Scheme which throughout the year supports an active programme of lectures and workshops around the country.

An annual Summer School is held during August and details of this event and other activities outside of London are available at www.theosophy.org.uk

The Foundation is able to provide some bursaries to support individuals to attend theosophical activities and further information is available on the website. Please apply to the bursar@theosophy.org.uk or ring 020 7563 9817.

If you are interested in hosting an event and would like a list of approved speakers, or for further information about the Foundation and theosophy, please email: office@theosophy.org.uk telephone: 020 7563 9817 or write to 50 Gloucester Place London W1U 8EA.

The Foundation was founded by the Theosophical Society in England in 1992 and it continues to be supported by the Society through annual gift aid. Both organisations hold theosophical events at 50 Gloucester Place.

If you have enjoyed this issue of "Esoterica" please sign up to our mailing list.

Here is a selection of talks across the country supported by the Foundation of Theosophical Studies

SPEAKER'S DIARY from January 2013

BIRMINGHAM

A MAGNIFICENT OBSESSION

Maureen Atkinson

Sunday 27 January 2013, 4 pm

How common are paranormal experiences and powers? What do they tell us, and what lies behind and beyond them? Psychic faculties are often thought of as extensions to the normal powers, but are better viewed as signposts to something far more important.

Robert Woolley is Vice-President of the Northampton branch of the Theosophical Society

52 Tamar Drive, Castle Bromwich, Birmingham B36 0ST

Details: Carmel, 0121 240 5912 or tsoffice3@aol.com

BIRMINGHAM

ENERGY FIELDS AND OCCULT POWERS

Donald Atkinson

Sunday 27 January, 6 pm

How common are paranormal experiences and powers? What do they tell us, and what lies behind and beyond

them? Psychic faculties are often thought of as extensions to the normal powers, but are better viewed as signposts to something far more important.

Robert Woolley is Vice-President of the Northampton branch of the Theosophical Society

52 Tamar Drive, Castle Bromwich, Birmingham B36 0ST

Details: Carmel, 0121 240 5912

or tsoffice3@aol.com

SHIPLEY

IT'S ALL IN THE ETHERIC

Teresa Keast

Saturday 9 February. 2.30 p.m.

An in depth exploration into the nature of our Etheric energy body, allowing insight into the chakra energy dynamics that play out through our personality, and reflect our soul expression. Through understanding our own energy centres and their unique vibration, we come to understand the energetic en-rapport we experience with others, within groups, between world

servers that enables us to explore a vision of where this might potentially take us.

**Room 2, Shipley Library, 2 Wellcroft,
Shipley BD18 3QH. Tel: *Atma*, 01274 598455
or info@ts-bradford.org.uk**

DURHAM

The Face of the Divine – Science and Spirituality Explored

Susan Bayliss

Saturday 2 March, 2 pm

Mystics and deep spiritual seekers of all religions, or of no religion, tell us of an absorption into an experience which brings knowledge love and truth and oneness. This reflective talk explores the role of near-death experience in our awakening to the higher life and takes a journey through the some of the latest scientific research. Some fascinating experiences of enlightenment help us to consider what relevance such concepts may have for us. These can help to deepen our spiritual practice and open our conscious awareness of the world around us.

**Durham Centre for Theosophical Studies
Shakespeare Hall, North Road,
Durham City DH1 4SQ.**

Tel: Jim Blakey 0191 386 0492

Email: Durhamcentr4ts@btinternet.com

BOURNEMOUTH

AGNI YOGA & SHAMBHALA:

THE MYSTICAL WORLD OF

HELENA ROERICH

Robert Kitto

Saturday 2 March, 2.15 pm

Helena Roerich was a remarkable Russian writer, thinker and scientist . . . and the inspiration of her legendary husband - the painter and humanist Nicholas Roerich. Together they developed a system of living ethics known as Agni Yoga, which is based on Theosophy, and the writings of Helena Blavatsky. Their speculation about mystical Shambhala, Maitreya, and an occult hierarchy are ideas that resonate with many of today's spiritually minded.

**Cobham Lecture Theatre,
Bournemouth University,
Talbot Rise,
Bournemouth.**

Details: 0800 612 7282.

Visit: www.bournemouthsociety.org.uk

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All sizes are approximate and may vary slightly depending on the design and the overall format of the magazine and other material published.

There may be a small extra charge if any advertisement presented for publication needs extra design work and imagery. Advertisers will be informed of this before any advert is placed in the magazine.

Please note that the rates quoted may be revised at any time but advertisers who have booked and paid in advance will not be affected by any price rises to advertising rates.

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FOUNDATION FOR THEOSOPHICAL STUDIES

Headquarters: 50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA

Telephone: 020 7563 9817 Website: www.theosoc.org.uk Email: office@theosoc.org.uk

ESOTERICA IS PUBLISHED BY THE FOUNDATION FOR THEOSOPHICAL STUDIES

Editor: Eric McGough Managing Editor: Barry Seabourne Events Editor: Colyn Boyce

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Colyn Boyce – Administration Officer: Telephone 020 7563 9817

For lettings, membership, administration enquiries please telephone Tuesday – Friday; 2-6.30 pm
or email: office@theosoc.org.uk

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Barry Thompson – Librarian: Telephone 020 7563 9816

Library and Bookshop opening times: Monday – Thursday 2-6.30 pm
Special appointments may be arranged – please phone the Librarian for further information

CONTRIBUTIONS: Articles, letters, obituaries and other material on the Ageless Wisdom, spirituality, philosophy, science, obituaries on long standing theosophists who have passed on can be sent to the Editor.

All material submitted is on condition that this material can be accepted or rejected in part or in full, or it can be amended or sections deleted on grounds of content, space and suitability without any reason given. Any manuscript sent by post cannot be returned. Material can be emailed.

Please note there is no guarantee that an article, information, obituaries or other material will be included.

Please ensure that any material you may submit is subject to the above conditions

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ARTICLES, ADVERTS AND OTHER MATERIAL FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF ESOTERICA SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO:

EDITOR, ESOTERICA 50 GLOUCESTER PLACE, LONDON W1U 8EA

OR emailed to office@theosoc.org.uk

No later than 1ST FEBRUARY 2013

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Thank you.

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Printed by Premier Print & Direct Mail Group, London.

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