

Arcane School Conference

London

3-4 June, 2023

Keynote:

*“Let the group affirm the Will as an expression of the
Law of sacrifice”*





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Saturday Public Session – 3 June

2:00-5:30pm BST

Christine Morgan

Hello everyone and it's a pleasure to welcome those of you present at the venue, as well as those who are joining us online today. Fresh from the uplifting Geneva conference last weekend and the New York conference earlier in May, we have another opportunity to reflect on the keynote "*Let the group affirm the Will as an expression of the Law of Sacrifice*". The keynote not only focuses us on the true nature of sacrifice which is bliss when the will-to-good flows through us, but to understand that it's a progressive process of group realisation and synthesis. While it's a long-term goal, we know that sacrifice or whole-making sacredness, as well as renunciation of everything that holds us to the world of forms, is becoming a vital process for the survival of humanity as a whole. The Will is a needed driving force in our spiritual lives; for its not enough to imagine and to wish things to be different, but we are asked to mobilise our higher will to touch and stir consciousness into action in line with higher purposes.

2023 is a milestone in the life of the Arcane School which was established by Alice Bailey in New York 100 years ago. She laid down principles that it should always abide by, while recognizing that it will naturally evolve and change. She was insistent that meditations and esoteric study be grounded in service and in the application of the Laws and principles of the soul in everyday life. Today this has continued to be an integral part of the school's expression – studying the problems of humanity for example and the service of the Plan is deeply embedded in the curriculum and lives of many students. And the School today represents a culturally diverse group of people which further adds to the richness of its group life.

This weekend we have a rich and varied program with discussions ranging from the Nature of the Will through to Pathways to Spiritual Governance, Sacred Childhood and Education and imaginings on The Art of Relinquishment; the Rosy Cross, the symbol of the Law of Sacrifice followed by Sacrifice and the Will of the People...along with visualisations and meditations. It's heartening to know that although we do suffer from continual attachment to the forms we love and cling on to, the true nature of Sacrifice is sublime – a blissful participation in the redemptive processes knowing them to be a sacred celebration of life if we can summon the spiritual will to counter the selfishness, resistance to change and sharing which is everywhere to be found.

One way we can begin to do this is to understand the power of invocation, and today is World Invocation Day, a day when we join with thousands of people of goodwill, to sound the Great Invocation with its power to invoke Light to reveal the way, Love and Enlightened Purpose to guide us. As we say the words with understanding we know that divine energies are freely available to be evoked on behalf of humanity.

We are also working in the joyful releasing energies of the Gemini Full moon, also known as the Christ's Festival, Festival of Humanity, Festival of Goodwill. It's a chance for us to see that despite the severe crises being experienced, we can also see that humanity is stirring and many are responding to the soul's call. It can be seen in the fight for the priceless gift of freedom fought in many countries, and of goodwill in the many initiatives to heal the environment and to lift hearts and minds closer to reality.

Let's begin though by saying together "The Affirmation of the Disciple"

*I am a point of light within a greater Light.
I am a strand of loving energy within the stream of love divine.
I am a point of sacrificial Fire, focussed within the fiery Will of God.
And thus I stand.*

*I am a way by which men may achieve.
I am a source of strength, enabling them to stand.
I am a beam of light, shining upon their way.
And thus I stand.*

*And standing thus revolve
And tread this way the ways of men,
And know the ways of God.
And thus I stand.*

OM

* * * * *

The Nature of the Will

Anne Woodward

Invictus

*Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.
In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.*

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

“What is the WILL? Can ‘exact science’ tell? What is the nature of that intelligent, intangible, and powerful something which reigns supreme over all inert matter? The great Universal Idea willed, and the cosmos sprang into existence. I will, and my limbs obey.”¹

This quotation of Blavatsky reminded me immediately of these poetic lines from *De Rerum Natura* (*On the nature of Things*) by the Epicurean poet Lucretius (1st century BC) in which he refutes the Stoic position that all life is strictly determined:

If all motion is always one long chain, and new motion arises out of the old in order invariable [...] whence comes this free will in living creatures all over the earth, whence I say is this will wrested from the fates by which we proceed whither pleasure leads each, swerving our motions not at fixed times and fixed places, but just where our mind has taken us?²

Both Helena Blavatsky and Lucretius refer to the two major aspects of the Will (that is, the source of all being):

- 1) First aspect: Its universal ‘Nature’ or ontology. What is this Will that creates life and somehow explains why there is something and not nothing?

¹ H. P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled* Vol I, p. 144

² De Rerum Natira 2:251: and 2:257:

and

- 2) Second aspect: Its ethics, that is, its presence and guidance inside us, giving us a sense of good and evil and therefore a moral responsibility. At the same time, the dynamic of the will within ourselves can also be described as the urge towards freedom and power. 'I will and my limbs obey'.

This last experience is our starting point on the way to freedom. Lucretius contrasts the 'innata potestas' (inborn power) in all living creatures with the external forces of fate and 'chance', the term which Epicurus (4th and 3^d cent. BC) used to qualify the original source of existence. He used this term not so much to explain what the Nature of being was, but more to make sure that it was a 'free' source and not dependent on Fate or on fixed natural laws.

The so called 'free will' that we all experience is not a phenomenon that somehow falls outside the laws of nature but is the very essence of our being. And even if some philosophers and scientists have argued that the 'free will' is an illusion (that is, they claim that our will is as determined by the laws of nature as all other things are), we do experience that we can direct our will and realise that our power and freedom depend on it. What all philosophies and spiritual systems seem to have in common is that they show us a road to freedom. The Will of God inside us, one could say, is the will to freedom. In the words of Albert Einstein:

"I am a determinist. As such, I do not believe in free will. The Jews believe in free will. They believe that man shapes his own life. I reject that doctrine philosophically. In that respect I am not a Jew... I believe with Schopenhauer: We can do what we wish, but we can only wish what we must. Practically, I am, nevertheless, compelled to act as if freedom of the will existed. If I wish to live in a civilized community, I must act as if man as a responsible being... I am enough of an artist to draw freely from the imagination. Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world."³

Clearly, the question 'what is the nature of the Will' is the most necessary and fundamental question we can ask. And indeed, philosophers, artists, scientists, theologians and spiritual thinkers alike have pondered this question and formulated innumerable answers, often seemingly contradictory, such as:

- 1) The Will is the dynamic of an intelligent and benevolent Spirit or God (Stoics, Christianity)
- or
- 2) the Will is the uncaused and unplanned immanent motion in all things (Epicurus, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche)

and

- 1) God is pure spirit; the physical world is a reflection or emanation. (Plato, Plotinus)
- or

³ Albert Einstein, from an interview with George Sylvester Viereck in 1929.

2) God is transcendent, created the world, but is separate from inert matter (St. Augustine, Descartes, most religions).

and

1) God is eternal and immutable. (Spinoza, Aristotle)

or

2) God is evolving. (Pythagoras, Hegel)

The amazing thing is that in the works of both the Tibetan and Blavatsky all these seemingly contradictory ideas are integrated and synthesized. It was, amongst others, Spinoza, who said that if one wants to find the truth, one must focus on what things (beings and ideas) have in common and not on how they differ. And that is exactly what the teachings of the Tibetan and Blavatsky seem to do.

To understand the nature of the Will is thus vitally important for everyone because it links metaphysics with ethics and spirituality, and vice versa.

It concerns the three interconnected life questions which Immanuel Kant so powerfully formulated:

- 1) What can I know?
- 2) What must I do?
- 3) What may I hope?

The history of philosophy can certainly be qualified as a continuous attempt to understand the nature of the Will and its consequence for our behaviour. We can only learn what the good and blissful life is when we begin to understand the universal dynamics of the divine. In the ancient times, philosophy included religion, theology, science and psychology. The most fundamental assumption, which most pre-Socratic thinkers as well as Socrates himself, Plato, Aristotle and their followers shared, is that mindful consciousness (*nous*, often translated as intellect) is in existence prior to the physical realm. Thus: Mind before and over Matter. Although the Stoics held that matter and mind were inseparably intertwined, they still believed that it was the active principle of God, namely intelligence, that sets the passive aspect, matter, in motion.

After the establishing of the Christian Church and during the ensuing 'Middle Ages', philosophy (scholastic) was based on the dogmas of the Christian religion. Christian philosophers such as St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas 'proved' in many ways the actual existence and nature of God and the world as being a creation of His Will.

Then, when the findings of science began to conflict with the religious dogmas, important philosophers such as Descartes and Spinoza wanted to bridge the gap between the truths of science and religion. Descartes attempted to build his philosophy on his own indisputable experience, 'I think, therefore I am', but soon had to introduce God as a creator to escape a total 'solipsism' (the idea that only one's mind is certain to exist) and to guarantee the 'reality' of the world. Spinoza took things further by changing the concept of 'God' and his Will by equating God with Nature and

the Will with the dynamic laws of that nature. For him, God is immanent in all things, as some mystical philosophers such as Giordano Bruno had already said. Nevertheless, God is the Law, and to lead a good life, we must live in harmony with that Law.

With Kant and the German Idealists, such as Schelling and Hegel, a new era began. Kant showed us that we see the world and ourselves solely through the filters of our own mind (space, time, causality, etc.) and therefore cannot know the ultimate reality: 'Das Ding an Sich' (the thing in itself). To live justly, we therefore need an unshakeable 'categorical imperative,' as he called it, very similar to the Christian imperative, 'Love God with all your heart and your neighbour as yourself'.

After that, such philosophers as Schopenhauer and Nietzsche described the Will as the blind 'Will to Power' and how the only escape to this egoistic and destructive Will would be Art (the imagination). Nevertheless, their moral imperatives still sound very familiar: Schopenhauer - 'see yourself in everyone (*tat twam asi*) and thus have compassion' or Nietzsche - 'do only those things of which you could wish them to recur for ever'.

A most interesting development came with the ideas of Schelling and Hegel, namely that The Divine Will is the Will to Evolve. The idea of Evolution as the drive behind all beings, including God, has only been broadly developed since the 18th and 19th centuries, although hinted at by such esoteric writers as Meister Eckhart and Giordano Bruno. The German philosopher Friedrich Schelling was, arguably, the first to base his whole philosophy on an evolving deity. He stated that God was longing to know Himself in a more conscious way and that He, so to speak, used the minds of humans to do this. George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel further developed this idea into a complete system of synthesis that was supposed to represent the goal - and end - of philosophy itself. The Tibetan, in Alice Bailey's writings, gives perhaps the most elaborate and satisfying descriptions of God as an evolving entity, and of man's responsibility to allow this evolution to take place:

'The best minds of this age are only just beginning to see the first dim ray of light which is piercing this glamour, and serving first of all to reveal the fact of illusion. Through the light thus cast, the following truth may stand revealed to those who have the expectant attitude and the open mind: Deity itself is on the road towards perfection.'⁴

'The evolutionary process covers all that is. Even Sanat Kumara is learning and advancing from a relative imperfection to perfection.'⁵

I think that we can say that the Will in the Tibetan's view is the dynamic of God and of all existence. It is the pinnacle of the Divine Triad (Will, Understanding (or Light) and Love). It is the Power of God in which we can consciously partake.

⁴ *Esoteric Healing*, p.11.

⁵ *The Rays and the Initiations*, p 674.

Considering all the above, it is my understanding that the divine will is immutable in the sense that it is eternal, involves all that exists and will never cease to be, but that its form is continuously evolving, and that, at this time, we humans must accommodate and support this process.

Interestingly, the answer to Blavatsky's question whether science will ever be able to tell us what the will is: that is exactly what some contemporary thinkers have been attempting. In the current debates about the (non-) existence or (non-)necessity of a God or divine plan and the (non-)existence of a free will in humans, which have been stirred up by Richard Dawkins, Stephen Hawking and Daniel Dennett, we hear regularly refutations of famous philosophers and religious thinkers. The alternative answer by Hawking (in his certainly fascinating book *The Grand Design*) is that the Will of God was not necessary for the 'cosmos to spring into existence', but that 'it came right into existence from nothing'. Yet, before that moment 'where time began', he admits, there was not nothing, but there was law. And, as the Jewish physicist Gerald Schroeder in his *The Big Bang Creation: God or the Laws of Nature* explains:

'Hawking's *The Grand Design* breaks the news, bitter to some, that ... to create a universe from absolute nothing God is not necessary. All that is needed are the laws of nature. ... There can have been a big bang creation without the help of God, provided the laws of nature pre-date the universe. Our concept of time begins with the creation of the universe. Therefore, if the laws of nature created the universe, these laws must have existed prior to time; that is, the laws of nature would be outside of time. What we have then is totally non-physical laws, outside of time, creating a universe. Now that description might sound somewhat familiar. Very much like the biblical concept of God: not physical, outside of time, able to create a universe.'

Returning to the views of the Tibetan, who makes it clear that the Great Law of Sacrifice is 'one of the life impulses ... of the One in Whom we live and move and have our being,' we might conclude that the Law of Sacrifice is one of the Laws that existed before the beginning of the cosmos and of time, if there ever was such a beginning, and is an eternal creative source of being.

A discussion followed with Derek Fraser, Simon Marlow and Michael Galloway of London and New York Headquarters.

3 Minute Imaginings by three students on – The Art of Relinquishment

Daniello Greco “The Dance of Relinquishment”

As a species, no matter how much we have evolved through the ages, we as humanity are predominantly still very much attached to the idea that we are separated from each other, from nature and from the subtle worlds in which a few aim to inhabit. As a result, the race has demonstrated an unbalanced over-identification and predisposition to the importance of the individual.

It is not too difficult to observe that when humans aspire towards working as a unified expression, be it a group of aspirants, or some other form of community; we find that even the most genuine and well-meaning groups find themselves engrossed in lower games of the separated-self such as pride and competition. These aspects which tend to degenerate relations, tend to also hold a quality of self-preservation and rigidity, as if the membrane of one’s personality has become calcified under the unconscious pressure of a perceived threat.

Perhaps you would agree, that group work really does require a wise relinquishment of individuality for it to successfully occur within the lower planes; as without a measure of self-sacrifice, group efforts will typically dis-integrate. There needs to be a ‘willingness to adapt’; a willingness to integrate with something greater than our individual selves and this adaptation requires a yielding dissolution of our collective obsession with individuality.

I sense that this really comes down to what the Tibetan describes as “the exercise of the discriminative sense, developed as the mind assumes increasing control”. In this context, the “discriminative sense”, illuminates between when is the right time to hold individuality in abeyance, and when is the right time for it to hold sway.

So, let’s be clear, relinquishment refers to the act of giving up or renouncing something, often with a sense of reluctance or resignation. It implies a conscious decision to let go of something that one has control over, but may not necessarily involve a sense of trust or surrender.

Surrender, on the other hand, implies a more complete and profound act of letting go. It involves a sense of trust and faith and often requires a release of attachment to a particular outcome or desire. Surrender is often associated with a sense of humility and acceptance, as well as a willingness to be guided by something beyond oneself.

It should be noted however, that blindly surrendering to external forces can lead to a loss of autonomy and agency. Hence, the “discriminative sense”, must always be in mind.

As we ascend the ladder up the Mount of Initiation, in order to progress, each rung must be continuously relinquished, it must be let go; so that a new foot, a new hand, a new vista, can be grasped and further our progress. Reflective discrimination then holds the possibility to develop trust through experience. A trust that we are able to

progress by relinquishment. And that in time, this process becomes a trusted way forward.

So in many ways, the greatest act of surrender to the Will of the soul, really does begin with the perhaps reluctant relinquishment of the lower self.

Let's recognise this as a pattern of the Path... as it may come to pass that in order to continuously grow beyond the gravity of our lower natures, there is a constant 'dance of relinquishment' required. A dance between holding and letting go... a dance between resistance and trust. That this dynamic, with a willingness to adapt, may very well be a part of the solution towards furthering successful group work and establishing right-human-relations.

Vaishali Waware

Good evening Everyone...!

The topic I will address here is the "Art of Relinquishment".

In today's world where accumulating wealth and hoarding goods are prevalent and 1% of the population owns more wealth than the rest of the world combined, talking about the "Art of Relinquishment" plays a significant role.

Buddha relinquished his family, palace, and kingdom, but we still run after procreation, build the same family, desire a big house, and powerful position. We try to follow Buddha's teaching but the paradox is that the outer world teaches us to acquire and achieve more and more as it is considered a sign of success, power, and authority.

Essentially there is a need to ponder what, why, and how we need to relinquish.

First and foremost, we need to relinquish our attachment to our ego. Our ego is the voice inside our head that tells us we are better than others. It creates a false sense of self-importance and separates us from others. By letting go of our ego, we can experience a sense of oneness with all beings and find true happiness and peace.

Material possessions are impermanent, and they cannot bring us lasting happiness. But our desire for them has resulted in increased income, inequality and social instability. By letting go of our attachment to material possessions, we can simplify our lives and focus on what truly matters.

We need to relinquish our attachment to people and relationships. This does not mean that we should become indifferent or cold-hearted. It means that we should not cling to people or expect them to fulfil our emotional needs, but that we should still love them unconditionally. Because when we hold onto people, we often create expectations, and when those expectations are not met, we feel disappointed, hurt, or angry.

Our past experiences, shape who we are today, but they do not define us. Often, we hold onto our past hurts, regrets, or traumas, and we allow them to dictate our present and future. We need to relinquish our attachment to our past and create space for new experiences, opportunities, and growth.

Fear is a natural human emotion, but it can paralyze and prevent us from living our lives to the fullest. We often cling to our fears because they give us a sense of security or control. By letting go of our attachment to our fears, we can step out of our comfort zone, take risks, and explore new possibilities.

In conclusion, the art of relinquishment is about letting go of our attachment to our ego, people, relationships, past, and fears. Relinquishment of material possessions can help to use wealth to create a positive social impact by investing in education, healthcare, and environmental sustainability, thereby creating a more equitable and sustainable world for all. By practicing this art, we can free ourselves from suffering, find inner peace, and live a life of joy, purpose, cooperation, and fulfillment. I think we need to encourage ourselves to reflect on what we need to relinquish in our own life to practice this Art.

Thank you...

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Monika Pakenaite

I've no doubt all of you here are long since "relinquished" wizards, but I also know you'll be visited by the last pilgrim, weary and hungry for that final instruction, so I've prepared something you can offer them, in a form everyone can enjoy. Cake. I've dressed it in three layers, the minimum needed to make it fancy. Plus, a secret filling.

To bypass their wariness, we empathize with the pilgrim. The crunchy base is pure facts. We've been working on this lesson since we were babies, we've had to let go of the holographic sticker, the dog, our vengeance, and we did, begrudgingly, but now we're asked to let go of it all, but All includes self-pity, and that's where we draw the line! We're the soft side of Velcro, with our gentle love and endless optimism, but the world as we've known it is the hard side, and we've been enmeshed in a most grotesque intimacy, so now we're sure that relinquishing anything means ripping the two apart, and that it's gonna be brutal. The crunch in the base—it's all nuts. Through realizing the sameness of all the bits, each one a little hook stuck in a little nook, we can chew away with crumb after crumb as though they were no more than a dream, releasing the details from their petty nightmares.

The middle layer, containing also the secret ingredient, says, there's no need to ever leave, stay with the flavours—are they lemony, are they like spring, or your cherished memories? — embrace it and let me be your forever home! Choose the cream-of-the-cream at the inevitable exclusion of anything lesser; your past now a blessing because it led you to the rich centre, and your future decidedly golden because from the rich centre it leads.

Where the second layer was the heart of the matter, the top one is the art. To pair with the simile, we'll use tea for illustration. A tea ceremony, be it Chinese, Japanese, or Mad Hatter, is all about proportion. The artist has tasted the bitter darkness of the chocolate filling and has learned its secret. The tea-master's focus is like a wall of fire to any moths of unwanted influence; they still come, of course, but only to burn up in that light, ecstatic. Sleeves too wide for any hard labour, lacquered nails, gold-rimmed cups—the artist gracefully works; a jasmine blossom falls into tea for the first time. Surprises are welcome. The everyday mind takes its place doing what it loves best—coldly refusing anything outside of tea-set parameters. Does the tea need more of this...jasmine? No. The end. It's simple like that, so the profound can shine.

Finally, when in false humility the pilgrim refuses the tea, tell them, "There are so many treasures in the land of honesty, abandon your lies, and you'll be rich!", then pour them a small cup from high enough to splash them with one drop and slide them their cake. By now you've tempted them with sweets and tempted them with riches, and if after all that they say, "But won't it be boring to chill as love forever?", say, "No, YOU'RE boring, love is the best!". And should they say the cake's too heavy or the calories too many, tell them to just drop it, burn their slice in the fires of love.

Thank you, I'm overjoyed to be here among all of you esoteric philosophers and people of officially good will—a part of me feared you were real only in the world of myth, riding unicorns—not that I didn't believe in you, I do believe in you, and thank you for your light.

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EVOKING THE POWER OF THE ONE LIFE – VISUALISATION

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A Presentation and Discussion:

Sacred Childhood: Education and the Will-to-Good:

George Bargilis

(A longer version of this presentation is available on request, or at the following link:
https://www.lucitrust.org/uploads/arcaneschool/Bargilis_full_Conference_Talk.pdf)

“Unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven” MATTTHEW 18:3

Jesus reminds us that the innocence and humility of a child, accompanied by Love is the True nature of humankind. Children are still 'in touch' with their hearts and we must ensure that the innocence and self-less humility which is directed by Love must be sustained throughout their adult life.

In the Buddhist tradition, the ideal of the child-like 'beginners mind' is well known. Mme. Blavatsky states that, "The pupil must regain the child-state he has lost".

As a school director, I believe in a learning environment which invites children to explore their inner potential, their inner self. It requires to 'know oneself' in order to understand others, and to become what one is meant to be. In this way they can discover the purpose of what they are here to do, what their calling is, and what they have to offer in order to make this world more beautiful.

There is a powerful elite present in our lives that desires the dehumanization and de-spiritualisation of humanity. Their "gospel" is that there is no God, no soul and no freewill. They are venturing in the world of children with their publications, their ideas and beliefs about family, God, the soul and humanity. They are creating their own education initiative, so that "they can revolutionize education". Children who are at young age, fragile and whose personality is still being developed, can receive a certain type of propaganda and indoctrination with the aim to feel comfortable enough to embrace an "alternative" way of life.

Their purpose is to control every other aspect of human life, our very essence of being, our soul, and the soul of our children. Rudolf Steiner warned one hundred years ago that humanity would be under spiritual attack by what he described as the "Fallen Spirits of Darkness."

Superficially, brutality towards children seems no longer accepted in the modern world. The year 2023 will mark the 34th Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. However, no matter how protective we seem to be, we live in a world where millions of growing children in developing nations around the world are exposed to war, extreme poverty, violence, exploitation and sometimes even famine.

Ultimately, society harms itself when it harms and corrupts its youth. Even if not brutalised, neglected, or exploited, in today's world, children are mainly taught to value materialism and encouraged to embrace a culture of self-interest.

I believe every educator should ask one fundamental question at the beginning of his or her career in teaching children: What does it mean to be educated? Should education simply be orientated towards adjustment to society and its directives?

We need to provide an innovative approach in education which encourages children to grow as confident world citizens. Self-esteem, respect for the culture, values and traditions of others, tolerance and understanding are essential qualities for the unfolding of one's individual potential.

We must help children comprehend that we are all here to contribute to this world and to learn through life lessons so that we can develop and transform ourselves as we are meant to do. We should inspire children to develop the ability to embrace all the above, to find their voice through creative expression so that visions materialise and become reality, through spiritual growth, the growth of inner freedom.

Through education, the right direction of the Will should be one of the major concerns of all true educators. The will-to-good, the will-to-beauty, and the will-to-serve must be cultivated with all that it entails. The root of the word sacrifice is *Sacer*, to make holy or to make whole. So the will to offer service must be nurtured among young

hearts. Certainly, by teaching children how to work together in an atmosphere of goodwill, there is no problem which humanity cannot resolve. Goodwill is man's first attempt to express the love of God.

The major objective of all true educational endeavor should be love in manifested activity, which gradually leads to wisdom. Love of self (self-consciousness), love of those around us (group-consciousness), becomes eventually love of the whole (God consciousness). The word LOVE is rarely mentioned in educational circles.

Eros is the most ancient of Greek gods who brought harmony out of chaos. Eros is considered, by some educators, essential for restoring the soul in education, as love acts as a unifying force. The love of family or tribe, the Greek "storge," can be extended to include the members of our larger human family as a whole, arising naturally from our humanity. Another dimension of love is "philia," the bond between friends and community which is encouraged in education through service-learning projects that bring students out into the larger community beyond the school's boundaries. Just as importantly, a love of strangers, or "philoxenia," needs to be nurtured in students. "Philoxenia," extends the notion of love to those beyond the intimate circle of friends and family, widening a spiritual worldview.

Our school motto is based on Plato's "Σοφία Παντων Καλλιστον", Wisdom Above All. Knowledge is not wisdom. Wisdom cannot be found in books, it cannot be accumulated, memorized or stored up. Wisdom comes with the surrendering of the self. Wisdom does not come through fear and oppression, but through the observation and understanding of everyday incidents in human interactions.

The American Academy School of Limassol has a mission statement which embraces and adopts the Principles and concepts as described and analysed above. The will-to-good is deeply imbedded in our school's psyche.

Andrew Harvey, in his book "The Hope", (2009) urges us to determine which one of the causes of the world breaks our heart and transform this heartbreak into a living force of practical compassion. My own private heartbreak which has haunted me from as early as I can recollect is that of suffering of children. Images of Biafra, Ethiopia and Vietnam, in the 60's, are imbedded in my subconscious, as vivid as those of children in anguish in the 21st century. My experience as a refugee, in my own country, simply reinforced my empathy and understanding of the pain sustained. If I could find a way to alleviate this suffering within the boundaries I am capable of reaching and at the same time help children as human beings to awaken to their inner divinity, then I feel I would have contributed my own "ripple of hope" in the preservation but also awakening of humanity.

It is my passion and think a necessity to set up in this a small part of the world, a school community, providing an educational environment, where children will be protected and encouraged to develop not only as individuals to live constructively in the world of today but where they will develop spiritually in such a way that their impact and contribution to the spiritual development of society will be of significant importance.

To some people, making spiritual development a part of the curriculum suggests the teaching of religion. The spiritual development of children, however, need not involve religion at all. As Alice A. Bailey explains "Education must meet the needs of the human spirit. Children may be guided to listen with the heart, to listen in order to understand, to appreciate, not to judge, but to have love, offering compassion. This is the way they become fully human and fully Divine.

At present, the group of schools I preside over is offering a number of scholarships to assist children with financial problems to study. This is extended on an international level, with children from overseas who have been offered full scholarships to study at the American Academy boarding facilities. They include children from Ukraine, Russia, Gaza, from the West Bank, even from Cyprus. The aim is to try to offer this service on a much wider scale inviting children from our country but also from all over the world.

In order to proceed with this project, the first step is to secure the finances required to support this idea. My intention is to set up an international charity fund which will help to set up the process, facilitating and supporting the educational, social and spiritual development of children from all over the world. I want to think that we will be able to reach parts of the world where evil causes misery and unnecessary life loss for children. I know that we cannot save or help all the children of the world, but even if one child, can be educated with the right foundations then this child may return to its country to offer his or her knowledge acquired. This does not mean that we would disregard children from our own social structure. They have also great need for assistance and support especially as our society is becoming more and more unfair towards its weakest members.

The second step is to provide the suitable environment where these children will live, interrelate and learn. Facilities will be designed and constructed where these children will be taken care of on a 24-hour basis. During school time, they will attend the normal school program with the purpose of graduating and moving into University where they will be able to follow a career of their choice. We have in place a number of inhouse counselors and psychologists to assist in the pastoral and emotional problems that these children and all the children in our school are facing.

The final and most intricate step is to establish the appropriate curriculum for these children. A special program will be developed, based on the ideas and concepts expressed so far, which will encourage their spiritual development, and raise awareness towards becoming the children of tomorrow. Special teacher training and constant professional development for teachers is needed. Nurturing the soul requires a different approach to professional development. All textbooks should be rewritten not from the present nationalistic and separative angles, but in terms of the right human relations, the power love, will to good, and selflessness.

It will be our responsibility to bring the best out of these children; academically, spiritually, aesthetically, intellectually. Our ultimate purpose is, where possible, to take them a step further to develop their full potential as Children of tomorrow.

Children present a unique potential for world transformation and when the welfare of children becomes a priority in the plans of humanity, the result will be a world with more goodwill, healthier and saner interrelationships and the wide spread recognition of the one humanity. In such an atmosphere and spirit of cooperation, there is no problem that humanity cannot face and surmount.

FESTIVAL OF HUMANITY – GEMINI FULL MOON MEETING 2023

The Christ Principle in the Public Sphere

Laurence Newey

Today is World Invocation Day, a world day of prayer and meditation when people of every spiritual path join in a universal appeal to divinity and use The Great Invocation. Together they focus the invocative demand of humanity for the light, the love and the spiritual direction needed to build a world of justice, unity and peace. World Invocation Day takes place in the influence of the Gemini Full moon Festival and the culmination of the higher interlude of the spiritual year. Since 1952 the day of the Gemini full moon is also celebrated as World Invocation Day when a focus is placed on the Great Invocation to empower humanity's subconscious appeal for the return of a World Saviour. This full moon is also known as the Festival of Humanity and it is a propitious time to further stimulate the Christ principle that is awakening in the consciousness of millions of people all over the world.

The habitual use of the Great Invocation keeps the mind and heart in tune with the sound of the Coming One. It also aligns us with "the centre where the will of God is known – 'Shamballa'" – touching a chord deep within our soul that resounds to the divine chorus and empowers us to continue serving with strength and fortitude. Enunciating the Great Invocation "As If" it is issuing forth from deep within our soul sees us take our stand with the chorus of souls that we call the spiritual Hierarchy. This ensures a direct and continuous inflow of the energy of the Will to restore the Plan on earth; and the more group consciousness we can attain in sounding the Great Invocation like this, the more the note of humanity synchronizes with the note of the Hierarchy. We are assured that a dynamic and immediate response from Shamballa will come. The interplay of this demand-response pattern has the capacity to become one of the greatest liberating forces for humanity.

And so we'll begin by sounding the adapted Great Invocation together. This alternative version was produced with the aim of attracting as many people as possible to use it, while having as minimal an effect on its deeper meaning and mantric potency as possible. We will use the original Great Invocation later on at the end of our meditation.

*From the point of Light within the Mind of God
Let light stream forth into human minds.
Let Light descend on Earth.*

*From the point of Love within the Heart of God
Let love stream forth into human hearts.
May the Coming One return to Earth.*

*From the centre where the Will of God is known
Let purpose guide all little human wills -
The purpose which the Masters know and serve.*

*From the centre which we call the human race
Let the Plan of Love and Light work out
And may it seal the door where evil dwells.*

Let Light and Love and Power restore the Plan on Earth.

The world's problems are of humanity's making and they are for humanity to solve. But the essence of the spiritual life lies in knowing that we are not alone. The energies of divinity are abundantly available and, on World Invocation Day, an appeal is made for the release of the energies which will enable humanity to create the new civilisation.

In Alice Bailey's book *Esoteric Astrology*, we read that Gemini, in which World Invocation Day occurs, is one of the most important of all the twelve signs and "its influence lies behind every one of them." Furthermore, Gemini relays "the force which produces the changes needed for the evolution of the Christ consciousness at any particular point in time and space. It is always compatible to the requirement." So, bearing in mind that this is the Festival of Humanity, what are the changes needed for the evolution of the Christ principle in the mass consciousness at this point in time and space? What changes are occurring in human consciousness that we might attribute in some way to Gemini's influence? As Gemini is "always compatible to the requirement" we should be able to see interesting developments occurring midst the chaos of our times – developments which may be taking place largely unnoticed by the public but which, nevertheless, are of real spiritual significance.

In the Service of the Plan study sets which are freely available on the Lucis Trust website, the Divine Plan is divided into seven fields of endeavour: Government, Religion, Education, Science, Philosophy, Psychology, Culture and the Arts. And while there are some positive changes taking place in all these departments, one area that seems to get less attention than it deserves from the esoterically minded, is the field of philosophy. This might be because the Alice Bailey books are, themselves, classified as esoteric philosophy; but the responsibility of all who read them, is to find the department of the Plan with which a special affinity is felt, and then to build "plan imbued thoughtforms" of service that bridge from where humanity's understanding is now, to the next level of unfoldment. Gemini's influence is a perfect stimulant for this for, as mentioned, it concerns the evolution of the Christ consciousness at any

particular point in time and space – it facilitates the building of thought structures which are compatible to the requirement.

So let us consider the general health and direction of philosophy as a representation of an area of the Divine Plan in the human kingdom. Contemporary Philosophy is a particularly challenging area of service, not least for philosopher's themselves, and this is because the 'field of knowledge' has grown tremendously in recent times, fragmenting into a myriad specialised areas of thought. Certainly, much good work is being done as randomly chosen lists of the most influential philosophers today show.¹ As one site points out, "today's philosophers live in the moment, digging into questions that impact our daily lives." However, when it comes to humanity's progress towards the realm of meaning and causes, a different picture of philosophy's role emerges, one that is well summarized by Paolo Parrini:

*"...a sense of confusion about the nature and place of philosophy has been growing and spreading in today's technological and globalized society... philosophy, as has repeatedly been said, has become ever more like a once-vast empire which progressively lost its provinces, but also because these provinces, i.e. the scientific disciplines gradually emancipated from it, have been able to develop theories capable to compete in breadth with traditional philosophical conceptions. These theories absorb questions once reserved for philosophy, attain outcomes which cast doubts on well-rooted philosophical doctrines...and even autonomously turn their own basic principles into problems."*²

Indeed, there is a famous quip that "the philosophy of science is about as useful to scientists as ornithology is to birds." The peculiar conclusions of two major theories of the last century – Einsteinian relativity and quantum physics – present such a bizarre vision of reality that no-one can really make sense of it. An upside of this has been the popularity of various books on quantum mysticism and transpersonal psychology that promote a worldview in which everything is basically interconnected – a field of "universal consciousness" that can be tuned into somewhat through various spiritual disciplines. On the downside however, prevailing scientific theories are antithetical to a structured, hierarchical model of reality – one in which creative hosts of sentient lives build in conformity with the plans of superconscious beings. In the educational climate of today, it is difficult to see how the basic premises of a Divine Plan, an inner spiritual government of the planet, and the reappearance of a World Teacher could even be discussed intelligently.

This is one of the reasons why the electric universe theory promoted by today's scientific intuitives is so important. Everywhere we look in the heavens we see rotation – planets, stars, galaxies – all rotate and revolve around each other. Rather than attributing this harmony of the spheres to uncontrolled cosmic explosions and collisions, these intuitives see electrical order on a cosmic scale. The electric universe is one in which heavenly bodies are created, built into form and made to spin through the agency of tremendously powerful electric currents that span galactic and intergalactic space. The big philosophical questions in this scenario concern the origin and control of such power and how these currents maintain their shape over such vast

distances without being transmitted via cables as they are on earth. The intriguing conclusion is that electric currents in space are self-organizing. This raises more philosophical questions about intelligent purpose in the universe and the significance of human beings as electrical creators within the greater whole.

It is questions such as these that can stimulate further interest in metaphysics, philosophy and religion. For example, esoteric teachings equate the electric force with the Will aspect of Divinity and teach how the spiritual will of an individual can project its own currents of electric force inwardly to communicate with a higher aspect of itself. Indeed, the Ageless Wisdom refers to such individuals as “Weavers in fohatic enterprise” – ‘Fohat’ being an ancient Tibetan term for the many aspects of the electro-dynamic force that pervade the multidimensional whole.

The electrical nature of the Will also injects a fresh dynamic into the long-standing philosophical debate on free will. It is through the projection of the will into the world of ideas that a human being finds true freedom. Ideas are electrical entities that act as a leaven when they are precipitated into the substance of the human mind. Through the expansions of consciousness they induce, the individual discovers that the principle of freedom is a fundamental aspect of divine expression. It is these sorts of discussions that could be initiated in the context of electric universe theory, and as cosmology is currently in crisis and being forced to re-examine some its fundamental assumptions at this time – perhaps a paradigm shift is not so far away.

In the meantime though, the decline of philosophy as “the mother of all knowledge” – “the guardian of reason” continues, but the positive side of this is that over the last half century or so, it has shifted towards the Humanities. And one of the most influential social theorists of our time, [Jürgen Habermas](#), has played a significant role in this changing direction of modern philosophy. While philosophy has traditionally searched for ‘[rationality](#)’ in the structure of the cosmos, current scientific theories have cast doubts on well-rooted philosophical doctrines, and the search for rationality and reason has been redirected. Jürgen Habermas describes philosophy’s new role as a form of critique that has an emancipatory potential – his work on [communicative rationality](#) describing how the human capacity for reason is inherent within language, especially in the form of argumentation in what he called the Public Sphere. In its ideal form, the public sphere is:

“made up of private people gathered together as a public and articulating the needs of society with the state.’ Through acts of assembly and dialogue, the public sphere generates opinions and attitudes which serve to affirm or challenge – therefore, to guide – the affairs of state. In ideal terms, the public sphere is the source of public opinion needed to ‘legitimate authority in any functioning democracy.’”³

Jürgen Habermas described the structures of argumentative speech that should ideally take place in the Public Sphere as “the absence of coercive force, the mutual search for understanding, and the compelling power of the better argument.”⁴ It was under the influence of Jürgen Habermas that political science “began to focus on how communities and populations develop a common will through communication in the

public sphere resulting in the development of deliberative democracy.” This form of democracy is described in the Encyclopaedia Britannica as follows:

*“Rather than thinking of political decisions as the aggregate of citizens’ preferences, deliberative democracy claims that citizens should arrive at political decisions through reason and the collection of competing arguments and viewpoints. In other words, citizens’ preferences should be shaped by deliberation in advance of decision making, rather than by self-interest. With respect to individual and collective citizen decision making, deliberative democracy shifts the emphasis from the outcome of the decision to the quality of the process.”*⁵

In 2021, those who have been developing Jürgen Habermas’ thinking succeeded in creating the first global assembly that “can claim to democratically represent the wishes of the global population.”⁶ This first Global Citizens’ Assembly was for the United Nations Climate Conference in 2021, and as the UN secretary general, António Guterres put it, “a practical way of showing how we can accelerate action through solidarity and people power.”⁷

The Core Assembly was created using a NASA database of human population density, to produce by lottery, 100 locations to recruit participants from. Local community organizations were then recruited as close as possible to each point, and these were called community hosts. There are trusted organizations in local communities that bring people together around common activities and beliefs, such as community centres, public libraries, cultural venues, sports clubs, co-working spaces, faith-groups, and educational institutions, among others. Community hosts then recruited a recommended 4-6 local potential participants, representing the diversity of their community. This was mostly done by having conversations on the street, and by door-knocking, as these methods could be used consistently anywhere in the world, to make sure recruitment was not biased towards mobile phone ownership, or those who have a formal address. Alongside the Core Assembly people all over the world ran their own Community Assemblies, using a step-by-step toolkit. They took place in workplaces, schools, places of worship and neighbourhoods. Feedback from those assemblies is included in the final report of the 2021 Global Assembly.⁸

The vision of the Global Assembly is “to give everyone on earth a seat at the global governance table” and by 2030, to have over ten million annual participants. While the assembly has no legislative power, it carries moral force as a representation of the united will of humanity. And this latest expression of deliberative democracy is surely a further development in the process of spiritually charging humanity’s collective consciousness. The sphere of deliberation is created through goodwill in action, undoubtedly establishing further delicate strands of the planetary bridge of consciousness in human minds and hearts. Assisted by the Spiritual Hierarchy, these may reach right up into the “Centre where the Will of God is known” where a great Law called the Law of Assembly operates in its true and purest capacity.

The Law of Assembly is only properly understood and worked with by the Adepts of the Spiritual Hierarchy, but like all laws that function on the higher planes of the

system, their reflected lower aspects seep into human consciousness where they often become distorted. The Alice Bailey writings cite an instance of this occurring when early Christian teachers confused the Law of Assembly with the Law of Sacrifice. This resulted in the erroneous concept of the vicarious atonement – the idea that Jesus Christ’s great sacrifice was to substitute himself for humanity and suffer God’s punishment for all its collective sins.

In reality, the vicarious atonement is more correctly understood as “substitutionary at-one-ment.” This is the process whereby the Christ, working under the Law of Assembly, anchored the seed energy of new, extra-planetary substance on earth to inaugurate a new phase of redemption. Under this law, the substance of which all planetary forms are comprised and which no longer serve the purpose of the planetary Logos, is steadily eliminated and its place taken by that which does. It is through this process of elimination and substitution under the Law of Assembly that the earth system steadily evolves into a greater expression of sacred unity.⁹

A reflection of this process might be seen in the great assemblies and international parliaments that the New Group of World Servers are establishing in order to debate social philosophy and the common good. Through this deliberative form of democracy, new forms of thinking that better serve the public good slowly replace those that have served their purpose. Through the process of communicative rationality as advocated by Jürgen Habermas, a form of vicarious atonement can take place in the substance in which human consciousness functions – one that emulates on a lower turn of the spiral the work that the Christ undertook under the Law of Assembly when he last appeared on Earth. Through the power of deliberation in the public sphere, humanity can learn to sacrifice selfish, desire-ridden forms of thought in exchange for those which evolve group consciousness and unity through identification with the whole.

The keynote of Gemini is, *I recognise my other self and in the waning of that self, I grow and glow*. We can surely apply this keynote to humanity now as there is a growing recognition of the evils in the collective consciousness that have to be overcome, alongside a steady, reaching out for light. Millions of NGO’s, dozens of international parliaments, and now, the first global citizens assembly that can truly be said to represent cosmopolitan democracy, are all stimulating the mass consciousness. The Christ principle has entered the Public Sphere, and the work before us is to further stimulate it – and this in preparation for the reappearance of the Christ Himself. May that day soon be with us.

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5. Encyclopaedia Britannica, *Deliberative Democracy* <https://www.britannica.com/topic/deliberative-democracy>
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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosmopolitan_democracy#:~:text=In%202021%2C%20a%20global%20citizen's.wishes%20of%20the%20global%20population.

7. Global Assembly website, <https://globalassembly.org/>
8. Ref: *How it Worked*, Ibid, <https://globalassembly.org/how-it-works>
9. A.A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, Vol II, pp 402-5

Sunday Public Session – London 4 June 2023 2:00-5:00pm

The Rosy Cross and the Golden Bird

Wendy Berg

“Having pervaded the worlds with a fraction of Myself, I remain.” These words are found in the Bhagavad Gita, where the Lord Krishna is explaining to Arjuna that He, Krishna, is the creative cause of all things, and sustains them with a fraction of his power, yet He Himself remains entire and whole. He tells Arjuna not to try to understand how things exist in their separate splendour but to realise that all things exist because Krishna has entered them. He sustains and supports them, yet He remains complete.

Although we may understand this, at least in theory, it can be more challenging to understand how this description of the presence of the One Deity in every part of the created worlds might be applied to our own selves and to our own creative work.

A clue of course can be found in the difference between the ‘Me’ which is the voice of the personality and the ‘I’ which is the voice of the soul. The Tibetan tells us that “The moment a man identifies himself with his soul and not with his form, then he understands the meaning of the Law of Sacrifice; he is spontaneously governed by it...”

So this suggests that all our creative activity should be prompted, guided and pervaded by the qualities of our soul and by what our soul knows and desires. The creative urge of the soul is an affirmation of the Will, and therefore an expression of the Law of Sacrifice. And we have been given the symbol of the Law of Sacrifice for contemplation: a rosy cross with a golden bird, the soul, flying freely above it. Let us have a look at this symbol by creatively building it in our mind’s eye so that we can explore what it means, how we relate to it and how we can engage with it.

Let us visualise, first, the rosy cross. And we find that we can now see, in our mind’s eye, an equal armed, rosy cross. Our first realisation is that the size and the extent of the rosy cross is limited only by our perception. In truth it is vast; it is glorious, radiant, powerful and filled with life; it extends far beyond the boundaries of our imagination.

The cross is called the rosy cross because it expresses the essence of the rose; it is an expression of all the qualities, the colours and the fragrances of the rose. The colours of the rose are not fixed, but are many and varied. Its petals reveal the first delicate pinks of the sky at dawn, touched with gold as the sun emerges above the horizon. And there are the deeper, dusky pinks that hint of the shades of violet that occur in the cool twilight of the evening. The colours of the rose blend and change, they strengthen and fade in accordance with the evolving life within.

This beautiful rosy cross also manifests the qualities of the fragrance of the rose. No other flower is blessed with so many different varieties of perfume as the rose. We

can perhaps bring this perfume to mind as it drifts towards us upon the breath of the spirit. It is said that the perfume of the rose has a unique ability to bring about calmness and peace within those who inhale its fragrance, and to open the heart, to lift the spirits and to inspire the opening of the mind to higher things. And it has been said that the perfume of the rose is the perfume of the soul, and comes from Paradise.

The rosy cross is the loved cross, the beloved cross, the cross of matter transformed by love. It represents the Will and purpose of the One Deity to appear, and to give Life to the universe which consequently manifests. But, simultaneously, the cross of matter offers the opportunity to all evolving lives in all kingdoms of nature and in all created worlds, to progress by expressing that same Will. The outcome of our creativity may be something tangible but equally it may be the creative urge to move forward into something more divine, a new state of being, a new way of thinking or understanding which kindles regeneration. This is the *soul's* endeavour.

Let us now visualise the symbol of the soul which is a golden bird that is flying freely above the rosy cross. In the high air above the cross we become aware initially of a golden vibration, the movement of golden wings, and a presence of love, of joy and of freedom. The golden bird of the soul is a manifestation of radiance, an expression of the regenerative light which transcends and transforms the physical form. It is an image of the unique qualities of our own soul. We watch for a few moments as this image takes shape and form...We can perhaps hear the bird's song, which is the unique sound of our soul.....

The appearance of the golden bird may vary according to our present awareness, as we move along our spiritual Path. We might perhaps see a tiny hummingbird as it hovers above a flower, or perhaps a great golden eagle soaring high above the mountains with its sight set upon the horizon, or perhaps we see the falcon which is able to gaze, unblinking, straight into the sun.

We do not really know the bird's place of origin, although we may sense it. Nor can we be sure of its final destination, although we have trust in its perfection. The golden bird is an expression of divine purpose, even though as yet we have only a glimpse of that purpose. It flies with perfect freedom above the illusions and glamour of the earthly plane and is not troubled by them. The bird of the soul is not constricted by linear time, nor is it constricted by the confines of space as we understand it from our earthly point of view. To many ancient civilisations, the bird was recognised as the messenger of the gods; it brought wisdom, truth and guidance from the heavenly worlds.

When we enter into conscious relation with our own soul we may arrive at the realisation of the joyous sacrifice which we made at the very beginning of our time as a soul on earth. We descend into matter, manifest through form and extend our consciousness outwards through the horizontal arms of the cross of matter. When we lift our consciousness into the vertical arm, we assist in raising matter into heaven. We pervade and sustain the fragrance and light-filled substance of the rosy cross by

giving creative expression to that which is most divine in ourselves, and thus in humanity.

We are not simply observing the rosy cross; we are a living part of it and the presence of our soul pervades and sustains its vibrancy while remaining whole and intact within itself. We maintain our conscious link with the rosiness of the cross by our continued love for creation and for the creative process.

To express the Law of Sacrifice is to affirm the Will of God within our daily life and thus to make all things sacred. It lights the ways in which we can better express, within our daily life, the higher energies that are available to us, revealed by the presence and the song of the golden bird of the soul.

“And in this manner we are able to transform the desert of physical plane life to blossom like the rose, so that from the garden of the lower life may arise those sounds and scents, and a vibration strong enough to cross the intervening space between the physical plane and the gateway to the spirit....so that the lower life can mirror forth the spiritual life of the indwelling divinity.”

* * * * *

Sacrifice and the Will of the People: Reflections on the Iranian Uprising

Thoughts of a student group

(This presentation was given to the audience at the venue and during the live broadcast in the form of a commentary using slides to illustrate the content. Audio and videos have been removed at the request of the student group involved.)

I would like to thank the organisers for the opportunity to present the reflections of a group of Iranian students on this year’s conference keynote, with specific reference to the on-going struggle of Iran against a 44 year rule of terror. This presentation aims to examine and explore the relationship between the energies influencing the current uprising and its esoteric and historical roots. Throughout this talk, the evidence for the manifestation of the Will and the Law of Sacrifice will be shown with examples from the events in Iran.

The Law of Sacrifice under the influence of the 4th Ray of Harmony through Conflict is manifesting as the work of ‘Those who Choose to Die’ in present day Iran. In September 2022 widespread peaceful protests were sparked across Iran, by the death in police custody of Mahsa Amini, a young Kurdish Iranian woman arrested for alleged breach of the Islamic dress code. Daily verified reports continued to show blatant regime brutality against peaceful protesters including at least 20,000 arrests where men and women alike were subjected to torture and rape and in excess of 516 protesters killed. The execution of 4 young men for participating in the protests at the time has now been extended to 3 more men.

The depth of the acts of group sacrifice we have witnessed during this period would be better appreciated through a cursory introduction to Iran, its history and culture.

Iran is the most easterly state within the Middle East, a vast country, 7x the size of the UK and one sixth of the size of Europe. With a population of over 80 million, it is a multi-ethnic and culturally diverse nation with at least 12 recognised ethnicities and several languages and dialects. Despite this diversity, there has been a strong sense of unified identity and solidarity between the different peoples of Iran.

Iranians have called their country Iran since the time of the great Empires of the past 2 millennia. The word Iran refers to the Land of the Aryans which formed a vast, advanced civilisation ruling the ancient world. They governed and protected their many nations and flourished in every department of life. Iran has not only been known for its great empires but also as a nation of great poets, mathematicians, physicians, philosophers, ancient religions, artists, master craftsmen, architects and astronomers. It is noteworthy to mention that the word 'nojoom' in Farsi, is used interchangeably for astronomy and astrology as the two disciplines are regarded as one. Astrology was and is still regarded as the science of all sciences by Iranian 'astrologomers'. She is also a nation of many recorded firsts: For example, alcohol and its medicinal (and other) uses were discovered by Iranian scientists. The first human rights declaration enshrined in the Cyrus Cylinder, the first justice system founded by King Anoushiravan the Just, the first postal system (Chapars), the most accurate and still in use solar calendar and the first armoured cavalry are some of many inventions of Iranians. Ancient Iranians created ziggurats, vast network of roads connecting the far ends of the Empire with each other, and the first extensive plumbing and sewage systems millennia ago. Later the first covered bazaar complexes, ghanats, canals and wind towers were created by Iranians, all in harmony with nature.

With this cultural and historic backdrop in mind, I will now show a brief video clip offering a glimpse, in images, of the burning ground on which the people of Iran have walked since the overthrow of the Pahlavi Dynasty in 1979. The regime change brought devastation to the foundations of Iran's social structure, economy, culture, environment and political, civil and human rights to a once advanced, flourishing and peaceful nation. Some of these images may be disturbing.

I hope this video aids our appreciation of the courage and purposeful determination of the protesters, where every act of defiance, no matter how minor may carry a huge risk. As such this movement demonstrates several hallmarks of an Aquarian group and the Law of Sacrifice in action. A young generation of men and women has come onto the streets together, knowing full well they may not return alive or intact. In the absence of a coordinated opposition or leadership, the slogan that was chosen and unified Iranians at home and abroad, irrespective of political persuasion, class, race, gender or ethnicity was "Woman, Life, Freedom".

Iran has historically been classed as a feminine nation. By the same token, historically women have played a prominent role in Iranian society. As you can see from this block print from 1932, Iran is portrayed as a woman carrying the national banner.

In this slide we see the Goddess Anahita, as the Bestower of Divine Light on the newly crowned King Ardeshir Babakan, the founder of the Sassanid dynasty, a further illustration of the high place of the feminine in Iranian culture of old.

The historical expression of the astronomical energies governing the fate of Iran, especially with regard to women, is worth a brief mention. Iran is thought to have been born under the sign of Leo, the polar opposite of Aquarius. Its rising sign, relating to her Soul, is 3 degrees Taurus.

Both the Sun as its ruling planet and its 1st Ray influence are represented in its flag. The Lion and Sun was a key emblem of Iran and her national flag until 1979. This symbol is thought to be based largely on configurations relating to the sun in the house of Leo in Babylonian astrology.

Furthermore, Leo and Aquarius in ancient Persian belief systems are derived from the great seven divine entities (named Amesha Spenta) emanating from "Ahura Mazda" (the Lord of Wisdom). Leo in Persian is "Amordad" meaning the Immortal guardian of the Eternal light, and the birth of Amordad was through sacrifice. Aquarius in Persian is "Vahumanah" meaning good thought or purpose.

In *Esoteric Astrology* page 311 we read "The lion must emerge from its lair, and this injunction is badly needed by Leo aspirants. It will, when followed, lead the self-centred Leo consciousness into the decentralised, selfless Aquarian awareness. It will alter the self-service of Leo into the group service of its polar opposite, Aquarius."

We believe this transition is being enacted today, led by women, united and with the support of the men in every corner of Iran before the watchful eyes of the world. The fear that lurks in the "lair" of the solar plexus is being raised up into the fiery crucible of the heart with every act of heroism and self-sacrifice we witness. Ultimately this all-embracing, courageous, fiery love nature will lead to a place where there is no separateness or conditionality, to the realm of the boundless Neptunian influences and the high place of the Saviours associated with the Law of Sacrifice.

A further astrological influence that is worth reflecting on is that the rising sign of Iran's Arab neighbours is 3 degrees Scorpio, in direct opposition on all levels to the rising sign of Iran in 3 degrees Taurus. This is not only of interest in relation historically to the fall of the Iranian Empire by the hands of the new religion from Arabia over 1600 years ago. We also know that in the pre-Islamic Bedouin Arab tradition, the feminine principle was suppressed, women were kept out of sight and new born girls were often buried alive which was in direct opposition to the place and value of women in the Iranian Empire of the time. Women and the Feminine Principle were held in highest regard, and women held high positions, including as warriors in the Imperial army and navy. The Pantheon of the Divine consisted of Gods and Goddesses, most notable of all was Anahita. Likewise in the 20th century, Iranian women were active in every department and field of service, as politicians and judges, teachers, scientists, physicians and engineers, to artists and musicians. The 1979 revolution brought the same energy of limitation to Iran in particular to Iranian women who found their civil liberties severely and brutally curtailed. For many this renewed subjugation of Iran and in particular Iranian women

by the Islamic Republic, is a re-enactment of the first attack of Islam on Iran and Iranians 16 centuries ago.

In addition to its feminine aspect, Iran has also been subject to a strong 6th ray influence. At the interface between these two energies, her feminine essence has been overshadowed by as quoted from *Education in the New Age* (page 119) “the idea of authority (a key idea of the Piscean age). This has led to the imposition of different forms of paternalism”, which in turn has somewhat conditioned Iran’s contemporary culture.

Iran’s history has been marked by many crises. Numerous conflicts and predicaments in her contemporary history mark the struggle of Iran’s personality aligning and manifesting her Soul’s Will. In the past century, interactions between the energies of the outgoing 6th and incoming 7th rays have brought up old crystallised forms and allegiances for shattering, resulting in the expression amongst others of the suppressed feminine aspect of the nation. This unveiling of the feminine principle is ensuing from unfolding, conscious self-sacrifice, bringing the base animal nature under the conditioning energies of the higher Will of the country as a whole. This has never been as palpable as in the recent uprisings. How does the will as an expression of the law of sacrifice present itself in the events witnessed during the protests? I would like to open the curtains to examples of this through a series of photographs, videos and artwork which portray the principles we have discussed so far.

Images shown

Unity and Solidarity: Group Identification across gender, disability, age and boundaries

Examples of Solidarity between men and women

Men’s symbolic display of support

Demonstrations in Amol

The disabled protestors I

The disabled protestors II

Children and the protests I

Girls and the protests II

This courageous elderly lady removed her head scarf in public and is chanting death to the dictator, in protest against the murder of Mahsa Amini. There have been numerous anecdotes of solidarity across the usual boundaries of belief and practice eg a woman who strictly adheres to the Islamic garb, decided to remove her head covering in solidarity with other women when out of her home. She was arrested, refused to repent and served a 40 day prison term. She reverted to her defiant stance upon being released.

Many of the slogans used during the protests were focused on unity between the numerous ethnic groups in Iran

Examples include Support in Tehran for Balouchi martyr;. Unity across ethnic groups and provinces; Popular slogan: ‘From Kurdistan to Tehran, I sacrifice my life for Iran’

Sacrifice

Heroism in small acts: A Handmaid’s Tale

School girls in classrooms from hejab to chemical poisoning

School girls in classrooms Women Life Freedom

From Tehran to Tiananmen Square

The loss of 400 Eyes, where the 'security agencies' actively target the eyes of protesters resulting in hundreds of men and women losing their eyes.

Both eyes and organs of generation were used as targets by the regime's forces.

No regrets: the lower self is willingly sacrificed for the higher and the greater good.

This example from an Instagram post shows how this young woman sees herself now merging with the greater Self: Iran is now carved into her physical being. And by Iran, we do not mean a nationalistic attitude but the oneness between the Spirit of Iran and its peoples.

The Hippocratic Oath: there have been a number of documented examples of doctors who chose to sacrifice their lives simply by following their Oath to their patients. By treating the injured away from medical facilities which could have led to the arrest of the injured protesters, they themselves became targets for the regime and were subsequently found dead.

Parents and Children: many examples of parents calling on to other parents to overcome the fear of loss of their children as well as protesters calling out to others saying, we too are sons and daughters of parents....

We can see from these anecdotes how the Iranian movement may be regarded as a process of balancing two principles. On the one hand the transfer of focus from self-centred/individual good to an unselfish/greater good is in progress as the pendulum of Iran's consciousness swings from material motives to a more spiritual impulse or Will under the influence of the Law of Sacrifice. We learn from the Tibetan (Esoteric Psychology vol II, p 87) "This Law governs group life and is the embodiment of "*group love, group understanding, group relations and group conduct.....* Sacrifice is a means of salvation and eventual release and liberation." Under this law the higher Will brings death to the lower self in a purposeful and determined manner sacrificing it in favour of the higher. We witness in Iran how it has been related to the impulse of giving, such that sacrifice and death come into their rightful place in the people's consciousness."

This tendency, blended with the rising Aquarian and 7th Ray energies has inaugurated the growth of the spirit of universalism, group work and service in Iran particularly as Aquarius is ruled by the 5th Ray which stimulates the mind and consciousness of humanity and witnessed in this movement. Evidence of these processes taking place is visible on the stage of Iran's development where the transition from the Sixth to the Seventh ray cycle, is overcoming the will to separatism of the 6th ray.

The next video is a rather poignant one. We see through eyes of a 16 year old sage the growth of conscious awareness in a very young generation of Iranians and the high price, one way or the other, they pay at such a tender age.

The people of Iran are willingly sacrificing all, including their lives for freedom, brotherhood, justice and a future with dignity for all through the work of salvage and will to group betterment; By dis-identifying with form life to identifying with the Principle of Freedom/Liberation, Divine Life/Spirit and the Mother of the World/Feminine; Through the purposeful and deliberate choice of death; The relinquishing of criticism to preserve unity; The garnering of a heightened power of observation leading to synthetic thought and spiritual Realisation; Through detachment from all strongly held age-old beliefs and ideologies; and the shedding of blood as sacrament and salvation.

The Aquarian influences at play remind us of the 11th Labour of Hercules where the cleansing of the Augean stables brings purification to the personality of the nation as a whole and elevates it to a higher sphere. Thus have the people – young and old – achieved the required illumination to continue their work of transforming of Iran into a beacon of light not only in their national interests but for the region and the rest of the world, against all odds and in the face of wanton and violent brutality. This video was created in the memory of the courageous lions and lionesses who have inspired, led by example and given up their lives or their loved ones on the path to freedom.

The current movement is not only restricted to courageous acts of loving sacrifice by protestors. The creative and symbolic ways in which the protests have been conducted, namely through art and music, have been striking. Through the medium of art the sacrifices of the imprisoned, bereaved and the fallen have been honoured, thus spreading the harmonics of love, liberation and unity across the world. These actions bear no thought of self, nor-vengeance, no mark of ambition, or separatism. In this, the creative Will is found to be animated by the love of the group and in service to the group. Ultimately, it is via this creative work that these ideas are translated into the Will to create harmony through conflict, that Iran's destiny will come to fruition and its historic service to the community of nations will one day be fulfilled. "

In the Book of King's by Ferdowsi, one of the greatest of Iranian poets from 1000 years ago, we read that during the rule of the mythical tyrant, the Serpent King Zahhak, Kaveh the blacksmith used his leather apron to create a standard for the revolution which succeeded in defeating the evil Ahriman. As a result Fereidoun ascended to the royal throne. Knowing the indestructibility of Ahriman, Fereidoun nailed Zahhak into the boulders in the bowels of Mount Damavand and adorned Kaveh's standard with gold brocade and gems.

The Standard of the Kings has in its centre a golden star (sometimes portrayed as a 12-petalled lotus) on a purple field, representing the constellation known as the Royal Stars of Persia (consisting of Aldebaran, the Eye of Taurus, Regulus, the Heart of Leo, Antares, the Heart of Scorpio, and Fomalhaut in Aquarius). The stars bestow blessings upon the nations of the world through their four radiant streams of light. Each star is the keeper of the 4 gates to the East, North, West and South, keeping a watchful eye in each of these directions respectively.

The myth prophesises that Zahhak, the agent of Ahriman, will one day rise again and spread tyranny and darkness over Iran once more. But this time Evil will be vanquished for good by the slaying of Zahhak by Garshasb, The Coming One.

Addendum: Translation of a blog by a young Iranian woman commenting on the essence of the transition witnessed in Iran

'The reason for this reminder about the principle that has begot you and me, is that in this phase of our revolution, we are told more than 15,000 people have been arrested and will be executed. The authorities are applying high pressure to increase the compressive force on us. But they do not recognise that we, the aware humans, know that when such pressures are escalated, then we are approaching the culmination of

the process of being born. The re-emergence of our lives, our Iran and the victory of our revolution is near. That is why we are experiencing these pressures. They threaten us with fear-inducing actions so that we step back and withdraw from the process. But they do not seem to know that the seed's shell must split so that the tree and the garden within it can appear. Have no doubt, our hearts are broken. But when the wall of our 'seed' breaks, not just a tree but a whole garden manifests. As the photos, videos and news recounting the 'mounting human toll' circulates, the rising pressure will signify to us Iranians who are awake, that the time of the dawn of the new life is imminent. No living being, no mother in any kingdom of nature, at the time of labour and delivery, will step back or withdraw from this 'nativity'. We know that we shall be holding our new Iran very soon in our arms. We are fearless.'

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VISUALISATION: The Summit of the Future

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The Right Concentration of Power: Pathways to Spiritual Governance

Swaan Barrett and Michael Brehme

Foundational Thoughts for the discussion by Swaan Barrett

Governance according to Merriam Webster refers to "the act or process of governing or overseeing the control and direction of something (such as a country or an organization)" Governance thus requires a set of principles and values on which such oversight of control and direction can be based.

Spiritual governance as a concept relates to the idea of alignment with a higher purpose. When our purpose as servers and members of the NGWS is clear, all of our thinking and acting can be aligned with this purpose, creating focus and direction and thus greater power for accomplishing much-needed changes in this world.

In organizations, particularly business organizations which are my main field of work, a similar process can be observed or even consciously stimulated. All businesses need some kind of governance, whether it is written down in handbooks or implicitly given by the living example of the leaders.

Governance of any kind must be based on key values and principles related to the purpose of the organization to which the governance applies. Thus, an approach to spiritual governance in organizations (and these could be businesses, governmental agencies, world-wide bodies or even gatherings of any kind) must include the purpose of this organization as well as consider its key values. If governance is not aligned in

this way, it becomes a paper tiger, a cumbersome administrative set of rules, or at worst simply a proclamation unrelated to what is really going on in the organization.

Thus, one way of approaching the creation of a system of spiritual governance is through a clarification of purpose. Why does this organization exist? What does it stand for? What needs does it serve, what is its key contribution to people and to the world?

For many non-profit organizations, these questions are quite obvious and tend to be the reason why people work for them. In businesses, this discussion is relatively new but increasingly relevant in the context of sustainability goals and changing values of the younger generations.

Working with these questions often brings out a clear picture and focuses the mental energy of people in an organization, regardless of whether it is a non-profit or for-profit one. Once purpose is clarified and the key values formulated, they can serve as a golden thread for all that follows in terms of governance, structure and strategies.

The UN exemplifies this, as its first articles are about the purpose and principles guiding all further activities. In fact, the principles are already formulated in such a way as to indicate a commitment of all signatories to specific ways of handling membership and decision-making.

In the business world, discussing and formulating purpose has become a broad field of endeavor. Much too often, purpose statements and proclamations of principles are considered part of a communications program rather than part and parcel of overall business strategy and structures. There is frequently an observable gap between the proclaimed purpose and values and the actual lived practices in organizations, which include structural setups and decision-making processes.

This is the gap that spiritual governance can close: the establishing and managing sets of rules and structures that are based on and support the purpose of an organization in alignment with spiritual truths such as right human relations - a principle that has a direct impact on decision-making processes if taken seriously.

This is also the hardest part of the work, as if the meeting of spiritual purpose with structural realities in organizations mirrors the meeting of the higher and the lower selves in our personality systems. For organizations to awaken their soul qualities, discussions about these qualities in the form of a meaningful purpose statement are key. When for-profit organizations consistently link to the goal of service to humanity through the products and services they provide, they can become part of and support the development of an economic system based on fair sharing and managing of resources for the good of all. This is already happening in many businesses who make sustainability and the triple bottom line an integral part of their purpose and governance.

If businesses in particular work towards their purpose - their highest possible aspiration and potential in terms of their vision for a better world - with the goal to infuse their structures and daily practices with this purpose, they will gain much in

focus, credibility, and effectiveness. And if they work these principles through their entire system of structures, roles, processes and rules, and doing this together with the people working in the organization, then it is possible to speak of a type of governance by the people for the people in this organization - an expression of the right concentration of power as a base for spiritual governance.

This in turn can become part of a base for global governance. If more and more businesses focus on spiritual values, there will be effects on their suppliers and customers as well as their employees. Thus, the ripple effects could create a new way or at least a new framework for doing business with each other which is truly based on fair trade, sharing and sustainability.

Foundational Thoughts for discussion by Mike Brehme

In just a few words the thought that the right concentration of power is a path to spiritual governance offers us insight into the nature of alignment, its power to transform, and the technique of approach toward achieving a more conscious participation in life.

Discussing the right concentration of power and spiritual governance in the context of unmanaged globalisation perhaps begins with an appreciation of governance as group intellect reason and intention in alignment to achieve a purposeful agenda.

For example, the three aspects of the group mind of Humanity have aligned to achieve the green agenda. It is only through observation, insight, and discrimination that Humanity begins now to govern itself to develop reasonable solutions to facilitate and bring to life what we can agree on, an agenda inspired by a progressive purpose.

Without alignment there is no governance.

Whilst the green agenda is only the first hint toward a future spiritual governance, its achievement demonstrates that right concentration and alignment are synchronous.

When there is a progressive purpose, they generate momentum.

It is the achievement of this sense of momentum that transforms intellectual governance into spiritual governance.

Just as the green agenda begins with the expression of its third aspect, the economics of sustainability. Because it is right, is aligned to the Plan, its momentum automatically invokes the second aspect, that which facilitates and now forms the emerging new economics of responsibility upon the near horizon.

Which, in turn, leads through its own ideas and language to the economics of the first aspect, the spiritual economics of making whole, of virtuous cycles and forces sacrificed for the common good.

In the context of unmanaged globalisation, we have witnessed the unbalanced governance of the third aspect or intellect applied in isolation. At its extremes it

generates technology and global economics but also intense competition for resource, exploitation, and war.

It seems that in its third aspect, both the highest and lowest expressions of governance are concerned with the concentration of power for competitive advantage but only one has a potentially constructive purpose.

Today, global economic momentum is stalling. It is in trouble. It doesn't know what it is for, what it is trying to achieve or why it should continue. Without opportunity for major new markets the third aspect investment thesis is running out of road and competitors are aligning to think about how to enrich or premiumise new entrants to participate.

Today the green economy and scarcity promises a new alignment of resources and global economic growth. An alignment that appears to be on Plan because it has momentum and is seeding a spectrum of socio-economic initiatives and ideas popping up all over the globe.

It is interesting to observe that such initiatives are not easy to create or carry through and serve to demonstrate that spiritual governance is not a simplification or an adjustment to a simpler life but are a labour of love, a new more sophisticated tension to be held up, recognised, adopted as something more abundant to be achieved.

Today, how capital is planned and deployed is shifting toward the achievement of more than a simple financial return for shareholders. There is an adjustment toward a better concentration of capital power to achieve a purpose. Here the tools of governance, knowledge, insight, and discrimination are, of course, deployed with skill and understanding to achieve gain but focus on identifying expertise and mitigating risk.

The prospect of gain is simply the math of the equation of competitive advantage over opportunity.

Today, capital is often highly regulated and shareholders often highly motivated to expand what they mean by the idea of a good return on their investment. At the same time fund managers planning how capital will be deployed seek certainty in a world where risk is more visible, arises quickly, often without warning.

Capital planning has moved on from the simple economics of scale to the complex economics of regulation, investor expectations, media insight, and reputational risk. We might say that corporate governance is on a journey.

In the world of capital planning the story of the journey from A to B is still the journey from risk to return, but the narrative is changing from "no one will notice" to one of "we're on the bus in plain sight" to facilitate change and achieve a more progressive outcome. A journey with a purpose to achieve the right concentration of capital power." In this way, risk is not avoided but adopted through a wider narrative and acceptance that there is a journey to be undertaken, a momentum to be built and a

purpose to be achieved that works for the whole, all stakeholders from producers to consumers.

We could say that the economics of sustainability began with the 3P's of people, planet and profit and because it has momentum will now transition to include the 3E's of economics environment and equality.

To achieve the spiritual governance, we may need to see the emergence of the 3 S's of sustainability, sharing, sacrifice.

In my own world of the simple cup of tea with its 13 million direct dependents. The challenge is to introduce that second aspect and to collaborate with other tea brands through pre-competitive alignments to transform the tea industry into a safe and beneficial place to work for hundreds of thousands of women and for local communities.

To summarise. Spiritual governance is not simple, it demands not just one but all three aspects of the mind to achieve a sophisticated balance that is the right concentration of power that automatically generates momentum.

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