

A Question of Peace

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Thank you for the opportunity to share a few thoughts, personal experiences and insights related to the question of peace.

I have worked with the Great Invocation for some forty-years or so, and for the majority of that time, not being a particularly religious person, I have not used it as a prayer. Rather, I was interested in how it might be relevant to the field of education, and even more challengingly, how it might relate to my keen interest in the field of the martial arts.

In both areas my background attitude was that of attempting to penetrate to a quality of insight that would enable meaningful service. My keen interest in the challenge of peace has only come into focus as I have reflected deeply on the potential meaning of a martial art of the Soul, and as I have persisted in a practice of considering how what I already know and do connects with and supports efforts to energise the emergence of a better world.

I am the founder of a musical approach to martial arts practice which is known as the Solfa-Do. This involves a practice of singing various sequences of Solfa notes whilst engaging with physical training based on traditional martial arts, and with the specific intention of musicalising the sense of self, and of gaining a degree of musical control over one's own energies. The point of relevance here is that taking up this practice as a regular activity seemed to offer a way by which we, human beings, could eventually learn to musicalise ourselves, opening the possibilities of more internal harmony as well as interpersonal and societal harmony. I saw that developing a culture of self-musicalisation would inevitably mean we had a powerful means of resolving conflict and open the way to a new basis for peace in the world.

The Solfa-Do is a family-generated martial art and it provides a means whereby various members of my own extended family can tune in to each other and share in a cultural activity which is relatively free of dogma whilst evoking a sense of deep and positive connection with each other. This singing activity is a vibrational complement to the study and use of the Great Invocation, and so this formula of words which we know as the Great Invocation is approached as if it is directly relevant to the practice of the Martial Art of the Soul of Humanity.

A number of years ago, in 2003 to be exact, I had the opportunity to anchor the connection between the Great Invocation and the growing phenomenon of the planting of peace poles. For anyone who does not know, peace poles are poles which carry a short prayer or invocation for peace, which says simply: MAY PEACE PREVAIL ON EARTH.

I had come across this prayer some time before, and it always made me think of the phrase from the Great Invocation: RESTORE THE PLAN ON EARTH.

Given the opportunity to do so, I buried a scroll bearing the Great Invocation at the foot of a peace pole that was being planted towards the end of a residential course in leadership for which I was a member of staff. Since then, in my mind, there has been a definite growing of the idea that the Great Invocation is in some way the basis on which humanity will find its way into true peace. This insight deepened my sense of the importance of continuous study of this Invocation, and confirmed that no true peace is possible unless we learn to overcome the war tendency within us through mastery of the martial art of the Soul. This Martial Art of the Soul is nothing less than the regular

tuning of oneself to higher purpose, and of one's life to expressing what we can of our higher nature; one could simply say, the regular attempt to tune oneself to "the purpose which the Masters know and serve". From the angle of the Solfa-Do, mastery depends on a conscious culture of peace through the musicalisation of the self and the harmonisation of this personal self with the higher Self, the Soul.

As some of you may know, it is said that the only place on our planet where true peace is known is the centre called Shamballa. We can imagine Shamballa as that place in consciousness which serves as the planetary head centre for all life on earth. In our Triangles work we understand that there is a long-term goal of bringing about a conscious and right relationship between this centre, Shamballa, our own human species as a centre of *creative* activity, and the other major planetary centre which we call Hierarchy – the centre which embodies the activity of loving wisdom. It seems from these descriptions that the challenge of achieving peace as a normal condition of human living is ultimately a question of the relationship between humanity and Shamballa, but involves also the recognition that the achieving of peace is not only a question of intelligence (which humanity has in abundance), but also a question of wisdom rooted in love. If Shamballa is the only place on earth where true peace is known, what does this imply for humanity?

For myself and after many years of study and work in teaching in the field of the martial arts the above question led to a decision to establish a dojo under the name Shamballah Dojo. This Dojo now exists in physical form and is the headquarters for our family martial art practice. The name Shamballah Dojo points to the intention that it connects with and serves the goal of opening an era of the culture of peace. The Dojo Peace Pole was inaugurated at Wesak this year, with the intention that it serve as a musical power pole within the worldwide network of peace poles, transmitting the Qi of Great Peace within human consciousness. This Peace Pole brings the energies and rhythms of the Great Invocation directly to bear on the prayer "May Peace Prevail On Earth". It carries the words "May peace prevail on earth", but on the other three sides it carries the keynotes of Light, Love, and Power, each of these in four languages. Buried at the base of this peace pole lies a scroll bearing the Great Invocation.

Clarence Harvey, Shamballah Dojo

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