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ABOUT THE MINERAL MONAD

"About The Mineral Monad" is the answer to **question 5** of a series of questions and answers printed in *Five Years of Theosophy*. This section ran well over a hundred pages, and was entitled: *Some Inquiries suggested by Mr. Sinnett's Esoteric Buddhism*. Three Initiates participated in writing the answers — one of whom was Madame Blavatsky's Teacher. The section propounds conclusions at great variance with Western scholarship, especially in the answers giving dates for Gotama Buddha and Sri Sankaracharya.

Any English expression that correctly translates the idea given is "authorized by the Adepts." Why not? The term "monad" applies to the latent life in the mineral as much as it does to the life in the vegetable and the animal. The monogenist may take exception to the term and especially to the idea; while the polygenist, unless he be a corporealist, may not. As to the other class of scientists, they would take objection to the idea even of a human monad, and call it "unscientific." What relation does the monad bear to the atom?? None whatever to the atom or molecule as in the scientific conception at present. It can neither be compared with the microscopic organism classed once among polygastric infusoria, and now regarded as vegetable and ranked among algae; nor is it quite the *monas* of the Peripatetics. Physically or constitutionally, the mineral monad differs, of course, from that of the human monad, which is neither physical, nor can *its* constitution be rendered by chemical symbols and elements. In short, the mineral monad is *one* — the higher animal and human monads are countless. Otherwise, how could one account for and explain *mathematically* the evolutionary and

spiral progress of the four kingdoms? The "monad" is the combination of the last two Principles in man, the 6th and the 7th, and properly speaking, the term "human monad" applies only to the Spiritual Soul, not to its highest spiritual vivifying Principle. But since divorced from the latter the Spiritual Soul could have no existence, no being, it has thus been called. The composition (if such a word, which would shock an Asiatic, seems necessary to help European conception) of Buddhi or the 6th principle is made up of the essence of what you would call matter (or perchance a centre of Spiritual Force) in its 6th and 7th condition or state; the animating ATMAN being part of the ONE LIFE or Parabrahm. Now the Monadic Essence (if such a term be permitted) in the mineral, vegetable and animal, though the same throughout the series of cycles from the lowest elemental up to the Deva kingdom, yet differs in the scale of progression.

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KKate entity trailing its slow way in a distinct path through the lower kingdoms,

and after an incalculable series of transmigrations flowering into a human being; in short, that the monad of a Humboldt dates back to the monad of an atom of hornblende. Instead of saying a mineral monad, the correcter phraseology in physical science which differentiates every atom, would of course have been to call it *the* Monad manifesting in that form of Prakriti called the mineral kingdom. Each atom or molecule of ordinary scientific hypotheses is not a particle of something, animated by a psychic something, destined to blossom as a man after aeons. But it is a concrete manifestation of the Universal Energy which itself has not yet become individualized: a sequential manifestation of the one Universal Monas. The ocean does not divide into its potential and constituent drops until the sweep of the life-impulse reaches the evolutionary stage of man-birth. The tendency towards segregation into individual monads is gradual, and in the higher animals comes almost to the point. The Peripatetics applied the word Monas to the whole Cosmos, in the pantheistic sense; and the Occultists while accepting this thought for convenience' sake, distinguish the progressive stages of the evolution of the Concrete from the Abstract by terms of which the "Mineral Monad" is *one*. The term merely means that the tidal wave of spiritual evolution is passing through that arc of its circuit. The "Monadic Essence" begins to imperceptibly differentiate in the vegetable kingdom. As the monads are uncompounded things, as correctly defined by Leibnitz, it is the spiritual essence which vivifies them in their degrees of differentiation which constitutes properly the monad — not the atomic aggregation which is only the *vehicle* and the substance through which thrill the lower and the higher degrees of intelligence. And though, as shown by those plants that are known as sensitives, there are a few among them that may be regarded as

possessing that conscious perception which is called by Leibnitz *apperception*, while the rest are endowed with that internal activity which may be called vegetable *nerve-sensation* (to call it *perception* would be wrong), yet even the vegetable is still *the* Monad in its second degree of awakening sensation. Leibnitz came several times very near the truth, but defined the monadic evolution incorrectly and often greatly blundered. There are *seven* kingdoms. The first group comprises three degrees of elementals, or nascent centres of forces — from the first stage of the differentiation of *Mulaprakriti* to its third degree — *i. e.*, from full unconsciousness to semi-perception, the mineral; the second or higher group embraces the kingdoms from vegetable to man; the mineral kingdom thus forming the central or turning-point in the degrees of the "Monadic Essence" — considered as an Evolving Energy. Three stages in the elemental side; the mineral kingdom; three stages in the objective physical side — these are the seven links of the evolutionary chain. A descent of spirit into matter, equivalent to an ascent in physical evolution; (the mineral) towards its *status quo ante*, with corresponding dissipation of concrete organisms up to Nirvana — the vanishing point of differentiated matter. Perhaps a simple diagram will aid us¹: —

The line A D represents the gradual obscuration of spirit as it passes into concrete matter; the point D indicates the evolutionary position of the mineral kingdom from its incipient (*d*) to its ultimate concretion (*a*); *c, b, a*, on the left-hand side of the figure, are the three stages of elemental evolution; *i. e.*, the three successive stages passed by the spiritual impulse (through) the elementals — (of

¹ The diagram appears on page 277 of *Five Years of Theosophy*, and is quite good, but we have not yet been able to obtain a TIF or JPG image of it.

which little is permitted to be said) before they are imprisoned in the most concrete form of matter; and *a, b, c*, on the right-hand side, are the three stages of organic life, vegetable, animal, human. What is total obscuration of spirit is complete perfection of its polar antithesis — matter; and this idea is conveyed in the lines A D and D A. The arrows show the line of travel of the evolutionary impulse in entering its vortex and expanding again into the subjectivity of the ABSOLUTE. THE CENTAL THICKEST LINE *d d*, is the Mineral Kingdom.

The monogenists have had their day. Even believers in a personal god, like Professor Agassiz teach now that “There is a manifest progress in the succession of beings on the surface of the earth. The progress consists in an increasing similarity of the living fauna, and among the vertebrates especially, in the increasing similarity of the living fauna, and among the vertebrates especially, in the increasing resemblance to man. Man is the end towards which all the animal creation has tended from the first appearance of the first palaeozoic fishes” (“Principles of Zoology,” pp. 205-6). The mineral “monad” is not an individuality latent, but an all-pervading Force which has for its present vehicle matter in its lowest and most concrete terrestrial state; in man the monad is fully developed, potential, and either passive or absolutely active, according to its vehicle, the five lower and more physical human principles. In the Deva kingdom it is fully liberated and in its highest state — but one degree lower than the ONE Universal Life.*

* The above diagram represents a logical section of the scheme of evolution, but not the evolutionary history of a unit of consciousness.

THREE KINDS OF FAITH —

Every human being has faith — faith in something, some ideal, some conception, some religion, some formula — but while the faiths of different people have one or another object, the faith itself proceeds from the Highest, and is inherent in the heart of every being. Faith is the very basis of our nature. Whatever way we follow is because of the faith we have — the conviction that it is the best way. That the world is full of false faiths is because of the differing beliefs, and philosophies which limit faith itself to the means thought necessary for obtaining a particular object of faith.

In the seventeenth chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita* faith is said to be of three kinds: faith of the quality called *sattwa*, the good and the true; faith of the quality called *rajas*, of action, and of passion; and faith of the quality called *tamas*, of indifference and ignorance. These three qualities given to faith are, in fact, the three limitations placed on faith by every human being; for the power of faith in itself is limitless. We continually limit that power to its operation within the range of some minor object or ideal based on externalities. “The embodied soul being gifted with faith, each man is of the same nature as that ideal on which his faith is fixed.” Man has that quality of faith in accordance with his disposition; and he also continually becomes of the nature of the ideal on which his faith is fixed. It is evident, then, that we ought to be sure of the nature of the faith upon which our ideal is placed.

If one places his faith on any *externality*, what ever it may be — gods or men, religions or systems of thought — he has placed it upon a broken reed; he has

limited the very power of his own spirit to expand itself beyond the limitations of his ideal. When, for instance, we accept the idea that nothing is real, but that which we can see or hear or taste or smell or touch, we have placed our faith on a very low basis. There is some reason for our falsity of thought and action, when we have assumed the present moment to be the only moment, the outward terrestrial world and this one existence to be the only life, from which we go, we know not where, nor to what purpose it all has been. To look on all beings according to one's own limitation of mind and range of perception, and to see only their externalities of speech or action in accordance, is not seeing them as they really are. An outside God, or an outside devil, an outside Law, an outside atonement for sins, the idea of sin being other than a denial of our own spiritual nature (the unpardonable sin), are all external faiths of the nature of *tamas*, or ignorance. Ignorance always leads to superstition. Superstition leads to false belief, and false belief to false faith

We are all in constant conflict with each other because of false bases of faith, for the very reason that faith fixed on anything will bring results, and man are blinded to real and true faith by the results of even false faith. Yet so long as we have a false faith shall we continue to create for ourselves lives of misery. The results flowing from a false faith in a selfish ideal must bring us bad effects in wrong conditions. They are the very limitations we have imposed upon ourselves by external faiths in other lives, and we must come again and again into bodies until we have rid ourselves of the defects in our nature which those external faiths have engendered. We have to get a better basis for thought and action than the false faith of the likes and dislikes we have obtained by heredity. We have produced the effects we see, but we need not go on repeating the same mistakes life after life, if we will but change our ideals. We have to find a true basis of faith.

We have to place our faith upon that which is not external, but *internal*.

The Internal is the very source of the powers that we possess of every kind, and that Internal is the same in every living one. At the very root of our being is that changeless Self which we can know only within ourselves. To reach in and in to It. We must first divest ourselves of all — of everything which changes. First of all, let man divest himself of the idea that he is his body. He occupies it; he uses it; but he knows that it is ever changing, that never for one single instant is it the same as it was the moment before. Let him divest himself further of the idea that he is his mind; for he himself can change the ideas that compose it — throw them out bodily and take their very opposite, if he chooses — yet he is still acting with other ideas. We are not bodies; we are not minds; nor are we both together; but we are That which uses and sustains them both. Through all the changes of the past and resent, and those that are to come, we shall always be ourselves. Even when death comes we shall still be operating in another way than in the physical body. The basis of the Changeless Self places the whole universe within reach of any being's mind — a stable basis for thought and action and realization within himself.

These things we have to know each one is the Self in his innermost nature; every one that he has arises in that Self; every being of every kind is conscious, with the power of the extension of its range of perception and action, while every instrument is due to the limitation of the conception of the individual's real nature. Never by looking at other beings, nor by any kind of faith whatever can man realize his oneness with the One Great Life (he can realize it only by looking into his own nature. His own nature is realized by seeing that which is *not* the nature of the Self. For anything, seen, heard, or felt, or tasted or perceived is not the Self, but merely a

perception of the Self. The Self perceives what may be perceived according to its own ideas, according to its own faith, but that which is perceived is never the Self. Within every being from whom we obtain any action or from whom we perceive anything, there is the Self, but we do not perceive That. It is only by realizing It within ourselves that we realize its existence in every other being. Then honor the spiritual nature of every being and strive to aid that being to see for himself the true path by which he can realize his true nature! We all have to think and act with that true nature as our guide.

We find ourselves prevented on every hand from taking the position of the true nature — it seems impossible. But this is only a delusion born from the false faith we have held. We have established ideas, likes and dislikes, and feelings which under the law of the return of impressions recur again and again. The moment we attempt to take an opposite stand we meet the result of the combined action of all these forces within ourselves. This is what we may call “the war in heaven” — the war in the man’s own nature. But if he remains true to his own spiritual nature, he is bound to be the conqueror. If he has faith in the law of his own nature, he will go forward and gradually the obstacles will disappear. But we must hold on grimly and have confidence and faith in That which is the only Real anywhere — Life itself — Consciousness. Then the fetters we have made for ourselves will fall away. Every force in nature begins to act for us and with us because we have no desire of our own, but only for the good, for the salvation of all. Every soul and every thing seems to work for our advantage, but not because we want it. We begin to see the spiritual meaning of the saying that the man who desires to save his life must lose it. He gives up everything as an acquisition for himself, devoting every power he has or gains to the service of others, and the whole universe is

before him. He can take all — but let him take nothing save to give it out again, accept nothing save to lay it at the feet of others!

There is no question of sin, or sinner. There is no question of good or evil. There is only the question: Are you working for yourself as you understand yourself, or are you working for the Self as you *ought* to understand you are, and not for anything else? If you want nothing for yourself require nothing for this body, but think only to do for others, what is needed *comes* under the law of the very force for which you make attraction. Support comes in every direction. The whole nature — spiritual, intellectual, psychical, astral and physical — is strengthened; even the surroundings are improved. It is our lack of faith — our unfaith - unfaith in That, which puts us where we would not be. Denying the Christ within, the Krishna within, the Spirit within, “is the unpardonable sin”, and so long as we crucify that Christ within, just so long will we suffer on the cross of human passions and desires. Service for ourselves is a creation which ties us fast to wrong conditions. We may strive for better bodies, better positions, for possessions of all kinds, better qualities, better understanding *on one condition only*, that the motive be to make ourselves the better able to help and teach others.

The only true faith is that in the Highest — in the Changeless, in That which each in his innermost nature is. The only true path is the trusting to the law of our own spiritual nature. Men may go from faith to faith, from faith in one thing to faith in some other thing, moving along from life to life and obtaining some results according to the nature of the ideal upon which their faith is fixed, but the only way out is through the faith in the spiritual, essential nature of all beings. And no greater gift could be given to any human being than the inalienable fact that he — and each one — has the power to realize it. This is a part of

the ancient knowledge known by a few, followed by a few, which They have ever brought into a world of false faiths and tried to teach the people in general.

Those who follow the Path of true faith are not drawn away from their fellow-men. One's fellow-men are more to him than they ever were before. He sees more in them. He sees more clearly the difficulties under which they labor, and desires to help them in every way. So he is more of a living man. He acts more knowingly than do the rest. He gets more from nature than they do, because he sees the whole. He gets as much out of this life and more, far more, than the man who lives for enjoyment, for happiness, whose ambition is for himself. But he lives not for himself. The whole aim of his life is that men may know these truths; for he knows that knowledge means the destruction of false faiths, and hence of all the suffering and horrors of physical existence. Then, evolution will go on by leaps and bounds. Men will be extricated from the places to which they have consigned themselves, and move on without limit in a universe of infinite possibilities.

When all our false beliefs, our desires and passions, our likes and dislikes have fallen away from us like cast-off garments, and we have resumed that nature of us which is divine, then we shall be able to build a civilization as much higher than this as we can possibly imagine. For we cannot get away from the Karma of the race to which we belong, and those effects which have been produced by us together, we must work out together. The best way, the highest way, and the surest way, is to proceed along the line of our own inner nature, and, so doing, give the suggestion to others by which they may realize their inner nature. Then, dwelling on That which is immortal, changeless, limitless, which is our very self and the self of all creatures, the realization will come — little by little, but it will surely come

(Robert Crosbie, *The Friendly Philosopher*, p. 354)

REVELATION VERSUS KNOWLEDGE

It is futile to accept revelations on anybody's say-so. They convey no knowledge, and it is actual knowledge that is required by each one. Shibboleths and formulas are mere words, not a criterion of truth.

Theosophy is in the world to present the means by which each one can acquire knowledge for himself. Its study and application call forth the judgment and discrimination latent in the man himself.

Truth is not a man, nor a book, nor a statement. The nature of Truth is *universal*; its possessors in any degree will be found to be appliers of universality in thought, speech and action. Their efforts will be for humanity regardless of sex, creed, caste or color. They will never be found among those claiming to be the chosen spokesman of the Deity — and exacting homage from their fellow-men: true Brotherhood includes the least developed as well as the very highest. We must seek to give aid to *all* in search of truth. Our value and aid in this great work will be just what we make them by our motive, our judgment, our conduct.

The heart-felt desire that others may benefit from our lives will be felt by those open — it matters little how few; they may be the means of wakening many others. It is the effort and the sacrifice that bring the ultimate results, but in our zeal it is well to consider what the Masters have done, and do year after year, age after age. They do what They can, when They can, and as They can

— in accordance with cyclic law. They conserve the knowledge gained — and *wait*. Knowing this, and doing thus, there can be no room in us for doubt or discouragement. Theosophy is for those who *want* it. We are to hold, wait, and work for those few earnest souls who will grasp the plan and further the Cause. Many have their ears so dulled, or their attention so diverted, that no number of repetitions can reach them — yet Theosophy must be held out continually for all who will listen. That is our self-assumed work; we have our example in H. P. B. and W. Q. J. — as to means, method and manner: let us imitate them, and so do their work in their spirit.

The Theosophical “arch” has been thrown across the abyss of creeds and materialism. Some have discovered where a base rests on one or the other side; others have found “stones” that belong to the arch, but the “key-stone” has been rejected” because of its irregular shape — all like the story of old — all like the story of old in Masonic tradition. But we are also reminded that the time came when the rejected stone became “the head of the corner” because it was found to be the key-stone. All the time there were those who knew of the key-stone, but they were very few and their voices were not heard amid the clamor of the claims made by those who had found portions of the arch and desired recognition. So the few had to “Work, Watch — and Wait”, knowing that history repeats itself, and that there is nothing new under the sun. The allegory of the tower of Babel applies to the present times. Everything is in confusion, everyone talking his own gibberish and nobody listening. I said “nobody” — but some are; a few realize that none of these things bring knowledge, All that can be done is to let the light so shine that all who will may seek it, thus sowing for future harvest. It would be a hopeless task were it not for Reincarnation; so the great effort should be to promulgate

the fundamental principles of Unity, of Brotherhood, of Karma and Reincarnation¹

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On page 365: the general idea that *sincere effort is causal, and therefore above success and failure* Each such effort plants unseen seeds within the soul, that bend like reeds, but never break, and blossom forth when their hour has struck: (ed., A.T.)

It is, then, to the Teachings that attention has to be called — not to ourselves who are only handing them on as best we can. If one sees that in many ways he is not able to do all that needs to be done, or that he would like to accomplish, it is evidence that he is in the way of improving. Our ideals are never reached: they continually precede us. As a man thinks, so he becomes; time is an element in this, and it is shortened by *patient* doing of *what we can*. To be in the least cast down by our apparent imperfections is a form of impatience — disregard of Law. Whatever comes is right — until something better appears. Observed defects will fade out under observation, so we can cheerfully bear; with our own defects as well as with those of others, while we go right on working.

One of the greatest helps that Theosophy gives is the power to take a wider survey of the field of action than is otherwise possible: we do not look on this life only, but on many future lives during which “I and thou and all the princes of the earth” will live and strive for the universal redemption of mankind — ever looking ahead, ever seeing further heights toward which the awakening spirit may be directed. There is much strength, there are many faculties among men and mostly used

¹ (Letter One, “In the Beginning”, *The Friendly Philosopher*, p. 264)

without direction of a permanent nature. Could right philosophy be implanted — even the single idea of the Divine nature in man — a greater impetus would be given to right living; then a philosophy in accord with this nature would be sought by those so quickened.

It would not take so long, nor be so difficult, if those who are interested in Theosophy would stop figuring it out for *themselves*, and get busy in spreading the philosophy and the idea of service. Without the right philosophy, strength and special faculties are useless. If all study so as to be the better able to help and teach others, there must result a general gain and help. I think the word “Theosophy” has power: if it had not, there would not be so many misusing the name. In spite of all these, Theosophy itself is untouched. Our work is to keep it pure as it was delivered to us, for the sake of those who *can* be helped — and we are finding some all the time. In better days we will be able to do more — and all the better because of present difficulties. Theosophy pure and simple is the standard by which efforts may be applied and errors combated, so it must always be kept in evidence as the source of all right effort.

When the Parent theosophical society was established, it was necessary to give it the form that would be best understood by the people of the time. It was known that many would cling to the form rather than to the spirit of the Theosophical Movement, and would imagine that the spirit could not exist in any other form. But also it was known that some would perceive that spirit and care only for that. Events have justified all this, so that we stand at another point in the cycle. Perfection in action is not possible; so, while showing forth the spirit of the Movement only, we yet present a *visible* basis necessary in any exoteric work. “U. L. T.” is a *name given to certain principles and ideas*; those who associate themselves with those principles and ideas

are attracted and *bound by them only* — not by *their* fellows who do likewise or who refrain or who cease to consider themselves so bound. The DECLARATION, with its signature by the Associates, is a wide departure from anything that exists as an organization. (*Ibid, p.366*)

The basis of successful work is Unity: this is the constant cry of H.P.B. and W.Q. J. To be able to afford a basis for Unity to individuals or organizations, without demanding any relinquishment of affiliation or belief, is no small thing. The *Declaration* of the “U.L.T.” does just that: it is not a theory, but a carrying out of the spirit of the Messengers. Paraphrasing a saying of the Master, we might say: “All Theosophy is before you; take what you can.”

The part we play, — major or minor — , does not concern us at all. We might say, as Judge once did, “sometimes a minor agent is used by the Lodge to call attention to a proper course.” *Our* work is to call attention to the true basis for Union among Theosophists — and at the same time to set the example. People need, whether new students or old, to grasp the message of Theosophy for itself — not because of belief in any person or organization. If students succeed in grasping and applying the Philosophy, they will have true clairvoyance as to men, things methods, and their gratefulness will include all that contributed to their opportunity; this gratitude will find expression in their; doing the same for others. (*Ibid, p. 367*)

THE MIGHTY TIDE OF HUMAN EVENTS

Upon studying William Judge's **Forum Answers** (p. 06), one can see a key quotation from a Mahatma Letter. It's on the cycles of historical evolution. The Master says in order to avoid certain theosophical misconceptions:

"...We never pretended to be able to draw nations in the mass to this or that crisis in spite of the general drift of the world's cosmic relations. *The cycles must run their rounds. . . .* The major and minor yugas must be accomplished *according to the established order of things.* And we, borne along with the mighty tide, can only modify and direct some of its minor currents (1)...."

The importance of those lines can't be overstated. These words were first published in the book, *The Occult World*, by A.P. Sinnett. Later, they were included in the chronological edition of the *Mahatma Letters*. In this crucial paragraph, the process of the "mighty tide of "Karmic cycles" is described from the viewpoint of the Adepts. (1)

On the other hand, there is a celebrated poem by Longfellow, whose title is *Santa Filomena* – which describes the same "mighty tide" but now from the point of view of average human beings and students of the divine wisdom.

The poem might be said to complement the Master's statement – from the student's perspective. The really significant verses are in the first part of the poem. Some four lines of it have been actually used by Sylvia Cranston in the opening of her extraordinary book "HPB" – the best biography available of the main founder of the modern theosophical movement.

It is worthwhile to read and meditate on the first 12 lines of Longfellow's poem, which really show the same fact described by the Mahatma – the *common tide* of human karma – yet from quite another perspective. It says:

Whene'er a noble deed is wrought

Whene'er is spoken a noble thought,,

Our hearts, in glad surprise,

To higher levels rise.

The tidal wave of deeper souls

Into our inmost being rolls,

And lifts us unawares,

Out of all meaner cares.

Honor to those whose words or deeds

Thus help us in our daily needs,

And by their overflow

Raise us from what is low! (2)

Indeed, the common efforts of the Sages help lift the whole of humanity along the immense sea of time. The fact that many human beings are completely unconscious of it does not make a difference. Those who know about that, though, can share a vision of great things – and thus better understand the work of the elder brothers of our humanity.

CARLOS CARDOSO AVELINE, FROM BRAZIL.

NOTES:

(1) The whole letter from which WQJ made his quotation is of extreme importance. It has not been published in the T.U.P.(Pasadena) edition of the “*Mahatma Letters*”, but it is in the “*Combined Chronology of the Mahatma Letters & The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky to A.P. S.*”, by Margaret Conger, T.U.P., pp 28-38; and also in the Chronological edition of the “*Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*” (TPH Philippines, 1993, pp. 469-476).

(2) “*Favorite Poems*”, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Dover-Thrift-Editions, Dover Publications, Ind.,

THE WATCHER AT THE FORD¹ –

Vikharam, looking inward, beheld deathlessness, and found the sages who repose behind the veil of time, who rest go forth, do their work, and return. The four castes and the four yugas are in them, but they rest in the eternal; they descend and reascend the stair of time which men call variously birth, youth, manhood, death.

From that zone where the sages dwell, in the singing light, Vikharam entered the stair of the seven steps, the stair each step of which becomes denser and darker. As the fine-drawn filaments of light knit closer and closer, the body of fire that makes the shining house of the immortals silvered into finest ether; clothed itself in thoughts of service to the unholy castes of men; put on the desires of earth, knocked at the door of mother-love, entered the chrysalis; and at the tenth moon Vikharam once more gazed outwardly through child’s eyes, calm and undisturbed. Thus was the journey downwards which men call birth.

“This is our first-born child of our great love,” said the householders, Mother and Father. “Our cup is filled We are now the Trimurti — Father, Mother, Son.”

Narada, they named him, “my Narada,” his mother called him. “He is grave like a man, like an elder. He is wise beyond speech, more than men.”

¹ From *The Book of Images*, Cunningham Press Edition, Los Angeles 1947 pp. 126-32

And the father: "He is silent, like a man in the arms of the beloved: content, filled with tenderness, no more desiring, only that love forevermore endure."

She who had been only wife, became as mother, and grew every day richer in the doubled largess. He who had been only husband, became as father, and grew every day more gentle, enriching others with the benevolence of a full heart. So was sown the seed of Satya, the golden yuga in the midst of Kali, the black age.

"We have a son," quoth mother and father to each other. "He will inherit after us. His children will live after us. Our names will be remembered in generations to come. Men will say in remote times, 'these were the parents of Narada, the Blessed One.' We shall live again in him and in them when these our bodies shall have returned to the grey parchment. It is good to be a Father. It is good to be a Mother. It is good to have a son."

So these parents of Narada gave thanks to their God; they made offerings in the temple and revered the priests speaking in the name of their God. Their hearts being filled their love being content, they saw not the miseries of earth, nor heard the lamentations of those who mourn. Or if perchance the drawn notes of another's agonies made discord in the sweet silence of their love, they gave thanks to their God, that He spared them the common lot, and made Him offerings in the temple, that all men might be drawn to the true faith. Or again, if the shadow of another's woe fell across the sunshine path they trod, they besought him to seek the priests and make his peace with the true and

loving God whom they worshipped, that His bounty might bring healing and fullness of joy.

Thus they erected the four pillars of all faith as is written in the commentary on the incarnations of Vikharam: the pillars of sincerity, of devotion of steadfastness, of integrity. The four pillars being thus erected, they entered upon the fifth year of the days of Narada, Son of Man. As is well known to those who ponder the path of probation, the fifth is the pillar of Light, which reveals as the balance of Karma even unto the number nine. If the faith of the householders proceeds from the sattva of understanding, the nidanas of perfection are builded into the columns and the temple is complete. If the faith of the householders is of the quality which proceeds from the sattva of misunderstanding of the true nature of the soul, the fifth column falls, and great is the fall thereof, causing also to fall the four pillars erected. Thus is the number nine the number of justice and the number of mercy, the number of perfection, or the number of death, according to the faith of the householder.

These parents, knowing naught of the mysteries of the Incarnation, but content in love, sought no other knowledge. They worshipped the lamp and not the flame of the unfed fire of the soul. They knew only their God, knowing not Him who is the origin of all the gods and of the adepts. They knew only Narada, their son, knowing him not as Vikharam, ancient of lives companion of the sages who repose behind the veil of time.

But Vikharam, beyond time and space and therefore beyond all forms and appearances, waited the fateful

balance of the manvantara of householders.

Upon the face of Bhumi the earth, fell the chill dark clouds of Kali, the black age. Men shivered and groaned under the weight of the iron harvest of past sins heaped to the balancing point. They forsook their gods and read tales that soon there would be no more light; that Nyima the sun would disappear and all men perish miserably. Fierce struggles began and men fought in whirlwinds for a place in the sun while yet some light lasted. Other masses made sacrifices to their gods that the earth might be cleansed of her offenses and the sun restores.

Those who had wives and children crying to them for food and for shelter began slaying each other that their own might be saved. Dreadful diseases rained over the lands.

The parents of Narada saw not heard not, heeded not. Illumined by the virtues of former living, filled with the light of their love, how could they know hunger who hungered not at all? Came day when the priests of the sects, seeing ruin for them and their gods in the ruin of the people, without whom there are neither gods nor priests, gave up their external exclusions and besought all men to make sacrifice. But their gods had left the earth, mutilated by the mutilation of men's hopes, dead with the death of men's faith.

Each leader of tribes assured his own people that peace could not come again upon earth until they only should rule over all others. So caste fought with caste until the supremacy of misery was imposed upon all alike. The shrines of old, the marketing

places and the fields and roadways were heaped with the bodies of heretics. Each esteemed that his miseries were caused by the sins of his neighbor; yea, even by he accursed of his own household. The darkness grew more intense till many affirmed that there had never been other than darkness; that the sun was a myth of madmen, of priests and of fools, and would nevermore shine again. Thus came the balance point of all when both the pillars of sincerity and devotion, the pillars of steadfastness and integrity trembled and shook, as waver the lines of familiar things in the engulfing darkness of night.

By the sacrifice and the loss of that which they hold most dear are men purified of their sins. The mission of Vikharam being so far accomplished, the divine ray once more began to separate itself from the human, returning to the central flame.

"Our child is sick," cried the mother. "Our son falls ill of some malady," cried the father. Their love and their faith cried out conjointly. "Let us take him to the sacred pool of healing and implore our God for succor."

The priests, enjoined sacrifice, and the remaining elders chanted mantrams and intoned orisons. Narada looked at them with patient eyes, suffering all, but receiving naught from the ministrations.

"Look how his sight grows distant. Son, canst thou not see thy mother? Son, canst thou not gaze upon thy father?"

Son, have pity on us who love thee, and return again to us. A mist came up from the heart and covered their eyes. A silence came up from

the heart and covered their ears. There was no going that eyes could witness, no sound of departure that ears might hear, but when they looked and when they listened, Narada was no more there. The light had failed, so that the eye could not see; the air had sunken, so that the ear could not hear.

The mother crooked her arms in vain, they ached only with the void. Memory tugged at her heart, but the breast had felt no pull of dear hunger. Her love seemed a thing that had beroken in twain.

The father carried but clay in his arms; carried but lead in his heart, hw who had nestled sunlight in his arms, and singing gold in his heart. Kali, the black age, entered the secret recesses of their in most being through the door of love, when Narada went away into the darkness and the4 silence, where human eye could not follow, where human ear could not attend, where human love could not enter.

“The grief of all mankind has entered our heart,” cried the parents. “The fountain of our life has dried up. We are drowned in the sea of all sorrows.”

Loving the form and appearance, they had not learned to discern the soul as apart from forms and appearances. Then religion forsook them. Relying upon mortal religion, how could they learn the true nature of the soul as being entirely distinct from any experiences, and disconnected from all material things, and dissociated from their understanding? They knew and loved Narada. They neither knew, therefore, how could they love, Vikharam, the deathless, the immortal, the three-tongued flame of the four wicks?

Yet in the brotherhood of death is the door to understanding of the mystery of life; of the understanding that the universe exists for the sake of the soul alone; for the emancipation of the soul from bondage to mortal things.

Purified by their sorrows from all sins, these parents partook of what was left of the offering and entered upon the religion of works. In memory of Narada they entered into the sorrows of all who had loved and lost. This is the way of al knowing. In sympathy for another’s speechless grief, something stirred in the tomb of their hearts. In assuaging another’s tears, the fountain within them unsealed.

Narada was gone, but Vikharam never left them at all; never went from the heart of the mother; never departed from the heart of the father. In the speechless depths of their souls he moved to and fro, stirring the waters of compassion for all that lives. Clothed in the undying vesture of the Nirmanakayas, Vikharam lightened their hearts, spoke in the thrilled silence which becomes audible only to those who hear no more the sweet-tongued voices of illusion. Like the eternal music of the golden spheres his presence translated the voice of the silence.

“Only forms are of this world, dear Mother. Only appearances are of this world, dear Father. Only here are there tears and the black doom of parting, dear Parents. As sunlight from far spaces illumines the darkness of this world, so love shines afar from its source, giving light and warmth in the midst of mortal things. On the other side of night is the day still shining. On the other shore of death is the soul that illumines the clay.”

Compassion gave them sight.
Compassion gave them hearing.
Compassion gave them knowledge. In
the midst of forms and appearances
they found while living the ford
between the living and the dead. They
found the Watcher at the Ford.
Vikharam, watcher at the ford, met
them deathless and shining. The Soul,
which takes what form it will, took on
the form of Narada, transfigured,
transformed, translucent.

“Thou has found us and we have
found thee, O Narada, O our Son.”

Thus Father, Mother, Son, were
once more one.

Thus was the mission of
Vikharam achieved. Thus was
achieved the germination of Satya, the
yuga of the divine upon this earth, in
the midst of the forms and
appearances of Kali, the black age of
bondage to mortal things.

KESHARA, THE SKY-WALKER¹

The oxen, their necks fast in the yoke,
ploughed slowly forward in the white dust
of the shadowless road, walking upon their
shadows. The ungreased wheels of the cart
sang like crickets as they turned upon the

axle. The cut of contentment united the
oxen to their task, the harmony of a single
note sustained the wheels, and the white dust
purred at their passage.

Alone upon the cross-piece Keshara
sat motionless, eyes closed, ears stopped, the
goad asleep between his knees. Yoked with
inexorable Karma he could neither enter the
land of sleeping nor flee the zone of waking.
For Keshara, seeking that which was lost,
had come to the end of works where effort
seems a vain exertion and life a shadowless
road.

Awake, Karma, in the invisible form
of memory, pressed upon him dishes bitter
as aloes which he tasted through the feeling
of loathing. When he sought the darkness of
sleep, Karma, changing to the invisible form
of imagination, pictured before his mind's
eye unending stretches of shadowless road,
white hot in the acrid dust of unendurable
repetition. His soul entered into the
modifications produced by the mind. In the
blur of his inner self Karma became
invisibly and inextricably intimate with his
own being. Feeling became hearing and
found fault in his own inner voice.

“I who have been named Keshara, the
Sky-Walker, have been so named in
derision. Memory and imagination are not
wings but an evil affliction from the gods.
Is there no end?”

Feeling and hearing became sight. He
saw Keshara, seeker of the path to that
which was lost, wandering from caste to
caste, from teacher to teacher, passing
through countless experiences, finding no
rest. He saw himself more and more
desolate, cheated of fruition, at last a driver
of oxen, companion of a cart, drowning in a
river of dust. Self-pity, the shadow of
compassion, clothed him in drab vestments.

These beasts are more blessed than I.
They have neither memory nor imagination.
Each day is food and drink to them. Each

¹ From *The Book of Images*, pp. 78-83 Cunningham
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night opens to them the wide harbor of rest. Nature assoils them their sins. For me there is no end of toils. While the day serves, I am the slave of dumb brutes with whom there is no communion of soul. When the sun rests, I become the slave of my body, a dumb ox which I must water and feed and shelter. While these cattle sleep I am the slave of my mind, bruised by memory, goaded by imagination. There is no place where I may lay my head.”

Soul and mind conjoined in the body of Keshara with the organ of thought, as oxen and cart and dust were conjoined, Keshara swayed to and fro between the three worlds, slave of the powers he had himself aroused.

The oxen seemed to swerve in the track. The oxen seemed to swerve in the track. In the midst of the indistinguishable dust of the three worlds of waking, dreaming, sleep, a formless heap took on the outlines of a man. He neither moved nor spoke, but his halt breathing seemed to give a fraction of life to the heaped powder of the roadway.

In the bitterness of the irreconcilable elements of being, Keshara heard himself revile the prostate pilgrim.

“Lie there, thou dust. You are nearly home. Delhi is but a crippled day’s march. Or, if that discontents you, mayhap it is written thou shalt return to dust even where thou liest and be spared further useless exertion.. Mayhap Death, which denies me may be carelessly kind to thee.”

Assuredly, as is written in the commentary, at this ultimate moment of time in the journey of Keshara, a gnarled and wasted hand closed and unclosed in the heap, and in the imagination it can be seen that thereupon Keshara goaded the oxen so that the creaking cart pitched in the rut.

“Mock, if you will, with mute appeal to me who am more miserable than thou. Yet will I serve thee kindly, and give thee yet more plentifully a garment for thy nakedness, or, it may be a white shroud for thy wedding with Death. Death and the dust are the bonds which alone level all distinctions of tank and caste.”

The wain staggered on, lured by the lengthening shadow ahead. Keshara, inert upon the cross-piece swayed with the swaying of the cart, as it moved with the slow pace of the oxen.

Suddenly the sun, heaving the gaunt earth before him, deserted the skies. Night leveled all distinctions of road and of roadside. The oxen, sensing the friendly herbage and the lotion of water near at hand, turned the consenting cart into the open field.

Roused by the absence of motion, Keshara descended from the cross-piece, unyoked the cattle, led them to water, gave them millet from the sack, and released them to ponderous freedom in the communal silence of night. Then he carried his own feet to the margin, bathed and fed his body, and returning, lay under the cart to seek once more in sleep that which, in the world of waking, men vainly seek.

Shortly a separation of the soul and the mind from the body of Keshara occurred in the darkness. As in a dream, soul and mind freed from the bodily yoke took on renewed and unruly vigor and bent Keshara back over the pathway. Memory dragged him back through the dust, and the darkness. Imagination trebled the distance and gave eyes to the dust which rose up and surrounded him with accusative witness.

The chill of the night was transformed into fear. In the metempsychosis he had the sensation at each step, as the dust slipped beneath his sandal, that he was trampling the formless heap of the pilgrim. He felt the

passionless torment of the helpless, heard the speechless lamentation of the unpitied of this world. His mind contracted with pain. He saw a wasted hand close and unclose, plucking feebly at his ankle. His inner breathing grew halt, then impossible. He sank in the dust by the pilgrim and became in turn himself a pilgrim, spent and emptied into a formless heap in the arid waste of the roadway of life — the faint outline of a man.

Now the pilgrim arose, took on the form of Keshara, and gravely considered him in his plight. The soul and the mind of Keshara became indistinguishable from the pilgrim. Memory and imagination having fulfilled their dharma, dissolved. Karma, satisfied for the time, was not, and all things were one; the power of cohesion which makes all separateness, disappeared with the disappearance of the connecting bonds of action.

Without memory and without imagination there is neither the world of waking, nor the world of dreaming. Only the world of the real remains in the silence, and in the real there is no Karma. In the real there is neither dust, nor oxen, nor pilgrim, nor Sky-Walker; neither any memory of Karma which was nor any imagination of things to be. In the real there is no separateness at all, nor any speech, nor anything to be heard, nor anything to be seen. In the real there is naught but the communion of the Self, and in this Self-communion there is that which is in the world of waking seems as forms and in the world of dreaming seems as voices. It is in the real that the Self is as a spectator without a spectacle.

But when the silence melts into the voices, and the voices melt into forms, and the forms melt into dust, and oxen, and pilgrims, and Sky-Walkers, then Self comes forth into the world of waking through the land of dreaming. Then Karma awakes while the Self sleeps. Soul and mind are once more conjoined in the form with the

organ of thought. Memory and imagination are once more yoked together to the cart, and the white dust of the shadowless road stretches forth, horizoned with unendurable repetitions.

Keshara, seeking that which was lost, was roused from the silence by the returning breath of the body. Surya, hidden by the revolution of the great wheel, once again opened the eye of day as one new-born. The breathing of the rested cattle seemed an oblation of the oxen. The running waters chanted with an auspicious rhythm. The dust, stirred by the morning breeze, moved in faint formless waves of inaudible accompaniment. Like memory transformed into feeling, a subtle transmigration from all things enveloped Keshara. His body glowed, soft and cool and subtle, brother to the dust. His breath seemed fragrant, melodious, as though water and herbage in some mystic metempsychosis had become an expanding and singing incense within him. His mind, lightened, free and enamored, spread and rose like the smoke of the incense to greet the sun. His soul caught the fire of imagination and lighted the spatial depths of all things.

He perceived standing near the roadway, white immaculate, like a symbol, a pilgrim resting upon his staff. And this pilgrim, tall, shining beneficent seemed to reach from earth to sun. The dust embraced his sandals; his hands offered salutation to herbs and to waters. His head seemed one with the sun. A radiance, as of woven strands of light, spread into all places. And from all around, from earth, and sky and light, from dust, and cattle, from herbage and waters, from pilgrim and Keshara, the enthroned peace intoned the unison.

“That which thou seekest is here. I enter the earth supporting all living things by my power. In all creatures I am the life. The brilliance of the sun which illuminates the whole world, and the light which is in the moon and in the fire, are the splendor of

Myself. I am the sweet smell in the earth. I am the taste in water. I am the breath of all breathing. From Me come memory, knowledge. All that is, is the image of Myself.

As dreaming is the image of waking, so is the waking world the image of the real. I am this. I am that. I am thou. I am not to be remembered. I am not to be imagined. All that is, springs from me; I do not spring from them.

“Farther than far am I when sought in memory. More hidden than darkness am I when sought in imagination. More unendurable than endless repetition am I when sought for in works. Heavier than matter am I when sought for in forms. More bitter than aloes am I when sought for in separateness.”

Suddenly, as assuredly is written in the commentary the ultimate division of time returned upon Keshara, expanded like a glowing sphere, became the eye of wisdom, and he saw all things in the light of the Real.

Keshara, once more seated upon the cross-piece, became the Sky-Walker, for he had found that which was lost.