

Entering the Silence: Meditation and the Hidden Path of Theo Sophia

A Treatise on The Soundless Sound

extracted from

**The Teachings of The Order of Christian Mystics
and The Voice of the Silence**

by

Dirk Jan Schreuder

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“Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of God.”

Dedicated to the Founders of The Order of Christian Mystics

Pyrahmos and Rahmea

and to their Teacher, who on earth was known as

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky

“Every teaching will come back renewed, with its heart in it. There is nothing hid that shall not be revealed, nothing buried that shall not be resurrected.”

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by

DIRK JAN SCHREUDER

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for the degree of

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Entering the Silence: Meditation and the Hidden Path of Theo Sophia

A Treatise on The Soundless Sound extracted from The Teachings of The Order of Christian Mystics and The Voice of the Silence

I declare that the above dissertation is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

I further declare that I submitted the dissertation to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at UNISA for another qualification or at any other higher education institution.

DJ Schreuder

Signature

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Date

Summary of Dissertation

This dissertation aims to show that the eternal spiritual verities to be found within Asian philosophy such as karma, reincarnation and engaging an inner path of meditation to attain Unity with 'God' – freedom from repeated reincarnation – is comparable with, and to be found within broad-based Judeo-Christian¹ mystical tradition as espoused by *The Order of Christian Mystics* (1908 - 1949).

Its spiritual teachings aimed to show its pupils and disciples how to come into touch with an *Inner Divine Power – the Mystic Christ or the Soundless Sound*² – and how this 'Sound Current' redeems and transforms the aspirant, leading to God-realisation. It draws on Theosophical teachings to show the universality with Asian philosophy, revealing a system of personal regeneration or spiritual alchemy, by transmuting the base creative energy – understood as *kundalini shakti* in Asian philosophy – through Divine aspiration and inner contemplative and meditative practices.³

Key Terms:

Entering the Silence; The Soundless Sound; The Sound Current; Concentration; Meditation; Mystical Christianity; The Mystic Christ; Regeneration; Redemption; Transmutation; Divine Life; Purity; Theosophy; *Nada*; *Sāṅkhya*; *Samyāma*; *Yoga*

¹ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 428)

² (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Soundless Sound*, 2012a, p. 13)

³ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, pp. 21-26)



Figure 1: Depiction of The Christian Mystic

Depiction of the Christian Mystic Saint Hildegard of Bingen, wearing the outer robes of purity, her enlightened state evidenced by the Inner Radiance, the halo surrounding her head. Her gaze is drawn inwards and upwards and represented by the diadem, placed at the eye centre. The Flame emanating above her head, the Supreme, shows her connection with and immersion in Divine Love. In her hand, a partially hidden scroll, *Sci Vias Domini*, "Know the Ways of the Lord." The Harp sounding the inner Divine Melody, with the Radiant Spiritual Sun, showing the way to God and experienced as sound and light. The descending dove, ever the symbol of the Mystic Christ, is descending as Divine Grace.

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List of Abbreviations

Curtisses	Harriette Augusta and Frank Homer Curtiss
<i>Gītā</i>	<i>Bhagavad Gītā</i>
HPB	Helena Petrovna Blavatsky
OCM	The Order of Christian Mystics

Fundamental Concepts

The following terminology is used throughout this dissertation to clarify core definitions of spiritual concepts and for ease of reference. These have been taken mostly from *The Teachings of The Order of Christian Mystics* and *The Voice of the Silence*.

Mystic Christianity: The Mystical Path within Judeo-Christian Teachings, also termed Esoteric Christianity or "... the inner side of the Christian teachings...that same identical spiritual power and same truths (to be found) in the Christian religion."⁴

It "... teaches us to seek union with and the conscious guidance of the Higher Self (*Ātman*) ..."⁵

The Mystic Christ: The Supreme, The Absolute, THAT Supreme level of consciousness which is commonly understood as 'God' and experienced as *The Soundless Sound*. "The Mystic Christ is not a personality, but a Divine Essence. It is a spiritual emanation from the Godhead, the Son of God or the Godhead in its creative aspect; that Mystic Power or Principle which fructifies and animates all manifestations of life. It is the Divine Creative Force, a great stream of lifegiving, creative Essence which manifests in all things on all planes as the animating Principle of the One Life."⁶

Mysticism: Mysticism is best thought of as a constellation of distinctive practices, discourses, texts, institutions, traditions and experiences aimed at human transformation, variously defined.⁷

That Divine Power: Referring to the first emanation from out of the Supreme, which in *The Secret Doctrine* is called the *Word* and the *Logos*, also *The First Begotten Son of God* from which all creation sprang. In our

⁴ (Curtiss F. H., *Personal Survival*, 2014d, pp. 120, 121)

⁵ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Letters from The Teacher* Volume 2, 2013c, p. 84)

⁶ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Mystic Life*, 2012b, pp. 73,74)

⁷ As defined by the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy 2022.

sense, we call it *The Voice of God* or *The Soundless Sound*,⁸ that which the spiritual aspirant literally experiences on his mystical quest.

Devotion: A profound dedication to a Higher Power or spiritual principles. That inner state of being uplifted, active thought swallowed up in aspiration, drawn away from the material world, and always being somewhat inward, a state of abstraction (*pratyāhāra*), contemplating upon everything that one sees as *Ātman*. “Tell him, O Aspirant, that true devotion may bring him back the knowledge, that knowledge which was his in former births.”⁹

Prayer: The mode of addressing a Divine or sacred power, in which there predominates the mood and intent of reverent entreaty.¹⁰ “Prayer is an aspiration of the Soul toward the Divine.”¹¹

Heart Doctrine: Or *The Doctrine of the Heart* as per HPB’s *The Voice of the Silence*, referring to the devotional side of the mysteries, the inner path entered through prayer, aspiration, devotion, contemplation and the Supreme practice of *Entering the Silence*. Contrasted with *The Doctrine of the Eye*, intellectual learning.¹²

Concentration: “*Dhāranā*, is the intense and perfect concentration of the mind upon an interior object, accompanied by complete abstraction from everything pertaining to the external Universe, or the world of the senses.”¹³

⁸ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Soundless Sound*, 2012a)

⁹ (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 37)

¹⁰ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th Edition, Vol. 22, 256-b.

¹¹ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Temple of Silence*, 2015d, p. 34)

¹² “The ‘Doctrine of the Eye’ is for the crowd, the ‘Doctrine of the Heart,’ for the elect ... Learn above all to separate Head-learning from Soul-Wisdom, the ‘Eye’ from the ‘Heart’ doctrine.” (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, pp. 25,27)

¹³ (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 73)

Entering the Silence: *Dhyāna*. “Listening to the mystic, creative notes of *The Soundless Sound*.¹⁴ ... An ecstatic state in which the human consciousness is transcended and, while it lasts, all sense of personality is lost.”¹⁵

Meditation: From the point of *Samyāma Yoga*, “True meditation, *Dhyāna*, is conscious realization of God through intuitive perception.”¹⁶
Meditation refers to practices that still, elevate and ultimately transcend the mind.¹⁷

Contemplation: *Samādhi*¹⁸, in its highest sense, Oneness with the Supreme.
“... attaining the object of spiritual realization ... Our endeavour to realize our oneness with God ... which is the real object of all religion.”¹⁹ In a general sense, contemplation refers to those mental processes of having some spiritual ideal or thought ever-present and applicable to wakeful consciousness.

Still Small Voice: The *Inner Voice of Intuition* that advises us inwardly to correct action; by some called the conscience. “In every Soul there is a Divine Guidance which, if the human personality will listen, will clearly indicate that which is right and wrong.”²⁰

The Higher Self: *The Voice of the Silence*, the Father-in-heaven, our personal ‘God’ or Supreme Soul, *Ātman*²¹. That aspect of our constitution that is Unmanifest, Permanent and Eternal,²² continually striving to lead and guide the human personality back to conscious oneness with Him.²³

¹⁴ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Temple of Silence*, 2015d, p. 19)

¹⁵ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 347)

¹⁶ (Yogananda, *The Second Coming of Christ*, 2004, p. 1588)

¹⁷ (Lane, 2022), Introduction

¹⁸ (Yogananda, *The Second Coming of Christ*, 2004, p. 1590)

¹⁹ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Mystic Life*, 2012b, pp. 95, 96)

²⁰ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Gems of Mysticism*, 2015g), Title page.

²¹ (Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary*, 1892, p. 44)

²² See Figure 2.1, The Manifest and Unmanifest Creation.

²³ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 284)

- Yoga:* The term *Yoga* is derived from the Sanskrit root *Yug*, meaning ‘to join’ or ‘to yoke’ or ‘to unite’, in the spiritual sense, with that *Divine Inner Power*, commonly called and understood as ‘God.’ Any practice that helps to attain this union with ‘God’ is termed *Yoga*.²⁴
- Sāṅkhya Yoga:* The goal of *Sāṅkhya* is to attain liberation (*moksha*) by understanding the true nature of the Self, including “...definite *methods* for Self-realization ... the yogi perceives the exact nature of his body, mind, and soul. Through scientific techniques he attains by gradual steps the knowledge of the Ultimate Substance of creation.”²⁵
- Samyāma:* *The Voice of the Silence* expounds the practices of *Dhāranā* and *Dhyāna* to attain *Samādhi* – also called *Samyāma*²⁶ – representing the practical path of *Yoga*, elaborated in the *Yoga Sūtras* of Patañjali, pointing to those spiritual practices which lead to liberation from this world of illusion.

²⁴ (Yogananda, *The Second Coming of Christ*, 2004, p. 1595)

²⁵ (Yogananda, *The Bhagavad Gita: God Talks With Arjuna*, 2001, p. 269)

²⁶ (Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary*, 1892, pp. 291,292)

Chapter One: Introduction and Methodology

1.1 Introduction

Research has shown that there is a cross-cultural 'inner path' narrative that can be located within many of the religious traditions of the world. This is too broad a claim to defend in this dissertation, as it would entail detailing the nature of this inward mystical turn and then locating it in the spiritual traditions of the world. The purpose of this dissertation is to provide an orienting argument where a way or method of engaging this broad claim is presented.

A case study is presented where the author draws out the inner, deeper path vocabulary and narrative from the historical works of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (HPB), as linked to the Theosophical Society, and from the posthumously HPB inspired, largely forgotten, Order of Christian Mystics (OCM). The author makes no definitive claims, as the texts of the OCM are to be read and analysed on their merits and should be accepted for their addition to occult and esoteric knowledge, and for the scientific relevance and research that has made this current work possible. The teachings of the OCM, therefore, form the main textual reservoir from which the author draws, for two reasons.

First, having recovered their teachings from almost total obscurity, the author aims to introduce this occult and esoteric group to the scholarly community. Second, the OCM focused on this inner turn, which, while evident in and continuous with HPB's Theosophical writings, is less emphasised in general Theosophical texts and traditions. Every tradition invokes a specific vocabulary and conceptualisation of this theme, which the author suggests as 'perspectives' on a unifying position.

By positing the dimensions of this inner path tradition and then locating it in a Theosophical and post-Theosophical stream, the author aims to illustrate and negotiate the boundary between comparative religious study with the phenomenological approach, attempting to describe the practices and inner experiences of the mystic.

HPB's contribution to Christian mystical tradition is mostly unknown and, by implication, underappreciated. Bester (2017) highlights the lack of inclusivity of HPB's contribution to the development of comparative religion from a Theosophical point of view and lays out the comprehensive contribution to this field within broad

Theosophical writings. This dissertation aims to bring to light her purported contribution, posthumously, to the development of comparative religion within the field of Christian mysticism and to argue for its inclusion as an invaluable source of ‘new’ material for academic study. HPB was instrumental in bringing the Asian philosophies to the attention of the West through Theosophy as laid out in detail by Hammer & Rothstein (2013) in their comprehensive *Handbook of The Theosophical Current*.

This dissertation aims to open the ‘inner path’ narrative of HPB’s teachings but from within the perspective of Christian mysticism, as compared and contrasted to the far more ancient inner philosophy to be found within *Sāṅkhya* and *Samyāma Yoga* and to make this equivalency apparent. Drawing from such writers in the field as *The Yoga Sūtras* of Patañjali, *A Biography Book* by White (2014), and well-known Yogis, such as Paramahansa Yogananda and others.

Here I will draw upon HPB’s ‘inner path’ teachings from her major contemplative work, *The Voice of the Silence* (1889), expounded comprehensively within the teachings of the OCM, referred to in contemporary spiritual philosophy as *The Sound Current Tradition*. This tradition, its ancient roots and contemporary proponents, is extensively collated and expounded upon by Professor David Christopher Lane in his book *The Sound Current Tradition* (2022) and is cited and quoted from considerably in this dissertation.

HPB introduces this ‘Sound Current’ philosophy throughout the teachings of the OCM, naming it *The Soundless Sound* (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Soundless Sound*, 2012a). In the preface to *The Voice of the Silence*, her major work on this sound current philosophy, she refers to further works such as “the great mystic work called *Paramārtha*,” also an interpretation of the ancient *Bhagavad Gītā* called *Dnyaneshwari* and *The Katha* and *Nada-Bindu Upanishads*, from which this sound current philosophy arises (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015).

This dissertation argues that HPB brought this core philosophy of spiritual practice and the attainment of God-realisation to light, and that this system of mysticism has lain hidden and dormant within broad Theosophical teachings for more than a century and a half. Analysing the teachings of the OCM within the philosophy of *The Sound Current Tradition*, this dissertation contributes to unifying Christian mystical philosophy with that of the more ancient traditions as generally laid out by Patañjali and several *Upanishads*.

1.2 General Background

There is a substantive tradition within various mystical traditions of immersing the attention into inner subtle sounds (*Nada*) during meditation, and understood as *The Sound Current Tradition* (Lane, 2022, p. abstract). Meditation refers to practices that still, elevate and ultimately transcend the mind.²⁷ Concentrating on these inner sounds represents the means to attain that inner stillness known to mystics as the state of God, Christ or *Krishna* consciousness.²⁸

Albeit in a more veiled way, this *Sound Current Tradition*, as stated by Professor Lane, is to be found within mystical Christianity but with its own unique terminology and symbology. Termed *the Mystic Christ* or *the Soundless Sound* – that which is understood as ‘God’ – this philosophy was brought to light by an early 20th century spiritual order, *The Order of Christian Mystics*, founded by Harriette Augusta and Frank Homer Curtiss under inspiration from the departed founder of The Theosophical Society, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky.

Its philosophy taught how to come into contact with this *Mystic Christ* through specific spiritual disciplines and exercises, and provided through a large body of published works broadly between 1908, the year the Order was founded, and 1946, when its second founder, Dr. Frank Homer Curtiss, passed away.

Some of its works remained in print, but mostly, post-1950, its works were available only as rare prints and difficult to obtain. A concerted effort was made to collect and transcribe the original, rare and out-of-print publications of *The Order of the 15*, *The Order of Christian Mystics* and *The Universal Religious Fellowship* as originally published broadly between 1908 and 1949. These writings were then reconstituted as a whole, republished in e-format and presented broadly as *The Teachings of the Order of Christian Mystics*, the name most used to refer to this Order and its teachings.

Throughout this dissertation, the author has used the e-copies when referencing, as these are readily searchable and available on the Internet. (www.orderofchristianmystics.co.za) The original works have all been scanned and uploaded to the Internet Archive, where they can be searched for under *The Order of Christian Mystics* (www.archive.org) and at (www.orderofchristianmystics.co.za).

²⁷ (Lane, 2022), Introduction.

²⁸ As laid out by HPB (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. xi). See also ‘Christ and Krishna Consciousness’, (Yogananda, *The Second Coming of Christ*, 2004), Glossary, p1581, 1586.

1.3 Academic Approach

This dissertation will show that within certain mainstream religions, such as Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism and others, there is to be found an inner deeper teaching, which can be understood as its inner mysteries, that which ultimately gives it its life. This, when properly understood, constitutes those teachings given out from its founders and which over time settle into religious observances and practices from within which 'the few' practice mysticism. Those schools that practice mysticism have one thing in common in that they generally offer initiation to 'the few'. These schools and their teachings are, in their spiritual sense, *esoteric*,²⁹ intended for or likely to be understood by only a few initiated or enlightened disciples of a teacher, specially prepared and trained for higher spiritual attainment. Some of these schools have spanned millennia and are known by various names in different countries. They teach an 'inward turn' largely characterised by an experiential component, linked to reticence, initiation and a determined pursuit for salvation. While most commonly exemplified in the Greco-Roman mysteries, these traditions are also reflected in components of the Western Esoteric Tradition and the great Asian meditative traditions as laid out by M. W. Meyer (1987) and Goodrick-Clarke (2008) on Faivre's 'The Experience of Transmutation'.

Faivre "... provided the scientific community with an interpretational framework for the study of Western Esotericism that has gained wide currency today. His definition of Esotericism as a 'world-view' with certain elements ... is a valuable tool for making visible the 'Esoteric' currents underlying Western culture and Western history of thought from antiquity through today."³⁰

Following on from the above, this dissertation will follow two formal academic approaches, the Comparative Study of Religions and the Phenomenological Approach.

1.3.1 The Comparative Approach

Within the scope of this dissertation, this inner tradition and 'inward turn' is set out comprehensively by Professor Lane in *The Sound Current Tradition: A Historical Overview*, where he elaborates on various Asian and other spiritual traditions – specifically within Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam, Christianity and Buddhism – each having

²⁹ Hidden or secret. From the Greek *esotericos*, 'inner' or concealed. (Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary*, 1892, p. 119)

³⁰ NUMEN, Vol.49, p213, Review article, Leiden (2002).

within their teachings a definitive and scientific system of inner practices. Here, reference is made mainly to meditation, and for brevity, stated as the path or system of *Yoga* as elucidated by White (2014) that Patañjali constituted from the various *Upanishads*, and as per Professor Lane, common to all five. The system as laid out by Patañjali is termed scientific, because it offers practical methods for controlling body and mind, thereby making deep meditation possible to attain its ultimate outcome, union with 'God.'

The original research, as conducted by the writer, pertains to this 'find' of *The Sound Current Tradition* within a philosophy based on Christian mysticism, extracted from the teachings of the OCM. It will be shown that this tradition has existed in Asian philosophy for millennia, and that it is in line and conversant with the philosophy as espoused in *The Yoga Sūtras* of Patañjali. This supports the comparative religious approach, comparing the spiritual verities within Christian mysticism to those systems generally understood as *Sāṅkhya* and *Samyāma Yoga*.

Nwosu (2021) states that "Comparative Study of Religion, is a branch of the study of religion concerned with the systematic comparison of doctrines and practices of the world's religions. Comparison, is a process of assessing similarity and non-similarity..." This will be shown throughout this dissertation with respect to these latest revelations within Christian mysticism and its comparison to *Yoga*. He further states that "... comparative religion as study ventures to show that all religions are one in various forms," an assertion fundamental to the teachings of the OCM and Patañjali's *Yoga*.

This dissertation will show that in comparing *The Sound Current Tradition* as it pertains to the mystical traditions of the East, no such comprehensive system exists within the field of Christian mysticism, at least not openly. It is difficult not to notice the 'apparent' lack of continuity of the Western mystical tradition *vis-à-vis* the Asian mysteries, as the Western mysteries had to be promulgated, studied and practised secretly, literally on pain of death,³¹ for more than a millennium. This gave rise to a secret tradition, the establishment of hidden societies and occult orders, an absolute necessity. Those times are now long gone, and today the inner aspects of the Christian mysteries can be expounded more openly.

³¹ Vide the comprehensive persecution of dissenting views by the then Roman Catholic Church and expounded comprehensively by HPB in her *Isis Unveiled*.

This dissertation aims to bring out these inner teachings within mystical Christianity and to show that these have been available to those who look for them. Once its language and symbolism³² are understood these inner teachings are the same and comparable to other paths, as set out by Professor Lane, showing the Unity in All.

“One object of these teachings is to bring to the attention of the world, as simply as possible, the Pearls of Wisdom in the teachings of the Master Jesus – pearls that have been overlaid with wordy misconceptions so long as to be almost unrecognizable.”³³

These correspondences will be compared mainly within the field of *Vedānta*³⁴ as *Yoga*, as these constitute the most ancient of mystical teachings, readily available, and juxtaposed with other systems of mysticism, where feasible.

“While the teachings of this Order are those of the Wisdom Religion ... they deal with the Christian Bible quite as much as with Eastern teachings.”³⁵

Vedānta, or that which concludes the Vedas, is briefly stated as that which refers to the philosophy enumerated in the *Upanishads*, emphasising those aspects of devotion, knowledge and the attainment of liberation from intermittent reincarnation or *saṃsāra*.³⁶ It will be shown that this is essentially the philosophy expounded in the

³² Presenting Occult Philosophy through unchanging symbology as it is to be found within Western mysticism through numerology, astrology, myths, legends, fables and the Tarot, expounded by the OCM in their volumes (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key to The Universe*, 2015b) and (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key of Destiny*, 2015a) among others.

³³ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 428)

³⁴ “*Vedānta*. The mystic system of philosophy which has developed from the efforts of generations of sages to interpret the secret meaning of the *Upanishads*. It is called in the *Shad-Darshanas* (six schools or systems of philosophy), *Uttara Mīmāṃsā*, attributed to *Vyāsa*, the compiler of the *Vedas*, who is thus referred to as the founder of the *Vedānta*. The orthodox Hindus call *Vedānta* a term meaning literally the ‘end of all (Vedic) knowledge’ — *Brahmā-jñāna*, or pure and spiritual knowledge of *Brahmā*” (Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary*, 1892, pp. 364,365).

³⁵ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 428)

³⁶ “*Saṃsāra*, in Indian philosophy, the central conception of metempsychosis: the soul, finding itself awash in the ‘sea of *saṃsāra*,’ strives to find release (*moksha*) from the bonds of its own past deeds (*karma* and the rounds of rebirth), which form part of the general web of which *samsāra* is made. (from Britannica.com) Literally ‘rotation’; the ocean of births and deaths. Human rebirths represented as a continuous circle, a wheel ever in motion” (Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary*, 1892, p. 292).

teachings of the OCM and comparing the practical and devotional aspects of this Order's teachings with *Yoga*, to 'yoke' oneself to God the Supreme, representing that practical and 'lived' aspect to attain 'liberation' and enumerated by Patañjali as the Eight-fold path of *Yoga*.

As this dissertation expounds on core principles of *Vedānta*, the use of Sanskrit terminology is unavoidable. Sanskrit phrases where engaged – their context, translations, transliterations and expounded meanings – are taken mainly from HPB's (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015) and (Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary*, 1892) as well as Paramahansa Yogananda's (Yogananda, *The Bhagavad Gita: God Talks With Arjuna*, 2001).

1.3.2 The Phenomenological Approach

It is this practical aspect, this 'gap', this lack of a clear meditative path in the Western mysteries and its comprehension, that the writer wishes to address with this dissertation; an in-depth analysis and exposition of new material, a comprehensive body of writings and teachings on the inner philosophy of Western mysticism and published as the teachings of the OCM.

The Phenomenology of Religion, an approach that concentrates on the study of consciousness and the objects of direct experience, pertains specifically to the title of this dissertation as it pertains to meditation, the fundamental inner practice of *The Sound Current Tradition* as stated by Lane (2022), whereby the meditating mystic aspires to God-realization, becoming One with the Supreme. Omoregbe (2002) states the phenomenology, or the outcome of religion, succinctly when he says that:

“God is the point at which all religions melt into, and anybody who has had the experience of God comes to see religious differences as superficial ... Mystics see all things as one in God. They testify eloquently that religious differences mean nothing to God, that whoever seeks God sincerely, in any culture, any race, and any religion, will find him.”³⁷

³⁷ As cited by Enyioma E. Nwosu, PhD, Department of Religious & Cultural Studies, University of Calabar. *Comparative Study of Religion*, p6.

Choosing the phenomenological approach in the study of religion is in part an attempt to recapture the 'experiential' side of religion as it is to be found within mystical Christianity, which is to say, the world as experienced by the believer or insider. Kruger (1982:17-19) outlined that this approach, as embraced in the study of religion, is characterised by three dimensions – intentionality, epoche and essences. By 'intentionality' Kruger asserts the attempt to capture "how people themselves experience the world." With 'epoche', the researcher or observer is to 'bracket' or suspend their assumptions, beliefs, and prejudices. This attempts to appreciate the insider's experience without reducing it to something else. Phenomenology, therefore, hopes to capture the 'essence' of experiences or 'phenomena in themselves', for example, 'the essential character of prayer'. By identifying and classifying various phenomena of religion, it is hoped that, in addition to clarifying these phenomena, a comparative stance would also be enabled in this study of the teachings of the OCM.

Phenomenology (direct Husserlian philosophy as an understanding of lived experiences from a first-person perspective, and as applied as a method in the study of religion) has come under various critiques, metaphysical and epistemological, since it entered the academic arena (Flood, 1999; Meyer, 2019:1-23). Additionally, the debates within the academic field of the study of mysticism (mysticism being the field of experience par excellence and the core study within this dissertation) have made naive appeals to objectivity mostly untenable. The positions are expertly outlined in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, where, for this study, the differentiation between essentialism, perennialism and constructivism shows the parameters of the debate (Jones & Gellman, 2025). The criticism of attempts to recover the actual content of mystical experiences or to defend 'contentless' experiences has led to an emphasis on language and how mystics describe their religious experiences. The language that mystics use to record and make sense of their experiences is all that the scholar has access to. The experiences themselves are obscure, and 'mostly' beyond academic reach.

However, given the dimensions of the debate, the author refers to a comparative study of the theme of 'light' in a book edited by Matthew T. Kapstein, "*The Presence of Light: Divine Radiance and Religious Experience*," in which he notes: "Among the themes sometimes taken to suggest there is a universal basis for religious intuition and experience, images of light must hold pride of place" (Kapstein, 2004, p. ix). Situating his position between the perennialist and constructivist positions, Kapstein (2004:267)

asks, "... can we not still speak of religious or mystical experiences that are amenable to phenomenological determination...?" and argues for a move to compare "... experiences that are characterized by phenomenologically contentful descriptions." He suggests that the religious experiences of 'light' are one such example, and that inner 'sound' and a vocabulary of an 'inward turn' may be another cross-cultural theme or category to be explored. The shift to the descriptive language of the mystic or experiencer allows one to recapture themes that enable the comparative move. In this way, we can avoid some shortcomings associated with phenomenology, for example, the lack of historical contextualising, but retain some engagement with experience in the religious setting.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

The advent of the Theosophical Society, founded by HPB in 1875, culminated in a major drive to introduce the religious philosophies of the East to the West; an education for the Western world, which was all but imperative to break the dogmas of Christian Orthodoxy as followed throughout the previous millennium.³⁸ It was through two disciples³⁹ of HPB, Dr Frank Homer and Harriette Augusta Curtiss, that the teachings of the OCM came into the light of day.

For this dissertation, whose scope has obvious limitations, several contemporary writings on the inner path of mystical Christianity will be cross-referenced and quoted from. The first set of writings forming the key to this dissertation are, of necessity, *The Teachings of The Order of Christian Mystics* and their many and varied references to the Bible. Second, reference is made to the great mystics Kabir and Guru Nanak, leading to the foundational teachings of the inner mystical path within Sikhism,⁴⁰ and from which the term *The Sound Current Tradition*, as professed by Lane, has its origin. The modern Radha Soami movement, founded in January 1861 by Shiv Dayal Singh (1818-1878), was a contemporary of HPB (1831-1891). Their movement published numerous writings on the inner teachings of the Master Jesus and the Bible from an Asian perspective, which the author calls mystical Christianity, although it would be

³⁸ (Curtiss F. H., Personal Survival, 2014d). See *A Message from Madame Blavatsky*.

³⁹ (Curtiss & Curtiss, Letters from The Teacher Volume 1, 2013b), Dedication.

⁴⁰ Known today as the Radha Soami Satsang Beas. See www.rssb.org

more accurate to speak of Judeo-Christian teachings.⁴¹ The third stream of works will be those of the system of *Yoga* and its modern and contemporary proponents. Quoting copiously the great Yogi Paramahansa Yogananda from his two monumental works, *The Second Coming of Christ – The Resurrection of the Christ Within You*,⁴² in which he expounds comprehensively the inner path of mystical Christianity from a Hindu perspective, and his exposition on *The Bhagavad Gītā – God Talks With Arjuna*.⁴³

Thus, summarising the aims and objectives for this dissertation:

- To extract, compile and expound on the inner teachings regarding meditation – *Entering the Silence* – as per the teachings of the OCM as an invaluable addition to the Christian mystical tradition throughout the ages – and to reference these to requisite Biblical statements.
- To link these meditation-based teachings within the teachings of the OCM into a comprehensive whole and to show that HPB alludes to this meditative system in two of her major writings, *The Secret Doctrine*⁴⁴ and *The Voice of the Silence*.⁴⁵ These have been mostly misunderstood and are thus poorly represented and expounded in contemporary Theosophical philosophy.
- To show, elucidate and compare with established inner traditions as expounded by Professor Lane's *Sound Current Traditions* and the philosophy of *Sāṅkhya* and *Samyāma Yoga* as expounded by Patañjali⁴⁶ and to be found in *The Bhagavad Gītā*.⁴⁷

⁴¹ The term Judeo-Christian - having historical roots in both Judaism and Christianity - (Merriam-Webster) is used to group Christianity and Judaism together as well as its common 'scripture' as *The Bible*, and sharing many common values.

⁴² (Yogananda, *The Second Coming of Christ*, 2004)

⁴³ (Yogananda, *The Bhagavad Gita: God Talks With Arjuna*, 2001)

⁴⁴ In the *Secret Doctrine* HPB mentions the 'Word' and the 'Logos' many hundreds of times, THAT which was in the BEGINNING. It is the contacting of and immersion into this 'Word' and 'Logos' that is the very essence of meditative practice.

⁴⁵ In Fragment 1 Sloka 2 HPB directly refers to 'Nada' and 'The Soundless Sound,' different terminology for the 'Word' and the 'Logos' and the method to contact this primal power attainable through *dhāranā* and *dhyāna*, concentration and meditation, to transcend the mind.

⁴⁶ In *The Voice of the Silence* HPB writes about *dhāranā*, *dhyāna* and *samādhi* and the Path of *Yoga*, essentially the teachings expounded by Patañjali and its derivation from the *Upanishads*.

⁴⁷ The *Bhagavad Gītā* and *The Voice of the Silence* expound the stages of unfoldment that the spiritual aspirant experiences when one immerses oneself in that *Divine Power*, contacted through meditation.

The main research questions to be answered are as follows:

- Does Theosophy teach an inner practical path? What is *The Sound Current Tradition*? Through a critical reading and analysis of specific texts, this dissertation will show that HPB's teachings were crucial in bringing this hidden mystical *Sound Current Tradition* to a broader audience and that through the teachings of the OCM, this was stated in a language suitable for a Western and Christian-based audience.
- What is the esoteric interpretation of the *Word* and the *Logos* in *The Secret Doctrine*, *Nada* and *The Soundless Sound* of *The Voice of the Silence*, and *Entering the Silence* in the teachings of the OCM? Do all these concepts ultimately refer to the experience of God and the Supreme Being as Silence?
- Is this the true theory and practical application behind most spiritual endeavour, as espoused by several established paths, set out by Professor Lane as *The Sound Current Tradition*?
- Once known, what are the practical instructions given by HPB and *the Teacher* of the OCM, to be able to dedicate one's life to the attainment of the goal of God-realisation, which HPB dedicates 'to the few' and elucidates in *The Voice of the Silence*, among other writings.

The answers to the above seem veiled in the original teachings of HPB, to be found in *The Secret Doctrine* (a profound and comprehensive treatise on the hidden mysteries of our age), and the work titled *The Voice of the Silence* (a devotional work), in a measure comparable to *The Bhagavad Gītā*, and dedicated to those chelas and disciples who attempt to lead an inner life through the main practice of meditation. It will be shown that these practical spiritual teachings, well established in Asian philosophy, and which HPB describes as *The Heart Doctrine*, manifested through a new avenue, through her disciple Harriette Augusta Curtiss and the teachings of the OCM. This dissertation will attempt to recover this under-studied mystical tradition/stream alluded to in her major work, *The Voice of the Silence*, and continued in the teachings of the OCM.

1.5 Structure of Dissertation and Chapter Outline

This dissertation will be presented by dividing the work into two major segments.

Chapter Two of the dissertation presents an introduction, history and background of the organisation, which at the time presented itself as *The Order of Christian Mystics*. Some background will be given as to the ultimate inspiration for the manifestation of this Order, arising from certain writings of HPB and various claims that this Order was a continuation of the spiritual outpouring arising posthumously from HPB. Thus, the spiritual concept of *Avatāra* (descent), meaning a descent of high-minded teachers from the spiritual realms and how such teachers manifest in the phenomenal world. Elaborating on the life and times of *The Founders of The Order of Christian Mystics*, Dr. Frank Homer and Harriette Augusta Curtiss – what little is known of them – presenting an introduction to the main inspiration and teachings of this Order, arising from the crown jewel of Theosophical writings compiled by HPB as *The Voice of the Silence*, the *Scripture* of the Theosophical Society. This writing, in the light of *The Sound Current Tradition*, is mostly misunderstood and misinterpreted by Theosophists. Recently, a comprehensive dissertation by Letzerich (2023) expounds the categories of mystical experiences alluded to in this writing and thereby contributes to the phenomenological analysis of this work. Quoting extensively from this key text by HPB, the author discusses and compares what HPB in Theosophical writings speaks of as *The Doctrine of the Heart*, a somewhat Buddhist term referring to the inner teachings of the mysteries as compared to the outer. Letzerich (2023:118) considers this text “connected to *Mahāyāna* Buddhism and also influenced by other traditions, such as *Vedānta*,” comparative connections which will become evident throughout this dissertation.

Finally, an outline of *the Mystic Christ*, that *Divine Power* contacted through devotion, aspiration and meditative practices, and variously called throughout the teachings of the OCM as *The Soundless Sound*, *The Soundless Voice of God*, *The Word*, *The Logos* and many other names besides.

Chapter Three of the dissertation expounds the Comparative and Phenomenological aspects of the teachings of the OCM pertaining to the inner life, spiritual practice and the transfiguration and redemption of the aspirant to God-realisation; understood and referred to in Western mysticism as the ‘inner alchemy’ of the soul. This chapter compares in measure the philosophy, symbology and linguistic commonality of the Asian path of *Yoga*, with Western philosophy as expounded by the

teachings of the OCM, the Hesychast⁴⁸ doctrines, the Quietists,⁴⁹ the writings of Brother Lawrence,⁵⁰ the Bible⁵¹ and other writers within mystical Christianity. It introduces the philosophy of the OCM from the emic or subjective perspective – an insider, first-person and phenomenological view of religious experience – also understood as the practitioner's actual and internal 'lived' experience. Philosophising on what is most suitable for religious academic study, the emic or etic perspective or a combination of both, as laid out by Kripal (2007:109) where he argues that even the scholar can become a mystic of hermeneutics through their studies. "Scholars of religion, it turns out, often have profound religious experiences reading and interpreting the texts they critically study, and these events have consequences for the methods and models they develop, the conclusions they come to, and even for the traditions they study."

This segment elucidates the inner practices of *Entering the Silence* (commonly understood as meditation)⁵² and how the soul thereby receives inner guidance. It further describes how and why such practices lead to the precipitation and negation of karma, the philosophy of redemption or the working out of an individual spiritual path leading towards liberation (*moksha*) from intermittent reincarnation.

It further expounds on the alchemy of immersing oneself through meditation in the *Mystic Christ* and how this process leads to a transmutation of the lower physical and subtle bodies. (see Figure 2.1) Also, how the attainment of higher states leads to a life of ever greater purity – saintliness and adeptness – the difficulties and suffering encountered along the way and the final beatitude of *moksha* – the concept of liberation from the phenomenal world. This chapter will show how, in mystical Christianity, the concepts of spiritual development and growth are presented and contrasted with the practices to be found in Patañjali's system of *Yoga*.

⁴⁸ Hesychasm, in Eastern Christianity, a type of monastic life in which practitioners seek divine quietness (Greek *hēsychia*) through the contemplation of God in uninterrupted prayer. Such prayer, involving the entire human being—soul, mind and body—is often called 'pure,' or 'intellectual,' prayer or the Jesus Prayer. (from www.britannica.com)

⁴⁹ Quietism, a doctrine of Christian spirituality that, in general, holds that perfection consists in passivity (quietude) of the soul, in the suppression of human effort so that divine action may have full play. (from www.britannica.com)

⁵⁰ (Lawrence, 1963)

⁵¹ King James Version and based on New Testament Teachings of the Master Jesus and His Disciples and Apostles.

⁵² Various schools use the term meditation and contemplation interchangeably, meaning the mulling of a thought or idea and seeing it from its various aspects and angles versus those practices to still the mind. To differentiate, *Entering the Silence* refers specifically to that practice which seeks to still all thought and thinking and to transcend the mind.

Chapter Four of the dissertation, as its conclusion, is a concise and comparative summary about the higher teachings to be found within mystical Christianity, *Yoga*, Hinduism and Sikhism, showing the ONE universal teaching to be found within most, if not all, religions. This is termed by these Theosophical writers as *The Ancient or Wisdom Religion* – the universal inner teaching of transmuting and lifting up the lower nature into the higher, to attain that state of *Yoga*, permanently yoking oneself to ‘God’, which mystics call God-realisation.

1.6 Contribution to the Existing Field of Mystical Christianity

This dissertation represents a unique contribution and valuable addition to the inner mystical traditions in general and specifically to Christian mysticism, as the author has been vouchsafed a comprehensive compendium of mystical and esoteric writings couched within the philosophy of *The Sound Current Tradition*. This tradition, although extensively expounded by various schools such as the Radha Soami movement and as stated by Lane (2022), has nevertheless been relatively overlooked by academia to date. These writings are believed to have been inspired⁵³ by the departed Helena Petrovna Blavatsky – the Founder of The Theosophical Society – and set out in writing by Harriette Augusta Curtiss, an accomplished American-born mystic and clairvoyant. These writings, all but lost and unknown, have been reconstituted and republished in the public domain as the teachings of the OCM,⁵⁴ and containing within them profound teachings on meditation, termed by these authors as *Entering the Silence*, explaining the effects that deep meditation has on the spiritual transformation of the soul.

The genesis of these teachings originates from specific statements and concepts about what ‘God’ or ‘the Supreme’ represents, written about in *The Secret Doctrine* – the main opus of HPB – and termed *The Word* and *The Logos*, and in the teachings of the OCM, termed *The Soundless Sound*.

Following on from *The Secret Doctrine*, Blavatsky writes *The Voice of the Silence*, instructions for following an inner meditative path, filled with “timeless imagery, a spiritual classic of incomparable beauty and power,” a writing different from what she had penned up to that time. Classified by many scholars as a Buddhist writing and

⁵³ (Truth, 2014)

⁵⁴ www.orderofchristianmystics.co.za

regarded highly by the previous Panchen and current Dalai Lama,⁵⁵ this writing can be called the *Scripture* of the Theosophical Society.

This avenue of research is of paramount importance to the field of Theosophy or *Theo Sophia*, Divine Wisdom, in its practical application to everyday spiritual life and presenting a new field of academic research for the academic Theosophical community.

Bester (2017) argues for historically including HPB's works and spiritual legacy for the advancement of Theosophical and comparative religion. Here, I argue to include HPB's purported 'posthumous' works, recovered from obscurity and republished as the teachings of the OCM, comprising the core of this dissertation, as an invaluable source towards the modern development of Christian mysticism.

1.7 Methodology

This dissertation aims to collect, compile and reference the many disparate teachings and writings of HPB regarding the inner path and *The Sound Current Tradition* into an authoritative and comprehensive text. This dissertation focuses mainly on such exposition as presented through the teachings of the OCM and their references to *The Voice of the Silence*.

The Curtisses state that these inner teachings are nothing new as compared with the older teachings of Asian and Western origin, but that they are presented in a language and symbology suitable for our modern age. By way of illustration, the doctrines of karma and reincarnation, established in Asian philosophy, are described using Biblical quotations and terminology and laid out in their work (Curtiss F. H., Reincarnation, 2015e), showing this doctrine to have been Church history and even doctrine. Jesus asks, "Who do men say that I the Son of Man am?" and his disciples reply: "Some say thou art John the Baptist; some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets."⁵⁶ Further, *Nada* and *Anāhata-Shabda*, Asian terminology referring to

⁵⁵ "I am therefore happy to have this long association with the Theosophists and to learn about the Centenary Edition: *The Voice of The Silence* which is being brought out this year. I believe that this book has strongly influenced many sincere seekers and aspirants to the wisdom and compassion of the Bodhisattva Path. I very much welcome this Centenary Edition and hope that it will benefit many more." Gyatso, Tenzin (1989). "Foreword: The Bodhisattva Path". *The Voice of the Silence* By Blavatsky, H. P. (Centenary ed.). Oxford: Concord Grove Press. ISBN 9780886950460. In 1927, the Panchen Lama (Thubten Choekyi Nyima), officially endorsed the book and called it the "only true exposition in English of the Heart Doctrine of the Mahayana and its noble ideal of self-sacrifice for humanity."

⁵⁶ Matthew 16 vs 13,14 (KJV)

the inner experience of 'silence' and 'sound', are referenced and equated with Biblical terminology, such as *The Word*, *The Voice of God* and *His Voice*. Throughout the dissertation, these are referenced to established inner traditions to show their universal truths, appeal and application over millennia, but within the field of Theosophy and Christian mysticism, where it has lain all but dormant and misunderstood for the last century.

Current research into the teachings of the OCM seem scarce at best, as these teachings have only recently seen the light of day (2009). Of necessity, then, the methodological approach of this dissertation will comprise and combine Comparative and Phenomenological study and analysis of existing discourses and literature, all available in the public domain.

In his book *The Presence of Light: Divine Radiance and Religious Experience*, Matthew T. Kapstein (2004:289) enumerates the phenomenology of comparative religious and mystical experiences, attempting to classify these cross-culturally around traditions concerning the experience of light. He summarises:

"Thus, our world, which is constituted by the things we experience and ourselves as experiencers, is such that values are among its potentialities, and these potentialities, in turn, are actualised whenever a conscious agent experiences an object religiously, aesthetically, and so on. Although religious and aesthetic values may well be in a significant sense culturally and historically constructed upon the ground of material systems, these same values as potentialities of those systems in this way belong to the very fabric of our world. The apparently immediate awareness of religious value, or religious experience, finds its basis in the objective universe, in ourselves as subjects, and in the cultural worlds in which we are formed. But none of these is by itself a determining condition. Religious experience, like aesthetic experience, emerges from a complex skein of conditions, each element of which is underdetermining with respect to the experience in question."⁵⁷

This dissertation aims, therefore, in measure, to bring this cross-cultural experience of inner sound to light and to place this phenomenological religious experience as it pertains to the Christian mysteries in its due and proper context. It also aims to show the universality of such experiences as found within other religions and their place in the academic study of comparative religion.

⁵⁷ (Kapstein, 2004, p. 289)

1.8 Ethical Considerations

The teachings of the OCM were all published pre-1950, and the author has asserted that all these publications are currently in the public domain.

Publications to be consulted within the field of Theosophy are similarly in the public domain as are the main scriptures, which have been quoted from extensively.

The author has published previous works within the field contemplated in this dissertation, which was focused more on a historical basis and narrative, whereas this dissertation is solidly grounded to reveal the inner meditative tradition as described. The author is confident that this endeavour presents new and original work.

1.9 Literature Survey

Research has shown no comprehensive exposition on the inner teachings put forth by HPB regarding *The Sound Current Tradition* as detailed in her major works, *The Secret Doctrine* and *The Voice of the Silence*, and continued after her passing through her disciple, Harriette Augusta Curtiss, and manifesting as the teachings of the OCM.

From an academic perspective, the recent work by Letzerich (2023) attempts to classify the mystical experiences stated in *The Voice of the Silence*, but few, if any, contemporary writings provide clear practical instructions for the attainment thereof.

Theosophical publications and research in the field of these deeper inner teachings, comprising *The Word*, *The Logos* and *The Soundless Sound*, are few and far between and referenced where available.

These 'lost' teachings were collected, collated, transcribed and republished under the banner of the OCM via a website with a historical exposé on this Order self-published as an e-book, *Priestess of the Flame*.⁵⁸

The author draws on writings such as *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Voice of the Silence*, and then the extensive writings of the teachings of the OCM, as per the References at the end of this dissertation, supported with suitable scriptural references and comparisons as per *the Bible*, *The Bhagavad Gītā*, the *Yoga Sūtras* of Patañjali and Yogic texts arising from Paramahansa Yogananda and others.

Placing this dissertation into its Theosophical context, the author relies on well-known Theosophical scholars such as Hammer & Rothstein (2013) and Hanegraaff (2013). On the overall Western Mystery Tradition referencing M.W. Meyer (1987),

⁵⁸ (Truth, 2014)

Goodrick-Clarke (2008) and Kapstein (2004), and on the essence of this dissertation concerning *The Sound Current Tradition* and meditation, the writings of Professor Christopher Lane (2022).

1.10 Conclusion

This study aims to give a definitive account of the practical inner path to be found within mystical Christian and Theosophical literature and to show its universality when compared to other established paths of mysticism.

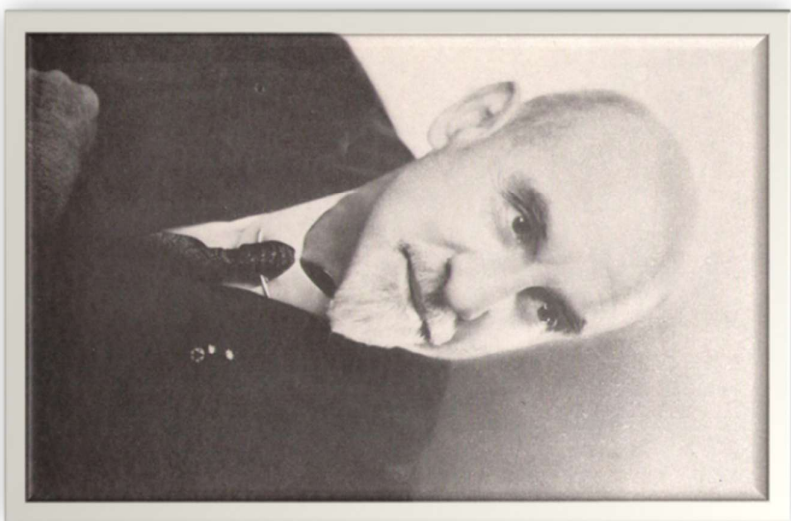
This should give weight to, and open, a relatively new vista within Theosophy for further study, and it is hoped, give direction and instruction to those Theosophists asking for more definitive practical guidance on how to follow the inner path of chela/discipleship as mentioned in *The Voice of the Silence*.



The Master Jesus



The Teacher of the Order
Helena Petrovna Blavatsky
1831-1891



Pyrahmos
Dr. Frank Homer Curtiss
1875-1946



Rahmea
Harriette Augusta Curtiss
1856-1932

Figure1.1: The Teacher and Founders of The Order of Christian Mystics

Chapter Two: The Order of Christian Mystics

Dedicated to “The Few Real Mystics in the Theosophical Society”⁵⁹

2.1 Preface

“Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?”⁶⁰

Over the last century, the teachings, mysteries and philosophies of Asia have become accessible to a far and wide-reaching audience around the world. Its main philosophical tenets of karma and reincarnation are largely well-known concepts and accepted terminology, as is its broad-based practical application of meditation and *Yoga*. Based on the works of Western and Asian teachers such as HPB, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, maha-Yogis Swami Sivananda and Paramahansa Yogananda, among many others, these practices for spiritual upliftment, psychological and physical well-being have become well established and popularised in Western spiritual culture. Yet it was not always so.

The acceptance and practices of *ahimsā*, non-injury and compassion to all life, human and animal, lie deeply ingrained as key virtues in Asian traditions, such as vegetarianism and non-violence, as laid out by Sarao (2017). These are key precepts in Buddhism and the *Yamas* as laid out by Patañjali. HPB in her first major work, *Isis Unveiled: A Master-Key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology* (1877), lays out the intolerances, persecutions and crimes of the Dark Ages; “centuries of subjection” committed by the authorities of the day, against the spiritual evolution of the Western mindset.⁶¹

It is difficult not to notice the ‘apparent’ lack of continuity of the Western mystical tradition *vis-à-vis* the Asian mysteries, as the Western mysteries had to be promulgated, studied and practised secretly, literally on pain of death, for more than a

⁵⁹ (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. xi)

⁶⁰ *Malachi 2:10* (KJV), referring to the wish of HPB that all her adherents would work together in harmony for the promulgation of Theosophy. (Curtiss F. H., *Personal Survival*, 2014d, p. 114)

⁶¹ (Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled* Vol 1, 1877, pp. vii,viii) and elaborated further in Vol 2 Chapter 2 (Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled* Vol 2, 1977)

millennium. This gave rise to a secret tradition, the establishment of hidden societies and occult orders, which was an absolute necessity.⁶²

Consistently persecuted and scattered by the authorities, it was difficult, if not impossible, to establish a deep and lasting Western mystical tradition, a lineage in the tradition of, say, the four Hindu Swami Orders or Maths founded by Adi Shankara,⁶³ or the sublime mystical teachings and traditions arising from Kabir and Guru Nanak. These traditions have, at their core, the spiritual upliftment of man; enabling the individual to follow a mystical inner path leading to liberation from this world of illusion or *samsāra*.

Even though conditions for the promulgation of the mysteries⁶⁴ in European society was difficult and trying, the Divine mysteries were ever provided and vouchsafed to certain groups.⁶⁵ These had to operate in more or less secrecy for many centuries, the Asian mysteries all but unknown or forgotten, up to the time that HPB made an entrance.

Hammer & Rothstein (2013) lay out the social and intellectual milieu of the time stating that “The TS was founded at a time when empirical, scientific observation was replacing other approaches to knowledge,” religious dogma and rank materialism giving rise to Spiritualism – a “substitute for conventional religion” – its proponents driving universal suffrage and equal rights for woman among many other social reforms of the day.

⁶² (Blavatsky, Isis Unveiled Vol 2, 1977) Chapter 7

⁶³ “*Math* is a word for monastery in the Hindi language. Many Hindu traditions established *maths* as austere residences where monks could live and study. Most famous are the four *maths* established by the great VEDANTA teacher SHANKARA (circa eighth century): Badrinath in far northern India, Dvaraka (Dwarka) in Gujarat, Shringeri in Karnataka, and Puri in Orissa. Monks from the Dashanami order following Shankara's teachings now live at these locations. The abbot of each of these *maths* is referred to as the Shankaracharya (while Shankara himself is referred to as the Adi-shankaracharya, or first Shankaracharya). Constance Jones; James D. Ryan (2006). Encyclopedia of Hinduism. Infobase. p. 280.

⁶⁴ *Mystery*, a religious truth known or understood only by divine revelation; especially a doctrine of faith involving difficulties which human reason is incapable of solving. (From Oxford oed.com).

⁶⁵ Based on the teachings of the master Jesus and promulgated by his followers, modern pseudo-historical texts such as *The Holy Blood and The Holy Grail* (1982), by Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh and Henry Lincoln trace the Western inner esoteric traditions into two major streams. One stream entered France through the cult of Mary Magdalene (See Susan Haskins, the author of *Mary Magdalen: Myth and Metaphor* (HarperCollins, 1993), ultimately giving rise to such groups as the Albigenses, Waldenses, Cathars and Rosicrucians, their teachings and traditions kept mostly secret or Sub Rosa. The other stream settling in Egypt, giving rise to the Copts and Desert Fathers (Waddell, Helen 1936, *The Desert Fathers*) from whence originated the Eastern Christian Hesychast tradition, practiced to this day and most in line with the inner traditions of the East. See (Kadloubovsky, 1977)

In this social context, according to HPB, reputedly as *The Teacher of the Order of Christian Mystics*⁶⁶, it was her mission *at the time* when she was incarnate, to bring to the English and Western-speaking world, in a language and setting this mindset could comprehend, the jewels of great price to be found in the mystical traditions of Asia. Her mission, she states in her own words in *A Message from Madame Blavatsky*, inserted in full at the end of this chapter.⁶⁷ This mission she accomplished over a lifetime of work with the founding of the then Theosophical Society, its influence spreading across the globe.⁶⁸

In this dissertation, the author aims to show that in addition to HPB's known works, she was instructed by her Master to found an inner tradition within the broader Theosophical movement, and that this ultimately led to the founding of *The Order of Christian Mystics*.

“One of the aims of this Order, [was] to bring to the attention of the American people as simply as possible, the pearls of wisdom in the teachings of the Master Jesus,⁶⁹ pearls that have been overlaid with wordy misconceptions so long as to be almost unrecognizable.”⁷⁰

Christianity today eagerly awaits the second coming of Christ. Paramahansa Yogananda, in his exposition of the Christian mysteries, writing from an Asian perspective titled *The Second Coming of Christ*, explains it thus:

“In titling this work *The Second Coming of Christ*, I am not referring to a literal return of Jesus to earth ... A thousand Christs sent to earth would not redeem its people unless they themselves became Christlike by purifying and expanding their individual consciousness to receive therein the second coming of the Christ Consciousness, as was manifested in Jesus ... Contact with this Consciousness, experienced in the ever new joy of meditation, will

⁶⁶ (Curtiss & Curtiss, Letters from The Teacher Volume 1, 2013b) Dedication, Preface and p157. It is the aim of this dissertation to elucidate this assertion.

⁶⁷ (Curtiss F. H., Personal Survival, 2014d, p. 121)

⁶⁸ (Cranston, 1993)

⁶⁹ It is more accurate to refer to the teachings of the Master Jesus and the Christian mysteries as pre-Christian Judaic teachings, as Christianity per se only originated in the fourth century post the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, convened by the emperor Constantine.

⁷⁰ (Curtiss & Curtiss, Letters from The Teacher Volume 1, 2013b, p. 161)

be the real second coming of Christ – and it will take place right in the devotee’s own consciousness.”⁷¹

According to the Curtisses, this Order aimed to lay down a solid foundation within Christian mysticism, and to expound for the few, the meaning of the second coming of Christ, *as an inner experience*, and the true meaning of attaining Christ-consciousness, bringing life to the Christian mysteries.⁷²

2.2 Introduction – The Order of Christian Mystics

“Ministers of Christ and Stewards of the Mysteries of God.”⁷³

According to J. Gordon Melton (Encyclopedia of American Religions⁷⁴ and Religious Leaders of America)⁷⁵ and June Melby Benowitz (Encyclopedia of American Woman and Religion)⁷⁶ the OCM was promulgated to give to the Western world advanced Christian mysticism, based on the Western mystery school tradition.

The Order was founded in Philadelphia in 1908 by Harriette Augusta and Frank Homer Curtiss. Its original name was *The Order of the 15*, a numerical designation having an esoteric origin, but it was later changed to *The Order of Christian Mystics* to better reflect its outward philosophy.⁷⁷ They intended to combine Theosophical teachings with traditional Christian doctrine.⁷⁸ Their teachings were reputedly transmitted through Harriette Augusta Curtiss by the departed Founder of the Theosophical Society, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891), otherwise simply called *The Teacher of the Order* or *The Teacher*. The Theosophical Society had

⁷¹ (Yogananda, *The Second Coming of Christ*, 2004) Back Cover

⁷² *Christ Consciousness*. The projected consciousness of God immanent in all creation. In Christian scripture, the ‘only begotten son,’ the only pure reflection in creation of God the Father; in Hindu scripture, *Kutastha Chaitanya* or *Tat*, the universal consciousness, or cosmic intelligence, of Spirit everywhere present in creation. (The terms ‘Christ Consciousness’ and ‘Christ Intelligence’ are synonymous, as also ‘Cosmic Christ’ and ‘Infinite Christ.’) It is the universal consciousness, oneness with God, manifested by Jesus, Krishna and other avatars. Great saints and yogis know it as the state of *Samādhi* meditation wherein their consciousness has become identified with the divine intelligence in every particle of creation; they feel the entire universe as their own body. (*Glossary term taken from Yogoda Satsanga Society of India.*)

⁷³ *1 Corinthians 4:1* (KJV), (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 413)

⁷⁴ (Melton, *The Encyclopedia of American Religions*, 1999, p. 785)

⁷⁵ (Melton, *Religious Leaders of America*, 1999, pp. 149,150)

⁷⁶ (Benowitz, 1998)

⁷⁷ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key of Destiny*, 2015a)

⁷⁸ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key of Destiny*, 2015a) Chapter 27, A Symposium of the Order of the 15

become ever more focused on the intellectual side of their philosophy to the detriment of its inner transformational teachings,⁷⁹ true *Theo Sophia* or Divine Wisdom, and through this new avenue, *The Teacher of the Order* gave out inner teachings required for true soul-growth, a philosophy stated as *The Doctrine of the Heart*, laid out in the devotional work *The Voice of the Silence*.

The teachings of the Order were promulgated through a system of personal correspondence whereby pupils could receive answers to their questions directly from *The Teacher of the Order*.⁸⁰ In addition, they had several centres from where lectures were presented, and devotional services held. Coupled with extensive publishing of books over a 40-year period, encompassing many editions, with pupils from over 70 countries, that must have numbered many thousands, some under personal instruction.⁸¹

The inner spiritual philosophy as espoused by this Order was based on a system of personal regeneration, otherwise called spiritual alchemy, by transmuting the base creative energy through a Life Divine of purity, prayer, devotion and study, leading into, and preparing for, an inner life of *Entering the Silence* or meditation.⁸² This was put forth in the mystical traditions of the West, a system of mysticism suitable for that culture, lifestyle and mindset. It expounded for its pupils a way to seek, what was termed, the Cosmic Christ-principle or *The Only Begotten Son*⁸³ within its Christian rather than Oriental scriptures. As the Curtisses explained it: "It is Mystic in that it teaches its pupils the mystery of how to come into *personal and conscious touch* with the Christ-consciousness within,"⁸⁴ i.e., how to experience directly *The Logos* or *The Word* of the Theosophists and how to be transformed by it. This "Mystic Christ is not a personality, but a *Divine Essence*. It is a spiritual emanation from the Godhead..."⁸⁵

⁷⁹ (Curtiss F. H., *Personal Survival*, 2014d), Chapter XI, A Message from Madame Blavatsky.

⁸⁰ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Letters from The Teacher* Volume 1, 2013b, p. 32) Preface and Circular of Information and (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Mystic Life*, 2012b), Preface and Appendix.

⁸¹ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Letters from The Teacher* Volume 1, 2013b), (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Letters from The Teacher* Volume 2, 2013c), (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 423), and Newspaper Article published in *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, Dec 23, 1908, and published in *Priestess of the Flame*, by A Lover of Truth, p259, Mount Linden Publishing, 2014.

⁸² (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Soundless Sound*, 2012a), (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Temple of Silence*, 2015d)

⁸³ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Divine Mother*, 2012d, pp. 24,25)

⁸⁴ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key of Destiny*, 2015a, p. 191)

⁸⁵ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Mystic Life*, 2012b, pp. 73,74) As used in these teachings, the term 'Christ' refers to the Universal Christ Principle or the individualised Ray of God within each heart. This Ray is often called the Spiritual Self, the Real Self, the Higher Self, the I Am Presence, the God-within, the Christ-within, etc.

and can be experienced directly, vide *The Sound Current Tradition* laid out by Professor Lane.

Its students were not asked to go to some far distant land or to seek entrance to some ancient monastery, living a hard and frugal life. The Masters back of this Order – also called The Lodge of Masters,⁸⁶ a central concept within Theosophy and referring to HPB and her teachers – comprehended the Western mindset to be one of freedom and independence. Therefore, being accustomed to homely comforts, these were to be seen as neither luxuries nor temptations but simply taken as a matter of course and not given a second thought, whereas their absence would cause a great diversion of mind. Thus, the mindset of those who, by Theosophical terms, were called the average Western aspirant, able to develop their higher faculties, submitting:

“... not to the dictates of Abbot, Priest or Master; nor to the rigid discipline of a monastery, but to the discipline of ‘living the life’ of aspiration and devotion in the midst of the world’s affairs, being ‘in the world, but not of it’ and subject only to the dictates of his own divine Higher Self ... Therefore, the Masters back of this Order set before its students, not rigid outer observances, discipline and physical requirements, but gave them an understanding of the basic principles and laws of manifested life, letting each student discipline himself as may be necessary to live in accord with those principles and laws, under the guidance of his own Higher Self, each one progressing according to the effort he makes towards his own self-mastery.”⁸⁷

According to *The Teacher of the Order*, the earthly mission of HPB and that of her Masters was to bring to the Western and Christian world what they considered the pearls of wisdom and truths to be found in the philosophies of the East,⁸⁸ but at her passing, it was realised by the Masters of this Order that an open and broad-based esoteric interpretation of the mystical truths to be found in the Bible and the Christian

⁸⁶ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Letters from The Teacher* Volume 1, 2013b, pp. 6,155-157,161), (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Letters from The Teacher* Volume 2, 2013c, pp. 64,65,77,78,115,118), (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key of Destiny*, 2015a, p. 195)

⁸⁷ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Message of Aquaria*, 2010c, pp. 100,101)

⁸⁸ (Curtiss F. H., *Personal Survival*, 2014d, pp. 114,119,121)

religion was lacking.⁸⁹ Having been introduced to these ancient Asian philosophies, members of the Theosophical Society were apt to point out that Christianity was a failure, if compared with the older esoteric institutions of the Orient.⁹⁰

Therefore, one of the main aims of *the OCM* was to promulgate those verities found in the Bible – an important source of esoteric knowledge available to the Western world – and to show the great spiritual truths to be found within that broad religion called Christianity; recognising the occult and mystical side of their scriptures, especially the teachings of the Master Jesus, as he is called within this Order.⁹¹ The outpouring of this philosophy was couched in simple language, in contrast to the all but incomprehensible language of the old alchemical writings regarding those inner processes and experiences which accompany the true transfiguration of the soul. Given *The Sound Current Tradition* and meditation, the essence of this dissertation, the Curtisses show how –

“...true and grand in its comprehensiveness do we find the simple language of the Bible! The more we unfold and grow in comprehension, and the more we understand the details of the Grand Plan of the universe, as set forth in the cosmic philosophy of Christian mysticism, the more do we admire and wonder at the simple language which includes so much in so few words!”⁹²

Harriette and Homer Curtiss, “two children in spiritual things,”⁹³ produced a large and comprehensive compendium of occult and mystical philosophy, couched in the language of Christian mysticism, over 40 years. It has only been in recent years (since 2009) that the combined works of the Order have once more seen the light of day and have been provided to all in the public domain.⁹⁴

⁸⁹ (Curtiss F. H., *Personal Survival*, 2014d, pp. 120,121)

⁹⁰ (Curtiss F. H., *Personal Survival*, 2014d, p. 121)

⁹¹ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Letters from The Teacher* Volume 1, 2013b, p. 161)

⁹² (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Inner Radiance*, 2012c, p. 91)

⁹³ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Message of Aquaria*, 2010c, p. 475)

⁹⁴ www.orderofchristianmystics.co.za

2.3 The Russian Sphinx – Helena Petrovna Blavatsky

“She was chosen as a Messenger of the Lodge because she had that karmic Right and had sought to prepare herself for that Work.”⁹⁵

The history, life, times and teachings of this remarkable woman have been put down on paper, journals, articles, tomes and volumes of work that eclipse, without exception, any other writer on or of the occult in our known history. Her work, comprehensively archived by Daniel H. Caldwell, stands as a testament to her far and wide-reaching influence in the realm of spirituality.⁹⁶ HPB, as she was wont to call herself, authored a vast range of books in addition to the writing of unending articles, letters and editorials in her lifetime. Pupils across the world, acquaintances, correspondents, translators and publishers of her works had to be dealt with daily.⁹⁷ She was one of the greatest spiritual reformers and religious awakeners of our age, ushering in a new age of spiritual understanding for the Western mindset recognised by Hammer & Rothstein (2013) in their introduction to the *Handbook of Theosophical Currents*, in which they compare the impact of her reception historically to that of Martin Luther's on Christianity.⁹⁸

During her life and extensive travels throughout the religious cradles of mankind, she learned many languages. Her remarkable mediumistic abilities are well documented⁹⁹ and, already at a young age, she helped the Russian authorities solve a murder problem.¹⁰⁰ Her humour, if somewhat dry, was appreciated by all and sundry. Her life's work inspired a revival of the occult across the globe. On each continent, branches of the new Theosophical Society opened, ready to study and disseminate her works. Mystics and occultists of Asia and in the West, all drew inspiration from her writings. The inspiration that poured forth from her prolific pen resulted in many additional books and writings published by her followers and adherents.¹⁰¹

⁹⁵ (Curtiss F. H., *Personal Survival*, 2014d, p. 115)

⁹⁶ www.blavatskyarchives.com (Caldwell)

⁹⁷ (Cranston, 1993)

⁹⁸ (Hammer & Rothstein, 2013, pp. 1-4)

⁹⁹ Her remarkable mediumistic abilities, narrated by her sister Vera, and expounded in Sylvia Cranston's book on the life of HPB.

¹⁰⁰ (Ostrander & Schroeder, 1970, p. 243)

¹⁰¹ www.blavatskyarchives.com

As the Theosophical Society spread its influence across 70 nations, the name and fame of its founder spread far and wide, but with it also came derision and infamy. Wherever she went, she was sought for pastime and pleasure. Her psychic demonstrations in front of many people are legion. Yet she despised effecting such demonstrations, necessary at the time to challenge materialistic science, as it inevitably brought down scorn on her and her work.¹⁰² Like all such things, people either worshipped her as a god, or despised her when she would not perform. During her life, she was accused of just about every calumny thinkable. According to Homer Curtis, this indifference to that which she held as *sacred* always hurt her deeply, for in her own words, no one understood her *real mission*,¹⁰³ which was to bring to Theosophy¹⁰⁴ the Mystic Teachings of the Heart Doctrine¹⁰⁵ – *an inner path* – the mission of all great Teachers. In preparation for her *real mission*, she first had to bring to the Western world the teachings to be found in other religions.

“In those early terrible days of materialism, the [Western] world needed hammer blows, needed to be shown that real religion, the Wisdom Religion, was scattered through all religions; needed to be shown that even those religions which they called ‘heathen’ contained the mighty spiritual truths needed to guide the life.”¹⁰⁶

Unlike many of the popular gurus of the day, she refused to ever accept money for her teachings. She lived simply and humbly and died without property. Her work continues to this day in over sixty countries through the Society she founded and the untold offshoots and groups that draw inspiration from her works.¹⁰⁷

“She passed away like a sentinel at his post, in the armchair in which she taught and wrote, the best and truest of Teachers, the most faithful and

¹⁰² (Wachtmeister, 1893, pp. 66,67)

¹⁰³ (Curtiss F. H., Personal Survival, 2014d, p. 115)

¹⁰⁴ *Theosophy*, from the Greek *Theo Sophia* or ‘Divine Wisdom.’

¹⁰⁵ According to a conversation with her Master, HPB was tasked to establish within The Theosophical Society, an inner, possibly more initiatory tradition. (Wachtmeister, 1893, pp. 66,67) The main teaching for this school was laid out in her final major work, *The Voice of The Silence*, dedicated “For the daily use of Lanoos or Disciples”, pointing to a possible teacher-disciple relationship as per the Hindu and Buddhist monastic traditions. (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015) Title page and Preface.

¹⁰⁶ (Curtiss F. H., Personal Survival, 2014d, p. 119)

¹⁰⁷ (Hammer & Rothstein, 2013, pp. 1-4)

untiring of Messengers ... She retained full consciousness to the last ... so quietly did HPB pass away that we hardly knew the second she ceased to breathe; a great sense of peace filled the room ...”¹⁰⁸

“And finally, the time came for her to lay down the outer part of her physical work. But did she lay it down altogether? No.”¹⁰⁹

It is thus the endeavour of this dissertation to map out what Harriette and Homer Curtiss and *The Order of Christian Mystics* claim to be a continuation of HPB’s work and to shed light on their narrative of revealing the sphinx-like rebirth of the outpouring that manifested through, what they call, that “Great World Teacher,” manifesting through her pupil and disciple, Harriette Augusta Curtiss, and *The Order of Christian Mystics*.

2.4 A School of My Own – Spiritual Orders and Their Means of Instruction

“After a long conversation with Master ... Either I have to return to India to die ... or I have to form ... a nucleus of true Theosophists, a school of my own, with no secretary, only myself alone, with as many mystics as I can get to teach them.”¹¹⁰

Worldwide, the Theosophical Society was growing exponentially. Their philosophy of the Ancients was made available to a wide audience, in Asia and the West, as laid out by Hammer & Rothstein (2013). According to *The Teacher of the Order*, after this preparatory¹¹¹ work was done, the next part of her great mission was revealed by her teacher, three years before her passing in 1888.¹¹² The philosophical teachings – the ‘outer shell’¹¹³ as she called it – had been established; an *inner teaching* was now required, the realm of the true mystic.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁸ In Memory of H.P.B., *By Some of Her Pupils*, 1891, pp6,7,26, 1891.

¹⁰⁹ (Curtiss F. H., *Personal Survival*, 2014d, p. 114)

¹¹⁰ (Wachtmeister, 1893, pp. 66,67)

¹¹¹ (Curtiss F. H., *Personal Survival*, 2014d, p. 119)

¹¹² (Wachtmeister, 1893, pp. 66,67)

¹¹³ See (Curtiss F. H., *Personal Survival*, 2014d, p. 119)

¹¹⁴ *Mystic*, from Greek *mústēs*, ‘one who has been initiated,’ from *muein*, ‘to close, to shut the eyes or lips, to see with closed eyes.’

Towards the end of 1888, the founding of the Esoteric Section soon followed, with the constitution and sole direction of the Section vested in Madame Blavatsky as its Spiritual Head under direct inspiration of her Master.¹¹⁵

The following year, two years before her passing, she wrote down a set of aphorisms which she had gathered during her travels, some of which predate Buddhism and are therefore of a far more ancient origin. She likens these aphorisms to the timeless words of Lord Krishna to Arjuna in *The Bhagavad Gītā* and presents these to “... the few real mystics in the Theosophical Society.”¹¹⁶ She titles this last major work, *The Voice of the Silence*, laying out, what she claims to be, the true path of spiritual development for all seekers of enlightenment, with the title of the work containing the true meaning of experiencing *Krishna-Christos*, the ‘Higher Self’. In poetic language and timeless imagery, she laid down what she considered a sacred text for the following of an inner path and for those with eyes to see – *the few* – containing a great secret, the way to true *Theo Sophia*.¹¹⁷

Theosophic circles do not openly teach that HPB led the life of a renunciate and that she was a deep follower of an inner mystical and spiritual path of purity and renunciation, as expected from a high teacher. A keen study of her personal life, and some requirements and conditions put down for her inner group of pupils and disciples,¹¹⁸ elaborates further on this assertion. During her extensive travels, she, according to her own account as stated by Cranston (1993), spent considerable time in the monasteries of Tibet and many other religious centres. She would thus have been very *au fait* with monastic orders and monasticism, and the accompanying lifestyle.¹¹⁹ It was therefore to be expected that members of her newly formed inner group would have to conform to a stricter mode of life to appreciate and internalise – become living embodiments – of the teachings in *The Voice of the Silence*. Rule 3 of

¹¹⁵ H.P. Blavatsky, *Collected Writings*, Vol X, p155; Vol XII, p481, Vol XII, pp488-9.

¹¹⁶ (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015) Preface and p xi.

¹¹⁷ According to *The Doctrine of the Heart* as presented in *The Voice of the Silence*, *Theo Sophia*, or ‘Divine Wisdom,’ is not reached through intellectual study, but through inner experience. The intellect is simply used as an instrument to convince the aspirant of the necessity to follow an inner path. Fragment 1 of *The Voice of the Silence* contains the secret to the attainment of experiencing *Krishna-Christos*, the ‘Higher Self’, a teaching misunderstood by most. The great secret is the contacting of that *Divine Inner Power*, that transmuting power which she calls *The Voice of the Silence*, *Nada* or *The Soundless Sound*, through the path of meditation – ultimately the only way to achieve mystical union with the Supreme.

¹¹⁸ Notes of the Inner Group teachings, part of which is in the handwriting of Claude Falls Wright.

¹¹⁹ Her spiritual pilgrimages (*yātrās*) to India, Tibet and other holy places described in detail by Sylvia Cranston. (Cranston, 1993)

the Esoteric Section stated simply “that you abstain from meat-eating and preserve absolute chastity.”¹²⁰ Further pledges “that I put away all worldly thought and personal ambitions: that I am free from all hatred and uncharitable feelings to others: That I submit myself as a humble and obedient student of *Gupta-Vidyā*. *Aum!*”¹²¹

“True, there is absolutely no need of going to Tibet or India to find some knowledge and power ‘which are latent in every human soul’; but the acquisition of the highest knowledge and power require not only many years of the severest study enlightened by a superior intelligence, and an audacity (boldness) bent by no peril, but also as many years of retreat in comparative solitude, and association with but students pursuing the same object, in a locality where nature itself preserves like the neophyte an absolute and unbroken stillness if not silence! Where the air is free for hundreds of miles round of all mephitic (noxious) influence; the atmosphere and human magnetism absolutely pure, and – no animal blood is spilt.”¹²²

Through careful analysis of the lifestyle expected from chelas¹²³ of monastic institutions, the author believes that HPB, under the direction of her Master, was formalising an inner school that would run along the lines of a monastic order as per certain instructions of the Esoteric Section (Caldwell, 2005). This would be given to members of the inner group, and suitable for the Western mindset – HPB herself being

¹²⁰ Notes of the Inner Group, part of which is in the handwriting of Claude Falls Wright. The instruction: “that you abstain from meat-eating (*ahimsā*) and preserve absolute chastity (*brahmacharya*)”, are basic vows of the Buddhist and Hindu monastic orders and laid out in *The Yoga Sūtras* of Patañjali. *Ahimsā* (non-injury and the vegetarian diet) and *brahmacharya*, the working towards as spiritual practices, become necessary for the higher inner attainments. *Brahmacharya* or *Knowledge of Brahman (God)*, can also be interpreted as ‘pure conduct’, one of the five *yamas* as mentioned in Patañjali’s *Yoga Sūtras* 2.30 and 2.38. It generally applies to the practice of sexual continence leading to complete abstinence. Through the practices of sublimating *prāṇāyāma* or life force control, all lower energies are transmuted (not suppressed) into spiritual *Ojas*, a sine qua non of leading the higher life. As the aspirant attains to ever ascending degrees of inner purity, the state of *pratyāhāra* or abstraction becomes more established and then, *The Voice of the Silence*, speaks of the *Sāṅkhya* which is the Path of *Yoga*; the final three limbs of the *Yoga Sūtras*, *Dhāranā*, *Dhyāna* and *Samādhi*.

¹²¹ Sanskrit for secret, hidden, or esoteric (*gupta*) wisdom or knowledge (*vidyā*); from the root *gup* (guard, protect; hide, conceal) and the root *vid* (know, understand, perceive).

¹²² (Cranston, 1993, p. 80)

¹²³ *Chela* is the Sanskrit term for a person who follows an *acharya* (spiritual teacher or preceptor) and means “one who is eager to learn.” Synonymous with ‘lanoo’ or ‘disciple’ or ‘scholar’ and used in Yogic and Hindu traditions to denote a sacred relationship with such preceptor.

an ascetic in the truest sense of the word (Hammer & Rothstein, 2013).¹²⁴ Abstention from meat-eating and chastity or *brahmacharya* being the *sine qua non* of the higher spiritual life, the required pledges in line with the vows of many Hindu and Buddhist renunciate orders.

Regardless, at her passing in 1891, the newly formed 'Inner Group' or Esoteric Section soon unravelled along continental lines as the Theosophical Society leadership settled their respective main centres in the USA, Europe and India, each with their leadership structures and as per Homer Curtiss, "according to the ideals of the Theosophical Society, Madame Blavatsky was transplanted into a higher sphere of activity where she would still be capable of carrying on her work."¹²⁵

"There never has been a great Teacher or a Messenger who, after he put away the hampering body of flesh, does not remain close to his pupils; who does not continue his work; does not come and appear to and speak with his followers ... but all messengers must be in conscious touch with the Lodge and be willing to lay down their own personalities, their own lives, to do the Master's work, and must be those whose Karma permits this."¹²⁶

This teaching of what *The Teacher of the Order* calls "being in conscious touch with the Lodge" – and that others such as Harriette Curtiss had this capability – was never accepted by the then leadership of the Society.¹²⁷ The Curtisses claimed that through this ability of having a conscious contact with her Master, HPB wrote her major work, *The Secret Doctrine*,¹²⁸ which manifested her remarkable mediumistic abilities.¹²⁹ In several Asian traditions, the sign of a *Nirmānakāya*, an illumined yogi, an adept on his trial.¹³⁰ According to *The Teacher of the Order*, it was by this achievement, this

¹²⁴ Post her brief marriage, Blavatsky was a life-long ascetic. Her lifestyle, up to her passing, as evidence is plain for all to see. (Hammer & Rothstein, 2013, pp. 15,16) and Introduction.

¹²⁵ (Curtiss F. H., Personal Survival, 2014d, p. 119)

¹²⁶ (Curtiss F. H., Personal Survival, 2014d, p. 115)

¹²⁷ The author asserts that at her passing, the departed HPB was in conscious contact with her disciple, Harriette Curtiss, manifesting as *The Teachings of the Order of Christian Mystics*. This contact with HPB was not accepted by the then leadership of the Theosophical Society and is elaborated in detail by the author in *Priestess of the Flame*, (Truth, 2014)

¹²⁸ (Curtiss & Curtiss, Realms of The Living Dead, 2013d, p. 44)

¹²⁹ (Curtiss F. H., Personal Survival, 2014d, pp. 105-108)

¹³⁰ The implication of this teaching is that those great souls who have achieved a high degree of spiritual development on this earth-plane, remain in conscious (psychic) contact with their disciples who remain on earth to continue their work. The Masters of HPB were in conscious contact with her, a teaching scattered throughout

unfettered contact upwards to her Master or 'The Lodge', her 'karmic Right', that she could establish on this material world, an occult order, the inner group of the Theosophical Society, "a school of my own."¹³¹

Two nights before her passing at 3 AM, she suddenly told her old friend Isabel Cooper-Oakley: "Isabel, Isabel, keep the link unbroken! Do not let my last incarnation be a failure."¹³² Her work, passion and dedication live on to this day in the numerous societies and organisations worldwide who steadfastly keep her work alive. *The OCM*, as per this dissertation, is considered a part of this continuation.¹³³

2.5 Āvesha – Inspiration from Above

"It is a case of *Āvesha Avatāra*, the overshadowing and informing of the lesser by the greater. In the *Āvesha Avatāra* a pure vessel is chosen, not necessarily a liberated man, and the Divine Life utilizes the man thus qualified, for a limited period and for a particular purpose ... Generally, for a lifetime, the Divine Influence continues to shine through the purified vessel and, to all appearances, as in reality it is, the human nature of the man is submerged by the overflowing Divine Life."¹³⁴

The concept of *avatāra*, simply meaning descent, or one who descends, the descent of Divinity, is ancient; usually understood as the descent of *Divine Grace* into a world overcome by materialism and unrighteousness. In *The Bhagavad Gītā*, Krishna, considered by the Hindus the personification of this *Divine Grace*, that *Divine Power* contacted by going within, says, "Whenever there is a decline of righteousness and a rise in unrighteousness, then I embody Myself, O Bharata. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked, and for the establishment of righteousness, I descend from age to age."¹³⁵

The Doctrine of *Avatāra*, comprehensively described by the OCM¹³⁶ and other

her writings in *The Secret Doctrine*. (Curtiss F. H., Personal Survival, 2014d, pp. 116,117) References 1 and 2. A most well-known case that of Sri Yukteswar appearing to Paramahansa Yogananda after his passing. (Yogananda, The Autobiography of a Yogi, 2018)

¹³¹ (Curtiss F. H., Personal Survival, 2014d, p. 115)

¹³² *The Path* [Isabel Cooper-Oakley 1854-1914], Vol IX, July 1894, pp122-24.

¹³³ The complete set of teachings of *The Order of Christian Mystics*, freely available in the public domain since 2009, at www.orderofchristianmystics.co.za

¹³⁴ (Curtiss & Curtiss, Letters from The Teacher Volume 1, 2013b, p. 18)

¹³⁵ *Bhagavad Gītā*, 4:7,8

¹³⁶ (Curtiss & Curtiss, The Voice of Isis, 2010a), Chapter X, The Doctrine of Avatara

systems of mysticism, is said to represent that *Divine Grace* which ‘descends’ from above to liberate aspirants from this world of *saṃsāra*. It is described as an inner *Divine Power*,¹³⁷ contacted by going within and becoming still, through the practices of meditation and devotion.

In addition, the concept of *āvesha* – simply meaning partial – refers to those who, according to *The Teacher of the Order*, reincarnate and appear intermittently on this world as physical embodiments, spiritually to benefit mankind, and are “willing to lay down (sacrifice) their own personalities, their own lives, to do the Master’s work.”¹³⁸ As an example of this, HPB vividly expresses her collaboration with her teachers on the establishment of the Theosophical Society in the following statement to William Q. Judge, saying that:

“I am under the curse of ever writing, as the wandering Jew was under that of being ever on the move, never stopping one moment to rest. Three ordinary healthy persons could hardly do what I *have* to do. I live an artificial life; I am an automaton running full steam until the power of generating steam stops, and then – good-bye.”¹³⁹

Those *āveshas* that appear on this earth from time to time never have an easy life, attested by the life-stories of many saints and sages, referred to by the Curtisses as *The Pattern Life* (Curtiss & Curtiss, 2013a). Emerging into a world, society or culture steeped in dogma and materialism, they must endure disbelief, ridicule and persecution at the hands of the less evolved.¹⁴⁰ “Divine Love gives out its message from a height so great that it is always misunderstood, and the giver crucified.”¹⁴¹

According to the teachings of the OCM, the incarnation of such messengers is rare, and the sacrifices they make to fulfill their missions, difficult to understand by most. Stated by the OCM: “By their works are they known!”¹⁴²

¹³⁷ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Soundless Sound*, 2012a, p. 13)

¹³⁸ (Curtiss F. H., *Personal Survival*, 2014d, p. 115), (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a), Chapter X, *The Doctrine of Avatara*, (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d, pp. 205,206), (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Message of Aquaria*, 2010c, pp. 433,434)

¹³⁹ *Reminiscences of W.Q. Judge, Yours Till Death and After*, H.P.B.

¹⁴⁰ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Letters from The Teacher* Volume 1, 2013b, pp. 24,25)

¹⁴¹ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Message of Aquaria*, 2010c, p. 139)

¹⁴² Originating from *Matthew 7:16* (KJV), (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d, p. 205)

2.6 Harriette Augusta Curtiss – The Saint from Philadelphia

“*Āvesha* is a peculiar relation between a chosen mortal – trained and perfected for this special relation through many incarnations – and a Divine Being or a more than mortal Spiritual Teacher, for the purpose of presenting to the world a particular truth, message or philosophy ... There can be no deception here, for by their works are they known.”¹⁴³

One of the main aims of this dissertation is to map the history of the lost neo-Theosophical group, *The Order of Christian Mystics*, and to reveal how they internally conceptualised and positioned themselves in continuity with the original Theosophical impulse and its post-Blavatsky iterations. In their vision, there was a sphinxlike rebirth of the spiritual outpouring that manifested through HPB after her passing, as *The Teacher of the Order*. In their narrative, such teachers continue their work from the higher realms. In this instance, the work of HPB continued through their Esoteric Order, the OCM, which was originally founded in Philadelphia, USA. From the Order's texts, we see how they believed this new outpouring manifesting through an incarnation of Divine purity, an example of *āvesha*, through a humble woman who at the time was completely unknown, Miss Harriet Brown (1856-1932), later Harriette Augusta Curtiss.¹⁴⁴

According to Melton (1978, 1991) and Benowitz (1998), Harriette was born into a literary family in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1856. Her parents were John Horace and Emma Brightly Brown. She received a cultured education and developed into a talented musician and actress. After starring in several amateur theatrical productions, she had the opportunity to become a professional, but her mother dissuaded her from doing so. She therefore put her writing talents to use and, for many years authored a column for *The Philadelphia Inquirer* under the pen name 'The Bachelor Girl'. As the years passed, she found herself to be a gifted clairvoyant, through which she eventually found her life's work.

In 1907, she married Dr Frank Homer Curtiss (1875-1946). They met while he was studying for his medical degree at the University of Pennsylvania, and together, they began working as occult teachers and writers. In the year of their marriage, they

¹⁴³ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d, p. 205)

¹⁴⁴ Elaborated more fully by the author in the publication *Priestess of The Flame*, (Truth, 2014).

founded *The Order of the 15* – a numerical designation – which in 1908 became known as *The Order of Christian Mystics*.¹⁴⁵ Harriette Curtiss, who became known within the Order as *Rahmea*, assumed the role of teacher, and her husband took the position of secretary (and was known by his order name of *Pyrahmos*).¹⁴⁶

Harriette and Homer, and members of their initial inner circle, were Theosophists,¹⁴⁷ and according to the Curtisses, it was through Harriette that conscious contact with HPB manifested. She eventually became an inspired teacher and conduit for the powers that be, bringing to this world a comprehensive spiritual philosophy couched in Christian mystical thought, and further instruction from HPB to the then Theosophical Society.¹⁴⁸ At the time of the death of HPB in 1891, Harriette would have been a woman of 35. It is unknown if she ever met HPB while alive, or at what age she became interested in spiritual matters and Theosophy.

By the time they formally proclaimed the birth of the Order, Harriette was already 52 years of age and Homer 33. They started their work, preparing material for publication, publishing over 27 books, running over many editions, with Harriette being the primary author. Throughout her life, she taught by issuing monthly lessons to students, answered questions through correspondence and with Homer, presented innumerable public lectures.¹⁴⁹

Whether they were self-taught or had teachers within the then Theosophical Society is unknown. However that may be, according to their account, they became the successors and intimate disciples of HPB as an answer to the world's great need.

“This Order came into manifestation because of the world's great need; the need of a simple yet heart-satisfying presentation of the world-old principles and laws of Divine Life. To accomplish its work two ‘children in spiritual things’ answered the call. They answered because they had dreamed the memory-dreams of their glorious heritage in the Father's home

¹⁴⁵ (Melton, Religious Leaders of America, 1999, pp. 149,150)

¹⁴⁶ *Rahmea* and the honorific ‘Priestess of the Flame,’ was the Order name by which Harriette Augusta Curtiss was known. (Curtiss & Curtiss, Letters from The Teacher Volume 1, 2013b) See Title Page on original print at www.orderofchristianmystics.co.za. According to the author, previously a member of an occult fraternity for many years in the Rosicrucian tradition, such tradition has it that you take on the name of your most illustrious incarnation to date. She was well aware of many of her incarnations. (Truth, 2014, p. 262), (Curtiss F. H., Reincarnation, 2015e)

¹⁴⁷ (Truth, 2014, pp. 258,259) Newspaper Article December 23, 1908, Order 15 defends itself.

¹⁴⁸ (Curtiss F. H., Personal Survival, 2014d), Chapter XI, A Message from Madame Blavatsky.

¹⁴⁹ (Melton, Religious Leaders of America, 1999, pp. 149,150)

and their hearts' desire was that all might know of, realize and share in that heritage which is for all. They answered: "Here we are, Lord, use us. We are weak and poor and small in personality, yet we fear not and can obey, and with Thy help we will do the best we can." And the reply came from the great storehouse of all wisdom: "The Teachings must be all, and we will supply them. Only be true and faithful and persistent. Keep the personality in the background. Lean altogether upon the Truth and the Truth shall set you free." These children have made many mistakes, yet they have never faltered, and the Order has gone steadily on growing and ever growing. And it will ever continue to grow, because the Teachings are living spiritual truths which transcend and shall ultimately swallow up the personalities of their interpreters."¹⁵⁰

After suffering from a long illness towards the end of her life, Harriette Curtiss passed away on the 22nd of September 1932 in Washington, D.C. She had reached the age of 76.¹⁵¹ Dr Frank Homer Curtiss maintained a successful healing practice until his passing in 1946 and implemented his holistic healing practice, side by side with the mystical teachings of the Order. This encompassed specialised dieting, in vogue to this day and radionics, then still in its infancy. Frank Homer Curtiss, many years younger than Harriette, remarried in 1937 to Eleanor Chapman Stevens, who helped him to continue his work until his passing. She became the sole heir and executor of his estate¹⁵² and it is assumed, the keeper of the archives of the Order at Homer's passing in 1946 at 71.

2.7 Rahmea – Descent of a Great Soul

"Divine inspiration has ever been and ever will continue to be God's chief avenue of expression for the guidance of humanity. But it can be given only through those sincere and devoted Souls whose lives and whose unfolded higher faculties are truly attuned to varying degrees of God-consciousness and enable them to reach up into

¹⁵⁰ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Message of Aquaria*, 2010c, p. 475)

¹⁵¹ (Benowitz, 1998, pp. 79,80)

¹⁵² Newspaper Article: Eleonor Curtiss, executrix, sole heir of the estate of F. Homer Curtiss, Washington (In Notice F. Homer Curtiss); 21 Aug 47, A17692. From Wikipedia article generated by the author.

the higher realms of God-consciousness and bring down to humanity higher conceptions of eternal principles for its guidance.”¹⁵³

The passing of HPB in 1891 brought to the fore existing tensions within the Theosophical Society. These tensions included a) differing conceptions and assessments of Asian and Western Occultism (including the placement and relevance of Christianity and Jesus) and b) a tacit division between a democratic Theosophical Society (represented by Olcott) and an elitist, aristocratic stream (represented by HPB). In 1895, the Theosophical Society split into an India Section with headquarters in Adyar, led by Annie Besant and an American-based Section led by early founder William Quan Judge. The offshoots and splits, which proliferated from this initial 1895 event, are numerous and include The Temple of the People (1899), United Lodge of Theosophists (1909), Rudolf Steiner’s Anthroposophical Society (1912) and Max Heindel’s Rosicrucian Fellowship (1905). Still later, the various Ascended Master streams, Alice Bailey’s Lucis Trust and the Agni Yoga of the Roerichs. It is into these re-workings of the Theosophical material, including various appropriations of authority, claims to legitimacy, and arguments for historical continuity with the original Theosophical Society and its founder, HPB, that the OCM can be read.

During this period, the clairvoyant abilities of Harriette Augusta Curtiss came to fruition, and according to the strength of the teachings of the OCM, she established a direct conscious contact with the departed HPB, *The Teacher of the Order*. So in 1907 was founded in Philadelphia, USA, *The Order of the 15*, assuming the more descriptive title *The Order of Christian Mystics* on the 1st of January 1908. A more open group than the Esoteric Order, *The Church of the Wisdom Religion*, was established during the First World War and later in 1929 incorporated as *The Universal Religious Fellowship Inc.*

According to the teachings of the OCM, Harriette, known as *Rahmea*, the name given to her by her Order, attained a level of enlightenment that put her in conscious touch with the Divine Realms of inspiration.¹⁵⁴ An initiate of *The Order of the 10*,¹⁵⁵ she brought into this world teachings *directly* from the Masters of Wisdom,¹⁵⁶ leading

¹⁵³ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Truth about Evolution and the Bible*, 2012f, p. 183)

¹⁵⁴ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d), Chapter XIX, XX.

¹⁵⁵ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, pp. 64,65)

¹⁵⁶ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d, p. 13), (Curtiss F. H., *Personal Survival*, 2014d, pp. 113-123), (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Letters from The Teacher Volume 2*, 2013c, p. 105) and as demonstrated throughout the

a life that was ‘blameless and immaculate,’ a saint.¹⁵⁷ This direct instruction from the departed HPB, being in “conscious touch with the Lodge,” is detailed more fully elsewhere from an OCM perspective.¹⁵⁸

In spiritualistic parlance, she would have been called a medium *par excellence* and a gifted clairvoyant, but careful analysis shows that her abilities were of quite a different nature. The method by which she received the teachings of the OCM is termed theopneusty,¹⁵⁹ a power to hear orally (or internally) the teachings or directions of a Divine Being, while in full waking consciousness, and classified as a *constructive method* of independent communication.¹⁶⁰ According to the Curtisses, through this ability, the great scriptures and philosophies extant today, both Asian and Western, were brought down into writing by enlightened souls through Divine inspiration.¹⁶¹ The writings transmitted through her consciousness are therefore, as explained by the Curtisses, “not a mediumistic report of certain experiences of an individual and deductions there-from, but form a *constructive philosophy* received directly by the higher teachers of mankind.”¹⁶²

A more rare and subtle ability which manifested through her being was that of theopathy,¹⁶³ which, according to the Curtisses, is the ability to assimilate the *nature* of a Divine Being¹⁶⁴ (or to become one with, and experience directly, such a being). Careful analysis of the Curtisses’ texts shows that *Rahmea* could communicate freely with the departed,¹⁶⁵ nature spirits,¹⁶⁶ conduct psychometry,¹⁶⁷ assimilate the nature of archangelic emanations such as Uriel¹⁶⁸ and Saturn/Lucifer¹⁶⁹ and communication

publications of *Letters from the Teacher, Volumes I and II* and the balance of *The Teachings of the Order of Christian Mystics*.

¹⁵⁷ From *Sant*, a Sanskrit term denoting custodians of superior divine wisdom, spiritual powers and inexhaustible spiritual wealth. (From Hindupedia). See also the chapter on Pyrahmos and Rahmea, (Truth, 2014).

¹⁵⁸ (Truth, 2014) Part II and III.

¹⁵⁹ *Theopneusty*, from Greek *theos*, ‘God’ and *pneustos*, ‘inspired’ or *pnein*, ‘to breathe into.’

¹⁶⁰ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d, pp. 13,206,210)

¹⁶¹ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Message of Aquaria*, 2010c, p. 350)

¹⁶² (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d, p. 13)

¹⁶³ *Theopathy*, from *theo*, ‘God’ and *pathy* or ‘sympathy.’

¹⁶⁴ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d, p. 13)

¹⁶⁵ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d, pp. 254,261,291)

¹⁶⁶ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d, pp. 165-177)

¹⁶⁷ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d, p. 283), see also the remarkable account of Rabiacca, obtained through psychometry, (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Love of Rabiacca*, 2015c)

¹⁶⁸ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Message of Aquaria*, 2010c, p. 381)

¹⁶⁹ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d, pp. 273-278)

on demand with her teacher, HPB.¹⁷⁰ She also wrote down many prophecies.¹⁷¹ The Curtisses also lay out the phenomenon of theophany,¹⁷² the actual appearance of a Divine Being to a mortal and state that “This great teacher appears to many students in a mist of beautiful, clear, rich violet light; for violet is the color of the higher realms of the astral world.”¹⁷³

On the title page of *Letters from the Teacher Volume I*, she was given the honorific *Priestess of the Flame* by her Order.

For the OCM, Harriette Curtiss's honorific as ‘Priestess’ and her ability to communicate with nature elementals confirmed the ancient doctrine that nature is subservient to the spiritually illumined will of man. According to OCM teaching, her enlightened state was attained through a pilgrimage of many lives, and that she had come to this world repeatedly as an *Āvesha*, revealed posthumously, to teach and inspire mankind.¹⁷⁴

The life of this saint shows that to be an initiate of *The Order of the Flame* is a major spiritual achievement. Many siddhis and occult powers are at the command of such initiates, for by their immaculate and enlightened state, as shown, the higher states and realms are open to their vision as alluded to by the apostle Matthew when he states: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see (experience directly) God.”¹⁷⁵

A comprehensive body of spiritual philosophy, couched in Christian mystical tradition, was transmitted through teacher and disciple and published extensively through many editions spanning the years 1908 to 1949.

Within this tradition, the transmission of spiritual instruction and teaching between teacher and disciple does not end with the demise of the physical body. According to the Curtisses, it was the mission of *Rahmea*, revealed by *The Teacher of the Order*

¹⁷⁰ As examples, *Letters from the Teacher, Volumes I and II*; *Personal Survival*, Chapter XI, A Message from Madame Blavatsky, *The Inner Radiance*, pp308,313, etc.

¹⁷¹ (Truth, 2014), Comprehensive compilation as Chapter V.

¹⁷² *Theophany*, from *theo*, ‘God’ and *phainein*, ‘to show.’ Communication with the departed and their actual appearance to the living is an occurrence well referenced throughout history. A well-known relatively recent case as reported by Paramahansa Yogananda with the actual ‘body and flesh’ appearance of his guru, Sri Yukteswar in 1936, and a comprehensive discussion of conditions in the afterworld. (Yogananda, *The Autobiography of a Yogi*, 2018, pp. 308-323), and the many similar occurrences throughout The Bible, most notably the Master Jesus appearing to his disciples. Also (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d, pp. 204-206)

¹⁷³ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d, p. 196)

¹⁷⁴ (Curtiss F. H., *Reincarnation*, 2015e, p. 34)

¹⁷⁵ *Matthew 5:8* (KJV), explaining the remarkable attributes and powers ascribed to saints of all races and religions.

in *A Message from Madame Blavatsky*, to inculcate into Theosophical teachings at the time what was termed in HPB's final writing, *The Doctrine of the Heart*. Implementing this doctrine, to bring to Theosophy the *inner path* of true *Theo Sophia* or Divine Wisdom, to assist the few true mystics in the Theosophical Society to experience that *Divine Inner Power* presented by Professor Lane as *The Sound Current Tradition*. In this dissertation, it is shown that this *Divine Power* is contacted through prayer, devotion, contemplation and ultimately through the supreme practice of *Entering the Silence* – meditation. This *Divine Power*, contacted through inner practice as expounded further in chapter three, is experienced by the spiritual aspirant as *The Voice of the Silence*¹⁷⁶ or *The Soundless Sound*.¹⁷⁷ The latter volume, first published in 1911 with the subtitle, *By The Teacher of The Order of The 15*, was transcribed by Harriette Augusta and Frank Homer Curtiss, who consider this volume to be an inspired writing from HPB through the agency of *Rahmea*. Both titles and the content of the writings form the core of HPB's treatises on the inner path.

2.8 The Voice of the Silence – A Timeless Teaching from The Masters

“It is the seed of freedom from rebirth [The Voice] ... it leads him through the fields of Being unto the peace and bliss known only in the land of Silence and Non-Being.”¹⁷⁸

With the writing of *The Voice of the Silence*, HPB had started what she understood as preparing her Society for an inner and more select teaching at the behest of her Master. She had laid the groundwork for the establishment of “a school of my own,” culminating in the formation of the Esoteric Section with its inner group teachings. This would assist its members to follow an inner mystical path to unite the incarnated soul (the lower self) to his or her own Higher Self, the true teacher or the Sat-guru.¹⁷⁹ Throughout *The Voice of the Silence*, the Higher Self is termed variously “the SELF, THAT SELF, ONE Master, SELF of Spirit, Over-Soul, the ONE, MASTER, ALL SELF,

¹⁷⁶ (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015)

¹⁷⁷ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Soundless Sound*, 2012a)

¹⁷⁸ (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 13)

¹⁷⁹ From *Sat*, ‘that which is true, absolute, unchangeable’ and *gu ru*, ‘dispeller of darkness.’ The following of a mystical path through the method of meditation is laid out in Fragment I of *The Voice of the Silence* and expounded throughout the remainder of that work.

Guru, Heaven-born, thy Inner GOD” etc., and expounded further in the esoteric section teachings.

The Voice of the Silence is described in a publisher’s preface as filled with timeless imagery, “a spiritual classic of incomparable beauty and power;”¹⁸⁰ her final writing, different from the intellectual and fact-based exposition of the occult penned up to that time. From her prolific pen and previous writings, she mentions *The Logos*¹⁸¹ and *The Word*¹⁸² from which creation itself was said to have sprung, many hundreds of times.¹⁸³ Stated previously, with the founding of the Esoteric Section, the time had come to establish within the Theosophical Society, a way, a means, to come into personal contact with this *Logos*, this *Divine Power*, emanating from out the Supreme or Absolute Realm, Divinity itself.¹⁸⁴ In the first fragment, aphorism two of *The Voice of the Silence*, she claims to provide the key to the attainment of what she terms the true mystical Self, an approach to ‘literally’¹⁸⁵ experience *The Voice of the Silence*, described as a Divine emanation through which the aspirant may yoke¹⁸⁶ himself ever inwards and upwards into union with the Divine, through the practice of transcending mental movement, meditation or *Entering the Silence*.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁰ (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015), Verbatim Edition, Theosophical University Press, Pasadena, California.

¹⁸¹ *Logos*, from the Greek translates as *Word* (Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary*, 1892, p. 193). It refers to the *Supreme Emanation*, the ‘First Begotten Son of God’, that which *first* emanated from the Supreme. Gen 1:1-3 (KJV) “In the beginning ... God said, Let there be light: and there was light.” “In the beginning ... God”, referring to the Absolute Reality. Then “God said”, referring to the Divine Word, the first emanation. Then, “Let there be light” and from this first emanation all of creation (the light) proceeded.

¹⁸² *John 1:1-4* (KJV) “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him (the Word); and without Him (the Word) was not any thing made that was made. In Him (the Word) was life; and the life was the light of men.”

¹⁸³ Throughout *The Secret Doctrine*, Volumes I and II.

¹⁸⁴ The numerous definitions and discussions in *The Secret Doctrine*, as to the nature of the ‘Word’ and the ‘Logos’ is extensive. The Inner Group teachings with its pledges and rules were put forth to implement a stricter regimen for ‘the few’; those aspirants who were prepared to make a concerted effort to experience union with their Higher Self.

¹⁸⁵ Experiencing *The Voice of the Silence* is not a mental concept, but an actual inner experience attested to by those who engage in deep meditation.

¹⁸⁶ The term *Yoga* is derived from the Sanskrit root *Yug*, meaning ‘to join’ or ‘to yoke’ or ‘to unite’, in the spiritual sense, with that *Divine Inner Power*, commonly called and understood as ‘God’.

¹⁸⁷ Meditation, in the context of this writing, comprises those practices which enable the spiritual aspirant to still the mind and to ‘Enter into the Silence.’ Any other mental process of thinking, analysing, arguing, debating etc., would be termed ‘contemplation.’

“He who would hear the voice of *Nada*,¹⁸⁸ ‘the Soundless Sound’¹⁸⁹ and comprehend¹⁹⁰ it, he has to learn the nature of *Dhāranā*. ”¹⁹¹

*Commentary by HPB: Dhāranā, is the intense and perfect concentration of the mind upon some one interior object, (here the interior object is termed Nada), accompanied by complete abstraction (pratyāhāra) from everything pertaining to the external Universe, or the world of the senses.*¹⁹²

Expounding on *The Sound Current Tradition in the West*, what little is known of it, Professor Lane gives an outline of the teachings on this subject in *The Voice of the Silence* “which provides a distillation of sound current teachings.” (Lane, 2022, p. 24)

Fragment I of *The Voice of the Silence* is, according to HPB, an exposition of the inner path leading to liberation, which is entered through meditation. According to *The Teacher of the Order*, it is the contacting of this *Nada*, “The Soundless Sound, that *Divine Power* which lies veiled behind all the imperfections”¹⁹³ through which one may enter such a path, and thus to ‘comprehend’ or to become one with it; not to be understood as an intellectual study, but an experiential one.

It is thus, through the practices of concentration (*dhāranā*) and meditation (*dhyāna*), that the meditator contacts and experiences directly that which these traditions call the inner Divinity, termed by HPB as the great *Word* or *Logos* and variously in *The Voice of the Silence* as:

Nada, the Soundless Sound, the Soundless Voice, the *AUM* throughout eternal ages, the voice of *Krishna-Christos* or the Higher Self, the voice of thy inner God, *Anāhata-śabda*, the Silent Speaker etc.

This is, according to HPB, the great secret of this writing, the key that opens *The Secret Path*, mentioned so often throughout *The Voice of the Silence*, comprehending

¹⁸⁸ *Nada*, from *nad*, simply meaning ‘sound’ or ‘indistinguishable sound.’

¹⁸⁹ Blavatsky mentions ‘*Anāhata-śabda*’ in the commentaries to *The Voice of the Silence*, p78. *Anahata* meaning ‘unstruck’ and *Shabd* meaning ‘Word’ or ‘Sound,’ literally then the ‘unstruck sound’ or the ‘soundless sound.’

¹⁹⁰ *Comprehend*, from Latin *comprehendere*, ‘to come together, to grasp a things complete nature, to become one with it’ and therefore not a mental construct but an experiential one.

¹⁹¹ (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 1)

¹⁹² (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 73), Commentary on Fragment I.

¹⁹³ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Soundless Sound*, 2012a, p. 13)

The Soundless Sound through the practice of *dhāranā*. Further aphorisms from Fragment I state:

“And this, O Yogi of success, is what men call *Dhyāna*, the right precursor of *Samādhi*.”¹⁹⁴

This ‘Soundless Sound’, experiencing the inner mystic sounds and using this as a focus and anchor for meditation and transformation. HPB explains that it is an inner state experienced by the meditator who has learned through the practices of *Yoga* to still his mind and become receptive to the Great Silence, elaborated in the first fragment of *The Voice of the Silence*. To attain such an inner experience or state, one must learn the nature of *dhāranā* through spiritual practices. In *The Voice of the Silence*, Blavatsky speaks of *dhāranā*, *dhyāna* and *samādhi*, collectively known and understood as the *Samyāma*,¹⁹⁵ the practical aspect of *Sāṅkhya Yoga*, one of the six major Hindu traditions of philosophy and *Samyāma* representing the upper limbs of Patañjali’s *Yoga Sūtras*, pointing to those spiritual practices which lead to liberation from this world of *saṃsāra*. HPB refers to *Yoga* and *Yogi* 15 times in this writing. From the viewpoint of phenomenological mystical experience – an approach that concentrates on the study of consciousness and the objects of direct experience – Letzerich (2023) makes a comprehensive study as to the inner mystical states alluded to in this work and attempts to classify them in her dissertation “Categories of Mystical Experience in *The Voice of the Silence* by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky.”

Thus, through the preliminary practices of *pratyāhāra*¹⁹⁶ – abstraction from the world of senses or the outer sights and sounds – the spiritual aspirant is led ever closer to the truth. From Fragment I:

“When he has ceased to hear the many, he may discern the ONE – the inner sound (*Nada*) which kills the outer (distractions). Then only, not till then, shall he forsake the region of *Asat*, the false, to come unto the realm of *Sat*, the true.”¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 20)

¹⁹⁵ (Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary*, 1892, pp. 291,292)

¹⁹⁶ The fifth limb of *Ashtāṅga Yoga* as per *The Yoga Sūtras* of Patañjali.

¹⁹⁷ (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 2)

It is only when the meditator exalts his awareness and consciousness above the mind, transcending the mind, to the upper regions where – as thought slows down, dissipates, and eventually disappears altogether – that true change or transformation takes place, transforming the lower vehicles (physical, astral and mental as per Figure 2.1) into a regenerated state as hinted at in the Bible.¹⁹⁸ This transformation from terrestrial man to the Divine man through a spiritual path of purification¹⁹⁹ can be effected only by this *Nada*, this *Soundless Sound*, the Supreme emanation of Divinity. Through the practice of *dhāranā* (concentration), Blavatsky explains, the meditator immerses his attention into and bathes in this inner power and enters into *dhyāna* (the meditative state) proper. Then only, not till then, does the meditating yogi see this transient world for what it is, yoking himself with increasing love (dedication) to the Supreme.²⁰⁰

“Before the soul can comprehend and may remember [its true Divinity], she must unto the Silent Speaker be united.”²⁰¹

¹⁹⁸ “If anyone is in Christ (immersed in this Christ-consciousness), he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” 2 *Corinthians* 5:17 (KJV); “It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven.” 1 *Corinthians* 15:44,47 (KJV).

¹⁹⁹ In *The Voice of the Silence*, pp20,21 and commentary 43 of Fragment I, we read of four periods, called ‘modes of Truth,’ through which the candidate for discipleship must pass ere his feet can be truly planted upon the Path and called ‘Ku’, suffering or misery; ‘Tu’, the assembling of temptations; ‘Mu’, their destruction; and ‘Tau’, the Path.

²⁰⁰ “Until he awakens to the desirability of the spiritual life and has heard the Voice of the Divine in his heart, the candidate is passing through the first period, called ‘Ku’ or the assembling of misery, or walking in darkness. When his gaze is turned toward the Star of Initiation, he calls down upon himself more rapidly his past Karma. This period is called ‘Tu’ or the assembling of temptations. In the third period he meets and conquers all temptations and wipes out all old karmic debts, which period is called ‘Mu,’ the destruction of temptations. And only in the fourth period, called ‘Tau,’ does he consciously enter upon the Path.” (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 320)

²⁰¹ (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, pp. 2,3)

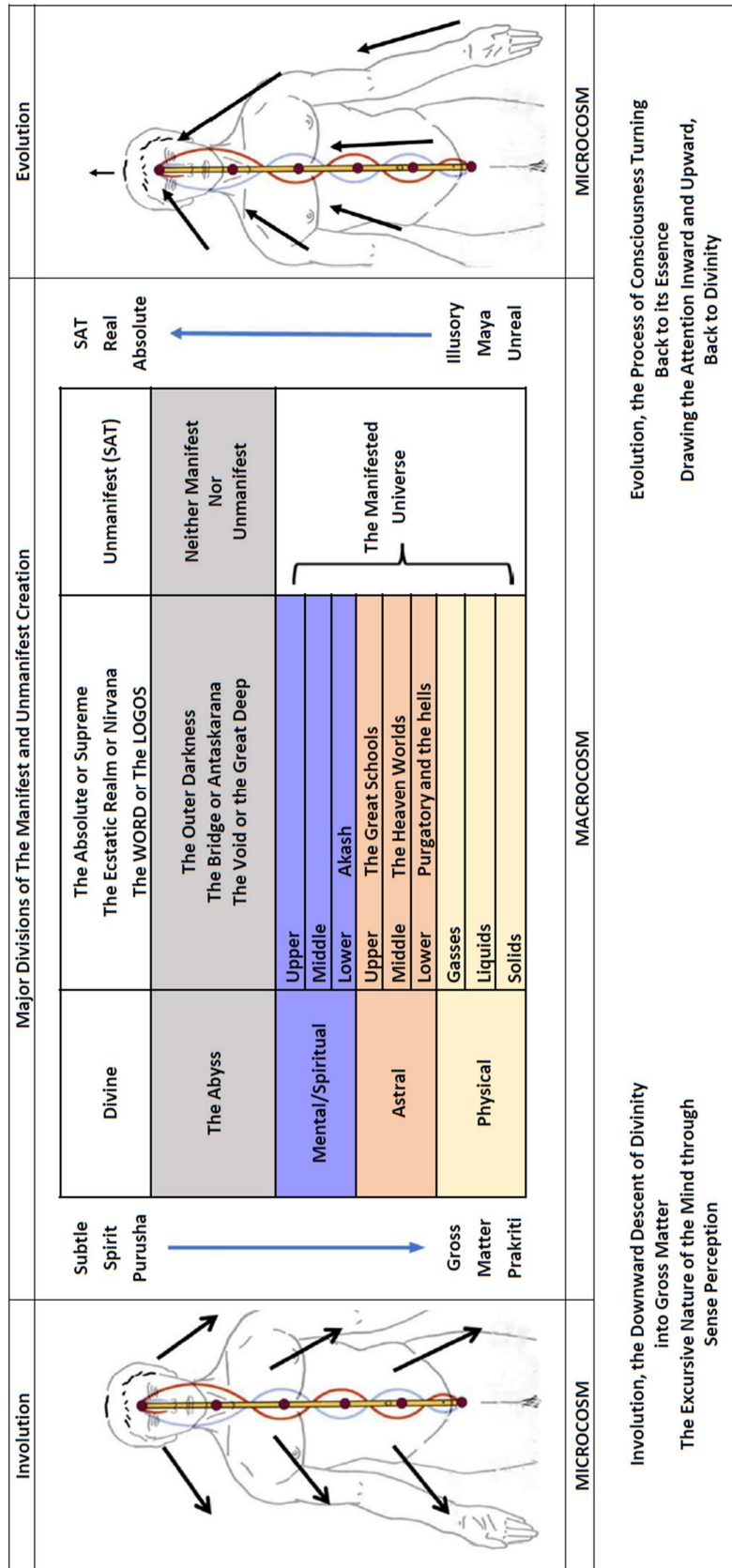


Figure 2.1: The Manifest and Unmanifest Creation, Microcosm and Macrocosm

2.9 The Doctrine of the Heart – The Mystical Spiritual Path Within

“When on earth Mme Blavatsky gave out but the outer body of the Mystic Teachings or Theosophy, the shell let us say ... now she has entered into her real work ... to take that outer shell and build into it its soul, the Mystic Teachings of the Heart Doctrine.”²⁰²

According to HPB, *The Voice of the Silence* lays out the beginnings of an *inner life* or the following of an inner mystical path to work out, for oneself, some form of personal salvation, leading to liberation from the inexorable law of karma and reincarnation or *samsāra*. This working out of a personal salvation – to attain Self or God-realisation, attainment of Oneness with the Supreme – is described in Theosophical teachings as the true *Theo Sophia*, the title of this dissertation. Also termed *Sanātana Dharma*,²⁰³ translated approximately as ‘eternal religion, way or law,’ the Divine Wisdom teaching – that the kingdom of heaven is to be found within you.²⁰⁴ HPB terms the development of the mind and the intellect the *Doctrine of the Eye*, necessary to give the mind the rationale for following an inner path, but of the *Doctrine of the Heart*, *The Voice of the Silence* says in Fragment II:

“The ‘Doctrine of the Eye’ is for the crowd, the ‘Doctrine of the Heart,’ for the Elect.”²⁰⁵

Thus, the inner teaching, the *Doctrine of the Heart* and her statement that it is “Dedicated to the Few”²⁰⁶ shows the way through meditation to experience directly this

²⁰² (Curtiss F. H., *Personal Survival*, 2014d, p. 119)

²⁰³ Theosophy is the *Sanātana Dharma*, the eternal wisdom of Theo Sophia, the knowledge and wisdom which underlie the universe, and which cannot be wholly expressed in discursive thought or words. (Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary*, 1892), Publishers Preface.

²⁰⁴ “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation ... for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” *Luke 17: 20,21*.

“What will a man gain by merely reasoning about the words of the scriptures? Ah, the fools! They reason themselves to death over information about the path. They never take the plunge. What a pity!” (Gupta, 1952, p. 543), *Sayings of Ramakrishna*.

“As long as I talked unceasingly about the Lord, the Lord stayed away, kept at a distance. But when I silenced my mouth, sat very still, and fixed my mind at the doorway of the Lord, I soon was linked to the music of the Word, and all my talking came to an end.” (Ezekiel, 2002, p. vi), *Teachings from Kabir, the Great Mystic*.

“Today I am revealing to thee this Yoga eternal, this secret supreme: because of thy love for me, and because I am thy friend.” *Bhagavad Gītā* 4:3.

²⁰⁵ (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 27)

²⁰⁶ (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015), Dedication.

inner *Divine Power*, in contrast to religious and intellectual learning, explained as the outer teaching, which, according to HPB, is 'for the crowd.' Through inner *sādhana*,²⁰⁷ consciousness can be exalted into the highest realms to experience the Absolute, that which is permanent and everlasting, commonly understood as 'God.' Having the awareness fixated on worldly affairs and sense-gratification, experiencing the relative and the transient as HPB expresses these contrasts in Fragment II:

"The Dharma of the 'Eye' is the embodiment of the external, and the non-existing."²⁰⁸

"The Dharma of the 'Heart' is the embodiment of Bodhi, the Permanent and Everlasting."²⁰⁹

These inner texts show that following an inner path of ego-abnegation through self-discipline to be a lifelong struggle. Striving to lead a life of purity and perfection leads to many trials and temptations which come the way of the aspirant. HPB thus recognises this path as 'for the few'. Liberation is for those who want liberation, who will do whatever needs to be done to attain that state of freedom from *saṃsāra*.

For those who are not yet ready *The Voice of the Silence* says:

"Yet if the 'Doctrine of the Heart' is too high-winged for thee ... then remain content with the 'Eye Doctrine' of the Law. Hope still. For if the 'Secret Path' is unattainable this 'day,' it is within thy reach 'to-morrow.'"²¹⁰

This inner path, this Secret Path, the Secret Supreme, is also mentioned by Lord Krishna in *The Bhagavad Gītā*.²¹¹ The *Gītā*, accepted as an ancient Scripture, details a comprehensive unfoldment of the spiritual aspirant as an inner soliloquy between Arjuna and Lord Krishna, his Higher Self. HPB and the Curtisses quote and expound extensively on the teachings in the *Gītā*, where this path is perceived as secret, as it can be known only by experiencing it. The inner path, the inner life, is experiential and

²⁰⁷ *Sādhana*, from Sanskrit, meaning 'daily spiritual practice' in order to effect disciplined surrendering of the ego, typically through prayer, contemplation and meditation – all practices of *yoga*.

²⁰⁸ (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 29)

²⁰⁹ (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 29)

²¹⁰ (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, pp. 33,34)

²¹¹ *Bhagavad Gītā* 9:1,2; 18:68,75 (Yogananda)

not intellectual. HPB describes this path and its associated meditation practice on how to contact this *Divine Inner Power*, the *Sat-guru* or Higher Self, by placing the attention during meditation at the eye centre.

“Then from the heart that Power shall rise into the sixth, the middle region, the place between thine eyes, when it becomes the breath of the ONE-SOUL, the voice which filleth all, thy Master’s voice ... Silence thy thoughts and fix thy whole attention on thy Master whom yet thou dost not see, but whom thou feelest. Merge into one sense thy senses, if thou would’st be secure against the foe.’ Tis by that sense alone which lies concealed within the hollow of thy brain, that the steep path which leadeth to thy Master may be disclosed before thy Soul’s dim eyes ... Live in that MASTER as Its ray in thee.”²¹²

It can thus be deducted from these statements that this *Doctrine of the Heart* is something that cannot be read or studied, but must be experienced, internalised and comprehended as the only way to attain liberation from a transient world of *saṃsāra*, attaining to that spiritual injunction, ‘that peace which passeth all understanding.’²¹³

2.10 The Soundless Sound – Spiritual Guidance for the Unfolding Soul

“What in this imperfect world of Nature speaks so distinctly, so persistently to your heart? It is *The Soundless Sound*, that *Divine Power* which lies veiled behind all the imperfections.”²¹⁴

According to the Curtisses, at the passing of a great teacher, such continue with their work in the higher spheres and can subsequently do exponentially more work from that higher state, not having to deal with the limitations imposed by a physical body. As for HPB, they write that:

²¹² (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, pp. 9,16,50). See also Chapter VI of *The Bhagavad Gītā* on meditation at the eye centre.

²¹³ “And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (in the Christ-consciousness, the Word, or the Soundless Sound).” *Philippians 4:7*

²¹⁴ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Soundless Sound*, 2012a, p. 13)

“... this Great Teacher still remains in the higher Realms of the Astral and from there inspires, works with and influences, to the degree that each will permit, respond and follow, not only the Society which she founded and all the sects into which it is now split up, but also every group of students throughout the world who are seeking to promulgate any phase or aspect of the Wisdom Religion and who are unprejudiced and open minded enough to respond to the more advanced conceptions of it to which she has now attained.”²¹⁵

In 1911, 20 years after her passing, *The Order of the 15* (later *The Order of Christian Mystics*) published a treatise titled *The Soundless Sound*, attributed to *The Teacher of the Order of the 15*.²¹⁶ In this work, according to the Curtisses, HPB elaborates and expounds on the second aphorism of *The Voice of the Silence*, giving a more detailed explanation of what she had written down previously as *Nada*, or *The Soundless Sound*, a teaching which at the time had escaped the then Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society.²¹⁷ According to Harriette Curtiss, she, under the inspirational guidance of *The Teacher of the Order* whom she considered to be HPB, inculcated the inner teachings of HPB to a small group of Theosophists, first put forth in *The Voice of the Silence*, and continued through inspirational writing from her hand in what would become known as the teachings of the OCM.

In this devotional treatise, *The Soundless Sound*, unknown to most, and the vast body of mystical philosophy which followed, this *Divine Power* is called variously:

The Soundless Sound, the Higher Self, the undercurrent of Power and Peace, the Voice of God, the Voice of the Silence, the Divine Voice, the Silent Voice, His Soundless Voice, the One Voice in the Soul of all, the Psalm of Life, the Harp of Life, the Melody of the Divine, the Voice of the Christ, the Spiritual Sound, a Voice that speaks where there is none to speak, the Music of the Spheres and so on.²¹⁸

²¹⁵ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d, p. 195)

²¹⁶ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Soundless Sound*, 2012a), Title Page.

²¹⁷ A careful study of the inner group teachings and the many writings and treatises on *The Voice of the Silence*, show no clear understanding as to the true nature of Fragment I of this writing.

²¹⁸ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Soundless Sound*, 2012a)

According to *The Teachings of the OCM*, this refers to that ‘state’ experienced when the meditator goes within and becomes mentally still; the only state in which the aspirant can finally merge into that higher quality of consciousness which is understood as ‘God,’ the aspirant becoming one with his own Higher Self, the true teacher which will bring all to remembrance, the *Sat-guru*, the Christ-consciousness.²¹⁹

The Curtisses explain that as the light of this Divine aspiration awakens the understanding “that we are *essentially Spiritual Beings*, here and now on the physical plane, as much as we will ever be,”²²⁰ then, through *a definite and conscious spiritual effort*, the mystic may in time come to understand his real Mystic Self “with all its strange longings and promptings, its flashes of spiritual illumination and its glimpses of glory.”²²¹ In its spiritual imagery, this little booklet is thus, according to *The Teacher of the Order*, meant to speak to the innermost soul of the reader, giving him the “assurance that in the midst of the toil and disappointments and weariness of life there is a surging undercurrent of Power and Peace, sweeping all humanity onward and upward, drawing them closer to the Heart of Love.”²²² From a phenomenological point of view, this devotional work elucidates the inner state to which the meditating aspirant and mystic aspires to. It describes the grand mystery and experience of attaining oneness with God – God-realization or God-consciousness – as described by Omoregbe (2002) as the ultimate aim of the mystic.

“Amid the rolling fields and wooded hills, while listening to the symphony of Nature sounds – the song of bird, the drone of insects, the rustle of leafy bough, the tinkle of brook or boom of sea – you are uplifted and stirred by a sense of the Divine surrounding you and coming close. You have caught a glimpse of Divine Consciousness. Your Soul responds to The Soundless Sound.

When your Soul thrills with the same oneness as you contact your fellow men, you will then have ceased, at least in a measure, to listen to the many and hearken to the One.

Then are you ready to come into Truth; to find Truth and understand that

²¹⁹ The compilers of the New Testament have so obfuscated the meaning of the Divine Word that it is literally interpreted and understood by orthodoxy as the personality of Jesus Christ.

²²⁰ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Inner Radiance*, 2012c, p. 11)

²²¹ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Mystic Life*, 2012b, p. 71)

²²² (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Soundless Sound*, 2012a), Foreword.

it is the foundation of all things; that underneath and within the innermost sanctuary of all manifestations of life is Divine Love.

Then will you know that this is not a world of confusion, of strange and mysterious happenings, but a world of Law and Love, a world of manifold expressions of Deity. Then and then only are you ready to listen to the Voice which speaks to you in the Silence, The Soundless Sound.

Then you will realise that you need not desert the haunts of men, live in the wilderness, mortify the flesh, live on roots and herbs, quench your thirst at the mountain streamlet. Your opportunity will confront you wherever you are placed.

You will find great joy ministering to each atom of humanity you meet. You will have found the One in all. Then will the Voice become the daily Friend,²²³ the everlasting Counselor, the Prince of Peace, the God of Love within your heart.”²²⁴

On the title page of *The Voice of the Silence*, HPB dedicates those timeless aphorisms “For the daily use of Lanoos or Disciples,” referring to spiritual aspirants who have dedicated their lives to the spiritual path, and who might be under the direct instruction of a teacher or *acharya*.²²⁵ These aphorisms are, according to the author, elaborated further by *The Teacher of the Order* in *The Soundless Sound*, bringing comfort and understanding to those who strive to live the higher life of purity, love and devotion and providing the aspirant with uplifting contemplative content. These two relatively short contemplative writings, inspired from on high, contain distinct and contemporary references to *The Soundless Sound* as the primordial emanation of Divinity, a phenomenological concept found as far back as the *Mandukya* and *Nada-Bindu Upanishads* (Lane, 2022, p. 9).²²⁶ In closing, a poetic description of *The Soundless Sound* by Sri Chinmoy, founder of the International Sri Chinmoy Mission.

²²³ In *The Bhagavad Gītā*, literally ‘The Song of God,’ Lord Krishna is depicted as playing the flute, referring to the inner unstruck sound. He says of those who go within to seek Him there: “Today I am revealing to thee this Yoga eternal, this secret supreme: because of thy love for me, and because I am thy friend.” *Bhagavad Gītā* 4:3 (Mascaro).

²²⁴ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Soundless Sound*, 2012a, pp. 19-21)

²²⁵ Blavatsky uses the term *Lanoo* to mean ‘disciple’ or one who has elected to tread the path to enlightenment. Generally, a disciple is under instruction from an *acharya* (teacher or mentor) or a *guru* (spiritual preceptor).

²²⁶ Vide *The Bhagavad Gītā*, *The Voice of the Silence*, *The Yoga Sūtras* of *Patañjali* and similar ‘short’ contemplative works.

“Before God created the Universe, He created Himself. God exists because of His creation; He created Himself. While creating Himself, He felt the necessity of creating two most intimate friends. He wanted them to go hand in hand with His own creation. His two most intimate friends were *Nād* and *Ānanda*. *Nād* is Sound, the Cosmic Sound, The Soundless Sound. God created this sound, and He requested this intimate friend to stay within His Heart. Here in this world when you strike one thing against another, it produces a sound. But this particular sound, which is in the inmost recesses of our heart, needs no outer object or subject to produce it. Automatically, spontaneously, this sound is produced. That is why in Sanskrit it is also called *anāhata*. *Āhata* means ‘struck’ and *anāhata* means ‘unstruck.’ Then, along with this sound, God created another friend, *Ānanda* or ‘Delight.’ He asked Delight to be always around Him and within Him.”²²⁷

2.11 A Message from Madame Blavatsky – The Teacher of the Order Speaks

“O star of wonder, star of might, Star of wondrous beauty bright, Godward leading, still preceding, Guide me with thy radiant light.”²²⁸

Preface

According to Frank Homer Curtiss and his historical perspective, the following communication from HPB to her pupil and disciple, *Rahmea*, is significant from many occult and esoteric points of view, revealing the life and mission of a Great World Teacher, *during and after incarnation* i.e., HPB as the founder and teacher of the Theosophical Society and then as *The Teacher of The Order of the 15* (The Order of Christian Mystics).²²⁹ Revealed to the Curtisses at a much earlier date (1928),²³⁰ it was finally published in 1946, the year that the second founder of the Order, Dr Frank Homer Curtiss passed away and the year that the work of the Order thus ended, its source and mission revealed to all.

It shows the means and methods, clarity of mind and purpose, in which discarnate

²²⁷ (Chinmoy, 1974)

²²⁸ (Curtiss & Curtiss, 2013a, p. 66)

²²⁹ (Curtiss F. H., Personal Survival, 2014d), A Message from Madame Blavatsky. (Truth, 2014), Exposition on “A Message from Madame Blavatsky.”

²³⁰ (Curtiss F. H., Personal Survival, 2014d, p. 213)

master souls transmit teachings and instructions to their advanced pupils. It reveals the abilities of certain disciples and initiates, 'the pure in heart', to receive such teaching; that such methods are employed in the day-to-day running of spiritual societies, *then and now* existent on the physical plane.²³¹ The teachings of the OCM provide a rare glimpse into the *modus operandi* of a living disciple inspired by a discarnate teacher, such teacher backed by a spiritual Hierarchy, those who govern the spiritual destiny of mankind.²³² It presents the reader and academic with a direct phenomenological experience in the realm of the mystic as stated previously by Omoregbe (2002). It provides a direct comparative opportunity with a similar example as demonstrated by Paramahansa Yogananda and his Guru Sri Yukteswar, as to the inevitable outcome of leading an inner spiritually minded life based on meditation and *The Sound Current Tradition*.²³³

Here we have, according to Dr. and Mrs. F. Homer Curtiss, a directly transmitted communiqué from a Great World Teacher and the Founder of the Theosophical Society to its members worldwide.²³⁴

A MESSAGE FROM MADAME BLAVATSKY

Transcribed by

DR. AND MRS. F. HOMER CURTISS

Founders of The Universal Religious Fellowship, Inc.

Authors of "The Curtiss Books"

The many messages from Madame Blavatsky given to the authors in her own handwriting and over her own identified signature, as reproduced in this volume,

²³¹ (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d), *Independent Methods of Communication*, Chapter XVI.

²³² From a Theosophical point of view, simply termed 'The Lodge of Masters.' These Great Spiritual Hierarchies cater for the differing aspirations and mind-set of hungering aspirants, the 'True Spiritual Priesthood.' (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Message of Aquaria*, 2010c, p. 436) Throughout these teachings, *The Teacher*, transmitting through Harriette Curtiss, has much to say about the Creative and Celestial Hierarchies: Hierarchies of Beings, of Heaven, of Divine Ones, of Builders and Creators, Spiritual and Planetary, etc.

²³³ (Yogananda, *The Autobiography of a Yogi*, 2018, pp. 308-323)

²³⁴ See also (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Letters from The Teacher Volume 1*, 2013b) (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Letters from The Teacher Volume 2*, 2013c)

should be sufficient evidence of the close contact the authors have had with her through many years. These messages should be sufficient evidence too, of the authenticity of the following message, dictated to Mrs. Harriette Curtiss by Madame Blavatsky, Oct. 16th, 1928.

This message was given to the transcribers some time ago for a special purpose. But the Author of the message now directs them to make it public. And they herewith comply with that instruction, that the message may reach the hearts of those who are ready for it.

It is very important that there should be a plain understanding of my teachings on some of the subjects which are causing so much misunderstanding among my followers in other societies, so that you can put things in a plain and definite way which will carry conviction, and will help, we hope, to bridge the chasm of separation and bring us all closer together as one family sitting at the table of our Father. You will have difficulty in making certain ones comprehend, owing to their fixed idea that only the explanations given them by their so-called authorities can be accepted. But I want this my explanation written out so that those to whom it is shown can accept it or not; then at least we have done our part in presenting the truth.

At the time when she who was known as Helena Petrovna Blavatsky was on earth, although she had many faults and many misconceptions, she was nevertheless chosen for the great work of preparing the Western world for the coming of the Great Teacher, the Avatar. She was never worthy in her own eyes, except in the sense that she was willing to take up the burden and would not lay it down until the work was accomplished. The chief work that she gave to the world, *The Secret Doctrine*, was made up largely from the Ancient Teachings, the fundamental principles of the Wisdom Religion. These were gathered from the Ancient Teachings because there they were most accessible, and because they expressed most convincingly the essential principles of that religion. So, with many a self-interpolated dictum and with many a hammer and tongs she did the best she could. And what has been the result?

With great suffering and many mistakes, the Theosophical Society was founded. And finally, the time came for her to lay down the outer part of her physical work. But did she lay it down altogether? No. That was impossible, because when one is chosen and given a definite work to do for the Masters in a definite cycle, that work must come

under the Great Law.

And one is never chosen and then the work pushed on him, but the choice always results because in his past incarnations, he himself has asked for the opportunity and has tried to prepare himself, has literally said: "Here am I, use me!"

She was chosen as a Messenger of the Lodge because she had that karmic right and had sought to prepare herself for that work. And it is well to understand clearly what I mean by a Messenger of the Lodge. The Lodge has messengers of greater or lesser degrees, but all messengers must be in conscious touch with the Lodge and be willing to lay down their own personalities, their own lives, to do the Master's work and must be those whose Karma permits this. And yet at certain eras in the world's history, when we might say the world is approaching a great event, such as the descent of the Avatar, there is always some special Messenger sent out who has the characteristics, force and power to hew the way like John the Baptist; to make straight His paths, to prepare for His coming.

This preparation for the coming of the Great Teacher could not be accomplished merely by gathering together a few followers to study the philosophy of the Ancient Teachings; they had been studied for ages. How hopeless such a task! You know how even during her lifetime she had few friends. Her true friends she could count on the fingers of her hand, or on both at best. She had no one who was really close, who really understood her or comprehended her *real mission*. She was either regarded as a mountebank and a doer of wonders, hence sought out for pastime and entertainment, or as a half-crazed enthusiast who was trying to make a stir in the world by putting forth bizarre doctrines which would upset the placid faith of easy-going Christianity which had only just settled down into a comfortable jog-trot after the strenuous experiences of persecution and intolerance of past ages. People either fawned on her or flattered her and demanded her help or they derided. And oh, how they crushed and trampled on her highest ideals and belittled her great mission!

At last, there came a time, as there always does, when the Great Ones said, "Dear child, you have worked long enough under this terrible handicap of disbelief, of bickering, of criticism. Now you can continue your work where it will be easier; where you can stand aside, can look at the Teachings you have given out, and at the Source from whence you gathered them, and can understand more fully what is still necessary for the coming age." So, Mme. Blavatsky, according to the world's opinion, died, and according to the ideals of the Theosophical Society was transplanted into a higher

sphere of activity where she would still be capable of carrying on her work.

According to the very teachings which had been so carefully gathered and inculcated in the little group which at that time called itself the Theosophical Society, it had been pointed out that when a Teacher has accepted the great responsibility of preparing for the coming of an Avatar, such a Teacher never goes into Devachan or accepts Nirvanic bliss; that always, if he is worthy the name of Agent, he makes the great sacrifice and remains in the Earth's aura and in close touch with his followers to teach and help them and to watch over the seed he has planted and help it to continue its growth. This teaching is scattered all through her writings.²³⁵ When they cry, "Back to Blavatsky," why do they not go back to her fundamental teachings on this subject as well as others?

There never has been a great Teacher or a Messenger who, after he puts away the hampering body of flesh, does not remain close to his pupils; who does not continue his work; does not come and appear to and speak with his followers. To say that Mme. Blavatsky died and then disappeared and left her work, left it in the chaotic and undeveloped and unfulfilled condition you all know it was in, and is still in today, is simply to deny her the one little recognition of her work that at least her followers should be glad to give her, namely, that she was an authorised agent and Messenger of the Lodge. For, as I have said, if she laid down her work at death, she broke the Law. And if she had not been a Messenger, she would have been repudiated long before her death. This doctrine of "the self-sacrifice of one who voluntarily gives up the absolute

²³⁵ Among the many such references we call attention to the following: "Of the voluntary and conscious incarnations of Adepts there are two types, those of Nirmanakayas, and those undertaken by probationary chelas who are on their trial ... There are cases – rare, yet more frequent than one would be disposed to accept – which are the voluntary and conscious reincarnations of Adepts on their trial ... But few are those who outside the higher degrees of adeptship, can guide the latter (astral body), or any of the principles that animate it, when once death has closed their short terrestrial life. *Yet such guidance ... is not only possible but is of frequent occurrence* ... After the physical translation of such a Saint ... his astral principles cannot be subjected to a natural dissolution like those of any common mortal. They remain *in our sphere and within human attraction and reach* ... Such an adept *remains in the astral plane connected with our Earth*, and henceforth moves and lives in the possession of all his principles except the Kama-Rupa and physical body ... Those are Adepts who give up Nirvana for the sake of helping humanity ... This kind of easy death ... symbolizes the 'death' of any Adept who has reached the power and degree and also the purification which enables him to 'die' in the physical body, *and still live and lead a conscious life in his astral body.*" (Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* Volume II, 1893, p. 559); (Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* Volume III, 1897, pp. 365-367,372) Other references are too numerous to mention. HPB promised never to come back 'as a spook,' and she never has, but this does not mean that she has not continued to work, through the independent or telepathic method (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d, p. 225), through enlightened and devoted followers who are so developed and trained as to respond to her directions, not in any kind of trance or 'spook control' but in full waking consciousness. The evidence is too plain to be ignored.

Nirvana in order to help humanity and be still doing it good ... to save his fellow-creatures by *guiding them*”²³⁶ has been plainly given to the Theosophical Society. And the Masters of Wisdom, be They of high or low degree, far advanced or only a few steps on the Path of Mastery, all obey this Law. Therefore, being an Agent of the Lodge, “an Adept on his trial,” she also could be expected to obey this Law.

Is it conceivable that the great Masters of Wisdom and Compassion who knew that the whole Earth was about to pass its great baptism of horror and of blood and of dissolution; who knew that the days foretold from the beginning of time; were about to be entered upon; who knew that this poor little Earth was about to pass through its most terrible time of testing; is it conceivable that these Great Souls would say: “Yes, we know that the world is about to reach its darkest night; we know that war and fire and sword and famine, pestilence, desolation and horror are stalking abroad. But we will now withdraw our Messenger and let no one from the Lodge interfere to help or comfort or guide. Let the poor suffering little children fight it out alone with what we have already given them. We will do no more to help. There will be no one sent from the Lodge until 1975 when it is all over! We will remain away in hiding, in some safe retreat where we cannot be hurt while they die and starve and suffer and sink down into a hopeless hell in the horrors they must face.” I say is this conceivable?

Is there a person living, especially one who calls himself a Theosophist, who can so belittle and falsify the teachings and condemn the great loving Masters who, as they have been taught, are the “guardian wall” around humanity, who are the givers of compassion and love, and the “watchers through the night,” the great lovers of mankind? Yet apparently, this is the result of Mme. Blavatsky’s teachings. Oh, if such a horrible doctrine were true, I myself would gather the peoples of the earth together and I would say: “Find these so-called Masters of Wisdom and tear them limb from limb and throw them to the dogs! Find this God of theirs in his highest heaven and tear him down and say to this God: How dare you make man and then leave him helpless and without comfort to suffer and die under such terrible conditions! How dare you!” Yet this is what my followers today are saying that Mme. Blavatsky taught! Ah, my children, it is unthinkable! It is monstrous! It is villainous! It is horrible!

On the contrary, according to the Great Law, when a Messenger of the Lodge is

²³⁶ (Blavatsky, The Secret Doctrine Volume III, 1897, p. 366)

given a work to do upon the earth plane, and owing to his Karma, his disposition, his racial characteristics and to a thousand other factors, he fails to a certain extent to carry out his mission as well as he should, and yet his heart is true and he wants to do better, he is taken up into a higher realm, yet not far from Earth, and there is given an opportunity to do better, to see more clearly, to work harder, to correct mistakes, and to make the great renunciation of Nirvanic bliss to remain as the guardian and guide of his followers: for he would not lay down his advanced state to incarnate again as a babe, and thus waste the most precious years of the cycle while waiting to grow up to an age at which he could resume his work.

Again, they say that granting that all this is so, why could not someone in the great and loving and brotherly Theosophical Society be chosen to carry on her work? Oh, they are doing it beautifully, are they not? But I tell you now that there is absolutely not one among all the T. S. members in the world whom, if he will come to me and listen to me and obey me, I will not teach and help and inspire, who, if he will let go his own preconceived ideas of what Theo Sophia is, I will not guide and enlighten. But they will not. They will not realise that when on Earth Mme. Blavatsky gave out but the outer body of the Mystic Teachings or Theosophy, the shell let us say. But now, like all such Teachers, when she has entered into *her real work* upon a higher plane, she has to take that outer shell and build into it its soul, the Mystic Teachings of the Heart Doctrine, the love, the understanding, the sympathy and the personal touch, because today that is what the world needs.

In those early terrible days of materialism, the world needed hammer blows, needed to be shown that real religion, the Wisdom Religion, was scattered through all religions; needed to be shown that even those religions which they called “heathen” contained the mighty spiritual truths needed to guide the life. This was accomplished, but after she had passed out the world had changed. It was no longer merely materialism we had to fight. The world was seeking and crying out for truth, for love, for understanding, for brotherhood. Therefore, as the dark night came upon the world it had to have the inner side of the teachings, especially the inner side of the Christian teachings, explained to it. But where could I find anyone with minds open enough and who were karmically prepared to give these except the simple ones I chose?

Therefore, I say let all those who consider themselves true Theosophists turn aside from worshipping the outer shell of the teachings and seek the heart. Let them say: “Yes, all that former teaching was necessary and fundamental and is good, but can it

alone really help us in these days of misery and unrest? Can philosophy alone really feed our Souls? *Yet, we know that in Theosophy, real Theosophy, there is this Bread of Life. But who shall break it and give it to us? Where are the disciples who can take the five loaves and the two small fishes and give them to the multitude?*” When they have said this let them take the Mystic Teachings I have more recently inspired²³⁷ and see if they cannot find in them the real inner nourishing food of true Theosophy; not the exact interpretation perhaps, not the talk, not the controversy, not the arguments, but the spirit; the Spirit of Truth; the help, and the understanding of humanity which needs different treatment today than it needed when Mme. Blavatsky was on earth in the flesh.

Not until the work of that Teacher is accomplished will she take her rest. And it will never be accomplished until the inner Mystic Spirit of her teachings has been given out. And when I say the inner Mystic Spirit, I mean the things which touch the heart, which grip the understanding, which help men and women to live in spite of the hard times; to stand up and face themselves and the world all the things they are passing through today, rather than mere metaphysical speculations and disrupting, hair-splitting disputations over doctrinal points. Her work will never be accomplished until it has brought out the true religion within the framework of the philosophy or outer body of the Theosophical doctrine; until it has shown the great spiritual power, not only in the ancient religions, but also *that same identical spiritual power and those same truths in the Christian religion.*

In the days when Mme. Blavatsky was on Earth, the Western world believed in what was called the Christian religion but could not believe that one could be anything but a “heathen” who could see truth in any other religion. It was the work of Theosophy at that time to bring the truth of other religions to the attention of the Christian world. And this work has been so well accomplished that as a result today it is a common thing for people to go to the Hindus and the philosophies of other ancient peoples and pick out their wonderful pearls of great price. Many of such persons say that Christianity is a failure; that there is nothing in it. Therefore, Mme. Blavatsky has not finished her work

²³⁷ Published as *The Teachings of The Order of Christian Mystics*. At the passing of Harriette Augusta Curtiss (*Rahmea*) in 1932, the unfettered contact that the Order had through *Rahmea* to *The Teacher of the Order* came to an end, and as such, also an end to the original *Order of the 15*, or *The Order of Christian Mystics*. Henceforth, all further teachings and publications under the guidance of F.H. Curtiss, would be disseminated under the name of *The Universal Religious Fellowship, inc.*

until she brings the same understanding of the Christian Mysteries to the public mind that she brought to it of the other religions; until she strings the pearls of the Christian religion upon the same thread of truth and makes the recognition of all reach around the world and touch the hearts of all.

You see that her work today is just a continuation of a different part of the same work. You cannot expect a person, even on the physical plane, to go on day after day, year after year, repeating the same thing. If he has a philosophy, he must emphasise those aspects which will meet the needs of the day; for it is not a philosophy if it cannot fit all times and all conditions of life. If you send a child to school and he is taught the multiplication table and learns it perfectly, and then learns something else and finally a profession, would you say: "This cannot be the same child, for this knowledge is not what he was taught in the grammar school, and he is now quite different!" Do you not see Theosophists today who use no more common sense than this?

When the cycle of my work is closed, when this 1975 they talk so much about comes, then there will be a new Agent or Messenger from the Lodge. Who will this new Messenger be? Ah, my children, that we must leave. It will be One whose understanding is opened, one who has wisdom, who has love and sympathy, who can touch the hearts and unfold the Heart Doctrine. His work will be a different work from mine, but a continuation of it. But in the meantime, you can all help to spread the real Theosophy, both the body structure and the heart. You can thus help to redeem the work that is attributed to Mme. Blavatsky when on Earth, can be setting it right, by making people understand that while she was a human being, full of faults and failings, yet she was a chosen Messenger of the Lodge. She was also an immortal Spirit and a divinely appointed Teacher whose work is not taken from her because she laid down the human body of flesh; *for she is still working and will still work and never lay down her work*, until she has not merely one agent on Earth, but many, who will catch the rhythm of the true Teachings and will give but Theosophy from the heart side.

Why has the Society failed to touch the lives and hearts of its followers as it should? Because they cut out its heart and now are trying through magic to hold the atoms of the outer body together. Like all corpses, in spite of the mummy wrappings, the ritual and the mystic powers, the little atoms are gradually separating and seeking to live their lives in peace and harmony elsewhere. Everything that is good in the old society – and there is much good – will be utilised. But there are still some devoted servants of the Lodge who are nevertheless so ignorant, so blinded, so deaf that they can look

only backwards, never forward. They see only that which was, never what now is, let alone what shall be. All that is good will manifest.

Every teaching will come back renewed, with its heart in it. There is nothing that is hid that shall not be revealed, nothing buried that shall not be resurrected.

This is all I care to tell you. You can proclaim it at your discretion and let who will believe you. Let those who are blind be blind still, as the Bible tells us. And he that is deaf and lame and halt, let him be so still. For the “Kingdom of Heaven” cometh like a thief in the night. Did you ever stop to realise what this means? The night that the Scripture was talking about was the night of the world that we are passing through today; this great night of darkness and suffering and ignorance. Yet through the night the footsteps of the Angel messengers of the New Day can be heard. They are coming quietly, yet steadily and persistently. They come like a thief in the night, because they are stealing from the old forms their life, that which was thought to be their exclusive foundation. And as they come to humanity, they must steal away from the old forms their life, their force, and their supremacy. And the result at first is more inharmony. Yet it is but like a mighty wind that is stirring up the dead leaves.

Soon, ah, so soon, will come the Great Gardener, like a fire, and burn up the chaff. The fire will be the fire of the Law, the fire of conviction, the fire of might and power. It will not be perhaps an outer fire – although that too, may manifest because the outer fire destroys – but the purifying inner fire, the fire of the heart, of the life, of the words. That is the fire that burns for ever and ever; that destroys ultimately all chaff and prepares the soil for new growth.

This is all I have for you tonight. With my great love I bid you adieu.

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As to the essence of this message, HPB laments the intellectual slant that had become the hallmark of the Theosophical Society after her passing. She states that her true mission – the mission of all advanced spiritual teachers – was to inculcate the heart or devotional side of the mysteries, but that she first had to prepare the ground through the then Theosophical Society. Only then could she lay out a comprehensive turning inward through aspiration, devotion and meditation as described in her final and devotional work, *The Voice of the Silence*. This she terms *The Doctrine of The Heart*, elaborated further in chapter three.<sup>238</sup>

## 2.12 Conclusion

“Listen to The Soundless Sound that sweeps with divine melody through your heart”<sup>239</sup>

From the above historical examination, the following can be said about *the OCM*, its founders and its implied Teacher. They were ordinary mortals with seemingly strange and mysterious abilities. They claimed that the purpose of their lives works and the body of teachings that ensued was to show spiritual aspirants of the Theosophic and Christian persuasions the way to lead what they called the Life Divine and how to contact the inner Christ-consciousness through a contemplative life based on prayer, contemplation and meditation. The teachings of the OCM suggest that departed teachers such as HPB and others – Agents of the Lodge – continue to guide and inspire their pupils and disciples – spiritually developed receptive souls who lead a pure life – and continue their work here on earth. It is implied that such teachers will come again and again to a hungering world, silently and with humility, as do all such manifestations of *Āvatara*, and that such manifestations have been with the human race from time immemorial and will continue to manifest as long as there is a spiritual need.

It is also shown that, according to the Curtisses, HPB continued her work through Harriette Curtiss’ inspired writings as the persona whom they called *The Teacher of the Order*. In this way, HPB inspired a comprehensive philosophy intended to stay as

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<sup>238</sup> A detailed exposition on *A Message from Madame Blavatsky* has been made by the author elsewhere (Truth, 2014, pp. 207-228). This letter, purported to come from HPB as *The Teacher of The Order*, is one of many published as (Curtiss & Curtiss, Letters from The Teacher Volume 1, 2013b) and (Curtiss & Curtiss, Letters from The Teacher Volume 2, 2013c).

<sup>239</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Soundless Sound*, 2012a, p. 34)

a testimony to Divine inspiration and to help to assist many to come with light, love, comfort and enlightenment.

In the words of the Curtisses and those of *the Teacher*, they were but agents of the Lodge, ever working on instruction from Higher inspiration.<sup>240</sup> It is shown how they understood their roles to be those of *transmitters of spiritual knowledge*, not the generators of such, and they did not claim or pretend to be infallible or otherwise.

It is also shown here how the Curtisses assert that it was through their determined spiritual efforts, apparently spanning many lifetimes, that they developed themselves to such a degree that they could transmit clearly and do such work. They also emphasised that what they termed Divine Love – a message given from a great height – is often misunderstood and the giver crucified, and that a life lived as a selfless guide and teacher of mankind is to be considered a ‘living sacrifice.’

The Curtisses further show the truth of the adage that ‘when the student is ready, the teacher will appear.’ Through the agency of Harriette’s inspired writings, spiritual aspirants could thereby find and internalise those teachings to which the heart aspires, differing for each aspirant, assisting the meditator to experience directly what they term the *Divine Inner Power*. This power is poetically called *The Voice of the Silence* or *The Soundless Sound*, a primordial emanation supposedly ringing and radiating throughout all of creation, *The Logos* of the Theosophists. This inner teaching is more mystical as compared to the outer intellectual teachings given mainly through HPB’s *The Secret Doctrine*.

According to the Curtisses, this ‘inward turn’ enables the mystic to hear and experience the *Still Small Voice* directly; a call from ‘God’ above to the personality ‘below’ and summarised succinctly in the following quotation: “I am the herald of the dawn of a new day, a new spiritual springtime in your life. I bring you the Christ’s message of light, love and peace, and call upon you to awaken to your opportunities and to the reality of your inner spiritual life.”<sup>241</sup>

It is thus shown that according to the Curtisses the writings of HPB – those they categorise as written and for the most part published while she was still alive, and those written posthumously through inspiration by the hand of Harriette Curtiss – form a comprehensive system of spiritual instruction that can be followed by all, showing

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<sup>240</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key of Destiny*, 2015a, p. 195)

<sup>241</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, 2013a, p. 125)

the way to come into personal touch with, and accept guidance from one's Divine inner guidance, the Higher Self, The Divine Witness.<sup>242</sup> The following chapter further elaborates comparatively the similarities to be found within this Christian mystical tradition as espoused by the OCM and Asian thought found within the teachings of *The Voice of the Silence*.

Thus, when HPB compiled *The Voice of the Silence*, she dedicated that work "To the Few ... Real Mystics in the Theosophical Society."

To conclude, this part of the dissertation aims to introduce these 'all but lost' writings and teachings of the OCM to academia, making them available in the hope that it will further stir academic interest in the fields of Theosophy and Christian mysticism and placing this outpouring in its historical context. It further introduces *The Sound Current Tradition* and shows such to be an integral part of Theosophy at large, although mostly misunderstood. Thus, bringing guidance and clarity to those Theosophists who attempt the inner life with further, practical material for inner advancement as laid out in chapter three of this dissertation.

**OM TAT SAT**<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* Volume III, 1897, p. 529), (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Letters from The Teacher* Volume 1, 2013b, pp. 152,153)

<sup>243</sup> The great mantra used extensively by HPB at the end of her writings and also given prominence in *The Bhagavad Gītā* (Yogananda), Chapter 17:23-26 amongst other writings; Hail to THAT (TAT) which is ABSOLUTE (SAT), OM, *The Soundless Sound*.

## Chapter Three: The Teachings of The Order of Christian Mystics

“The Path is the Path of Renunciation ... the renunciation of the domination of the lower self and the disciplining and training of its desires and appetites.”<sup>244</sup>

### 3.1 Academic Approach

Chapter three of this dissertation expounds a philosophy couched within language and symbolism suitable for the Western or Christian-based mindset. It is written from an insider's subjective and emic perspective, in contrast to a third-person, objective and etic analysis. It is stated that “Mysticism and poetry tends to treat the etic primarily as a vehicle for indicating an emic vision. Phenomenology understands the etic in terms of the emic.”<sup>245</sup> This can lead the scholar to understand that in phenomenology, the emic and etic perspectives are understood as complementary, not opposing, ways of understanding human religious experience. Phenomenology primarily focuses on the emic, the ‘lived’ experience of the individual, but acknowledges the relevance of the etic, the external, objective framework, for providing broader context and understanding, which will be provided by the comparative approach to religious study and bringing into perspective the ‘practical’ aspect as it pertains to meditation.

Referring once more to the statement by Omoregbe (2002) that from a phenomenological point of view, “God is the point at which all religions melt into, and anybody who has had the experience of God comes to see religious differences as superficial ... Mystics see all things as one in God. They testify eloquently that religious differences mean nothing to God, that whoever seeks God sincerely, in any culture, any race, and any religion, will find him.” This phenomenological approach is taken to its conclusion in this chapter, where HPB states most pertinently the universality of this inner mystical path, the ‘lived’ experience.

“This ‘Path’ is mentioned in all the Mystic Works. As Krishna says in the *Jñāneśvari*: “When this Path is beheld ... whether one sets out to the bloom of the east or to the chambers of the west, *without moving*, O holder of the bow, *is the travelling in this road*. In this path, to whatever place one would

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<sup>244</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, The Voice of Isis, 2010a, p. 296)

<sup>245</sup> From a commentary on “‘From the Native’s Point of View’: On the Nature of Anthropological Understanding” by Clifford Geertz, Anomologue Blog, 12 April 2009 “Notes on Emic versus Etic.”

go, *that place one's own self* becomes. 'Thou art the Path' is said to the adept guru and by the latter to the disciple, after initiation. 'I am the way and the Path' says another Master (Jesus)."<sup>246</sup>

*The Voice of the Silence* articulates a unique incorporation of the rich traditions to be found within Asian thought, especially pertaining to *Yoga*. This text, quoted, mentioned and referenced directly in the philosophy of the OCM over 80 times, offers a distinctive expression of Asian mysticism. This chapter then, via a comparative approach, unpacks this text among others to show how it merges Western and Asian mystical ideas, especially as it pertains to the broader philosophy and outlook within Theosophy and that of the OCM.

HPB, as the teacher of the OCM, stated that her true mission – the true role of any Spiritual Teacher – is to teach the liberation of the soul, *the Heart Doctrine*<sup>247</sup>, that which is known in Asian philosophy as the *Sāṅkhya Yoga* or the *Yoga of Liberation*. This *Yoga*, the yoking of the soul to the Supreme Divinity to be found within man, is the essence of the teachings in *The Voice of the Silence* and its devotional and practical implementation is expounded in the teachings of the OCM. This *Yoga of Liberation* – *Sāṅkhya* – forms the essence of chapter two of *The Bhagavad Gītā*; its fulfillment leading to that state where "Mystics see all things as one in God" (Omoregbe, 2002).

A detailed exposition of the *Sāṅkhya*<sup>248</sup> Hindu philosophy falls far beyond the scope of this dissertation, but its fundamental outlook and philosophy are within the teachings of Theosophy and that of the OCM. It represents a dualist view of reality composed of two opposite poles: spirit as macrocosm and matter experienced by the individual as microcosm, interpenetrating, combined and interacting. (See Figure 2.1) Expounding this diagrammatic representation of the manifested and unmanifested universe or creation, we have *Purusha* representing the highest quality of consciousness or spirit, the unmanifest. It emanates and descends downward into ever greater degrees of limitation as the involutionary process. *Purusha* is the Supreme witness-consciousness; *Om Tat Sat*, THAT which is absolute, independent, free, beyond

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<sup>246</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 78). See also further statements as to the path on p12, p39-40, p41-42, p45.

<sup>247</sup> (Curtiss F. H., *Personal Survival*, 2014d), Chapter XI, A Message from Madame Blavatsky.

<sup>248</sup> From Sanskrit *saṃ*, 'union; completeness,' and *khyā* 'to be known; knowledge' — i.e., to have complete knowledge; to attain the ultimate wisdom, or Self-realization and God-union. (Yogananda, *The Bhagavad Gita: God Talks With Arjuna*, 2001, p. 267)

perception, above any experience by mind or senses and impossible to describe in words. At the lower end, *prakriti* represents the creative power of the manifested universe, mind, emotions, physical matter and Mother Nature. The manifested universe comprises three great divisions, namely the physical, astral and spiritual-mental planes as per HPB (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 94). Described in varying detail by each extant philosophy, these planes interpenetrate, the higher supporting and outlasting the one just below.<sup>249</sup>

Paramahansa Yogananda describes this downward evolutionary process and its three great divisions emanating from the Supreme as *Purusha*, stating the qualities of consciousness predominating in the mental, astral and physical worlds as follows: “According to *Sankhya*, the twenty-four principles of the evolutionary process of Nature, from Spirit into matter, are as follows: (1) *Prakriti* (the basic creative power bringing forth all phenomena); (2) *Mahat-tattva* (Cosmic Intelligence; referred to in *Yoga* as *chitta*) from which comes *buddhi* (individual discriminative intelligence); (3) *ahamkara* (egoism); (4) *manas* (mind); (5-14) *jnanendriyas* and *karmendriyas* (ten senses – five of perception and five of action); (15-19) *tanmatras* (five supersensible or abstract qualities of matter); (20-24) *mahabhutas* (five subtle elements or vibratory motions, the conglomeration of which appear as gross matter in solid, liquid, fiery, gaseous, and etheric form).” (Yogananda, *The Bhagavad Gita: God Talks With Arjuna*, 2001, pp. 267,268)

It is within these three great divisions that the aspirant ‘lives, moves and has his being,’ *Sāṅkhya* expounding the philosophy, the structure and the ‘why’ of religion, Vedanta describing the end to be attained and *Yoga* its practical evolutionary method of implementation.

HPB elucidates this evolutionary process, the upward arc of *Sāṅkhya*, as three states or divisions to be mastered by the aspiring soul on its quest to attain liberation.

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<sup>249</sup> A discussion of the various planes of being is beyond the scope of this dissertation. What has been stated in Figure 2.1 is, more or less, a simplified version using nomenclature that will resonate with the average reader and aspirant. The three major divisions mentioned in *The Voice of the Silence* p.66 and note 27. For more detailed expositions on the various planes and sub-planes, we refer the reader to HPB’s original and extensive teachings on this matter within broad Theosophical teachings, i.e., the manifested and unmanifested reality, (Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* Volume 1, 1893, pp. 42-44) and also to the comprehensive teachings of the OCM on this matter, specifically put forth in their *Realms of the Living Dead, A Brief Description of Life after Death*, (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d). “Beings are unmanifested in their beginning, manifested in their middle state, O Arjuna, and unmanifested again in their end! What is there to grieve about?” *The Bhagavad Gītā*, 2:28 (Sivananda).

“Three Halls, O weary pilgrim, lead to the end of toils. Three Halls, O conqueror of Mara, will bring thee through three states into the fourth and thence into the seven worlds, the worlds of Rest Eternal.”<sup>250</sup>

The aspirant must learn to master and transcend the physical world and its terrestrial consciousness, distractions and temptations, the *yamas* and *niyamas* of Patañjali’s Eight-fold or *Ashtānga Yoga*, described by HPB as:

“The name of the first Hall is IGNORANCE – *Avidyā*. It is the Hall in which thou saw’st the light, in which thou livest and shalt die ... If thou would’st cross the first Hall safely, let not thy mind mistake the fires of lust that burn therein for the Sunlight of life.”<sup>251</sup>

Then arises mastery and transcendence of the astral world, the second grand division. Here we find seated the senses, the world of departed souls and of psychism from which the aspirant receives super-sensuous perceptions. These also include deceptive sights and dark inspiration playing upon the ego, arresting the aspirants ascent. Also, the state in which are to be found the various ‘hells’ and ‘heaven-worlds’ of the various religions. HPB calls the astral the world of *Great Illusion*, the ‘pleasure-grounds of senses’ filled with ‘sweet-tongued voices of illusion.’ Mastery of this world comes through the practices of abstraction, the *pratyāhāra* of Patañjali’s *Ashtānga Yoga*.

“The name of Hall the second is the Hall of Learning. (The Hall of *Probationary Learning*) In it thy Soul will find the blossoms of life, but under every flower a serpent coiled ... If thou would’st cross the second safely, stop not the fragrance of its stupefying blossoms to inhale. If freed thou would’st be from the Karmic chains, seek not for thy Guru in those *Mayavic* regions.”<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>250</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 5)

<sup>251</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 6)

<sup>252</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, pp. 6,7)

The mental world and its higher supra-mental spiritual region, spoken of here by HPB as a relatively pure state, the world of mental impression or *bhuddi*, beyond which lies the 'uncreate in thee,' the Supreme or *Purusha*. It is this Hall representing the mind which stands as the ultimate barrier between the lower and the Higher; its mastery attained through deep meditation or *Entering the Silence*, Patañjali's *Samyāma* (*dhāranā*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi*).

"The name of the third Hall is Wisdom, beyond which stretch the shoreless waters of AKSHARA, the indestructible Fount of Omniscience ... If through the Hall of Wisdom, thou would'st reach the Vale of Bliss, Disciple, close fast thy senses against the great dire heresy of separateness that weans thee from the rest."<sup>253</sup>

It is the practical implementation of 'closing fast thy senses' which leads to the mastery or purification of the lower vehicles – the physical, astral and mental constitution of man – that is the province of the *Ashtānga Yoga* as prescribed by Patañjali through which "Thou shalt not let thy senses make a playground of thy mind."<sup>254</sup> Finally, through the deep practice of meditation, when the mind is stilled *in toto*, the great 'sin'<sup>255</sup> of separateness – believing oneself to be distinct from God the Supreme – is dissolved into absolute ego-abnegation, and the aspirant attains final union and beatitude with the state of *Purusha* – duality dissolved into Oneness and liberation from this lower world of illusion.

Briefly summarising the philosophy of *Sāṅkhya*, it is between these two states of *Purusha* (unmanifest) and *prakriti* (manifest) that we find the manifested soul striving to elevate his consciousness from the lower to the Higher on the upward arc of evolution. Through the practices of *Yoga*, the meditator elevates his awareness away from the sights and sounds of this world of matter and duality (*prakriti*) into the higher 'state' of perpetual *Yoga*, *Purusha*, the non-dual state. "The Yogi 'involves' creation (reverses the twenty-four evolutionary processes of nature, as expounded in *Sankhya*)

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<sup>253</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, pp. 6,7)

<sup>254</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 49)

<sup>255</sup> Exoterically, 'sin' is seen as transgressing the moral code of society. In occult and esoteric parlance, 'sin' is seen as the soul believing itself to be a distinct entity from the Supreme, i.e. having materialistic beliefs and inclinations. See (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 22) and also (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d, p. 185)

... By gradual steps the yogi in this way converts all consciousness of matter into the consciousness of Spirit.”<sup>256</sup> This comprehensive turning inwards and upwards is the science of *Yoga*.

Says Lord Krishna about this inner process of the *Yoga* of abstraction (*pratyāhāra*):

“When the yogi, like a tortoise withdrawing its limbs, can fully retire his senses from the objects of perception, his wisdom manifests steadiness.”<sup>257</sup>

In Asian philosophy, implementing *Ashtānga Yoga* – the practical essence of the *Upanishads* – assists the yogi to negate those karmic bonds, which keep the incarnating soul bound to the wheel of *saṃsāra*. Comparatively, this chapter elucidates some similarities to be found within OCM teachings as a system of mysticism, broadly to be found within Christian mystical thought, *vis-à-vis* the *Ashtānga Yoga*.

Expounding on the *Sāṅkhya* (spiritual philosophy of liberation) and *Samyāma Yoga* (its practical aspects), Paramahansa Yogananda elucidates verse 39, Chapter Two of *The Bhagavad Gītā* as follows:

The ultimate wisdom of *Sankhya* I have explained to thee. But now thou must hear the wisdom of *Yoga*, equipped with which, O Partha (Arjuna), thou shalt shatter the bonds of karma.<sup>258</sup>

“Having received instruction (philosophy) about the sublime wisdom of Self-realization (*Sankhya*), the devotee must then learn about the secret celestial route of *Yoga* (its practical aspect), by which Self-realization can be attained – the way that leads out of the prison of karma. When by *Yoga* the ego is united to the soul, and the soul to the Spirit, the ego loses its delusion of being a mortal whose actions are governed by the law of karma” (Yogananda, *The Bhagavad Gita: God Talks With Arjuna*, 2001, p. 267).

Says HPB in *Letters from the Teacher*,<sup>259</sup> “... for as long as the ‘great heresy of separateness’ holds sway over your mind you are in bondage to the lower self.” Thus,

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<sup>256</sup> (Yogananda, *The Bhagavad Gita: God Talks With Arjuna*, 2001, pp. 267,269)

<sup>257</sup> *The Bhagavad Gītā* 2:58 (Yogananda).

<sup>258</sup> *The Bhagavad Gītā* 2:39 (Yogananda).

<sup>259</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Letters from The Teacher* Volume 1, 2013b, p. 121)

this dissertation and chapter show how many tenets within *Yoga* are to be found within Christian mysticism, pertaining to the teachings of the OCM.

In addition to the 'lived' emic and phenomenological perspective, the philosophy of the OCM is contrasted and juxtaposed, where feasible, to the philosophy of *Ashtāṅga Yoga* as expounded by Patañjali in his *Yoga Sūtras*, representing the practical aspect of the 'path' distilled from the *Upanishads*. Of these, the *Katha* and *Nada-Bindu Upanishads* are referenced by HPB in *The Voice of the Silence*.<sup>260</sup>

Yogananda briefly describes the *Ashtāṅga Yoga*, stating: "Patañjali, renowned exponent of Yoga, a sage of ancient times whose *Yoga Sūtras* outline the principles of the yogic path, dividing it into eight steps. (1) moral proscriptions (*yama*), (2) right observances (*niyama*), (3) meditation posture (*asana*), (4) life-force control (*pranayama*), (5) interiorization of the mind (*pratyahara*), (6) concentration (*dharana*), (7) meditation (*dhyana*), (8) union with God (*samadhi*)."<sup>261</sup>

The teachings of the OCM provide an inner emetic view of the spiritual 'path', describing the 'lived' experience of the spiritual struggles and accomplishments of the spiritual aspirant as laid out amongst others in *The Voice of the Silence* and *The Bhagavad Gītā* and is suitable contrasted, compared and juxtaposed to the philosophy as expounded by Patañjali.

### 3.2 Introduction to Practical Christian Mysticism

"Is this the Temple of Silence, and may we enter it?"<sup>262</sup>

This chapter introduces and elaborates on the inner path philosophy presented as the teachings of the OCM. The aim is to show that those deeper inner spiritual practices and teachings known in Asian philosophy as *Sāṅkhya* and *Samyāma Yoga* are to be found within this Christian-based philosophy and that comparatively, the higher spiritual disciplines are in essence the same, once the language and symbology of such a philosophy is understood.

With the start of the publication in 1908 of the teachings of the OCM, a comprehensive philosophy came to light to guide the inner life. In the words of the

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<sup>260</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, pp. x,74)

<sup>261</sup> (Yogananda, *The Second Coming of Christ*, 2004, p. 1589)

<sup>262</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Temple of Silence*, 2015d, p. 21)

founders, these teachings represented nothing new, but were a comprehensive restatement of ancient spiritual verities couched in a language for modern times and that,

“... these truths are indeed like nature, ever new, yet ever old; ever renewed so that each age finds in their beauty, in the perfume of their blossoms, in their fruits, and in their exhaustless supply, a new wonderment, as if made for that day and generation fresh from the hand of God.”<sup>263</sup>

Its philosophy, based on age-old occult truths and lore, was generally directed at those who would classify themselves as followers of Western and Christian-based teachings. Finding therein a comprehensive and soul-satisfying cosmic philosophy in line with their own culture and belief, and harmonised with the more ancient Asian teachings and philosophies. Guiding its aspirants to enter into a mystical quest of finding atonement<sup>264</sup> (at-one-ment) with the Divine, that degree of consciousness which we equate with and call ‘God,’ attaining to a permanent state of God-or-Christ-consciousness. Its teachings and philosophy, therefore, constituted a definite system of mysticism assisting the aspirant to come into contact with his or her own Divine Higher Self. The object of any system of mysticism is the worship of the Divine, and the fundamental object of all worship is to achieve a personal contact with and a realisation of the Divine, by placing the aspirant in contact with an *inner power*, experienced as *The Soundless Sound*, and described by Professor Lane as *The Sound Current Tradition*. This teaching and philosophy was known to the ancient Gnostics and other Western-based religious traditions (Lane, 2022, p. 1). In their writings, the OCM show that this fundamental philosophy and its essential truths are found within mystical Christianity if properly understood.

“The higher spiritual attainment, therefore, requires more than a clean, good moral life and good citizenship. It requires an active and persistent seeking for the Christ-consciousness as a personal, psychological and

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<sup>263</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key of Destiny*, 2015a, pp. 183,184)

<sup>264</sup> In its religious sense, atonement means a ‘reparation or expiation for sin’ that sin of believing and seeing oneself as separate from the Divine. The spiritual quest, therefore, is the redemption and transmutation of the lower nature (and its resultant belief in duality or separation from God) as will be expounded in further sections.

spiritual experience, putting aside all ideas of limitation as to the manner in which, or the religion through which, that realization may come. For in the heart of every true religion the Path of Attainment can be found if searched for diligently.”<sup>265</sup>

Through the teachings of the OCM, the Curtisses show that many an aspirant enters upon the mystical “Way of the Cross”<sup>266</sup> without his knowing,” on which he must meet and overcome many discouragements, obstacles and temptations, where his sincerity is tested as to which shall rule his life, the lusts of the flesh and the ambitions of the mind, or the inner guidance of the Spirit. Thus, establishing in the mind of the aspirant the fundamental concept that he is essentially a Spiritual Being, here and now on the physical plane, as much as he will ever be, and once having entered The Mystic Life, there can be no turning back from the spiritual quest to which the aspirant aspires.

### 3.3 The Mystic Life

“Realize your real Mystic Self, with all its strange longings and promptings, its flashes of illumination, its glimpses of glory.”<sup>267</sup>

Throughout recorded history, man has ever searched and striven to live the Life Mystic, to draw himself away from materialistic life and into closer union with that higher expression commonly understood as ‘God’ and with which he almost instinctively identifies. This aspiration the Christian Mystic understands as “an upward drawing Power which works through every individual life, causing it to evolve from the lower to higher physically, mentally and spiritually ... in the language of Scripture, the Christos; literally, ‘the anointed.’”<sup>268</sup> Inherent in this ‘aspiration,’ – this living of the Life Mystic – is a conscious striving to comprehend these “strange longings” and to attain “we know

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<sup>265</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, 2013a, pp. 152,153)

<sup>266</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, 2013a, p. 158) and exemplified symbolically by the life of the Master Jesus, expounded throughout *The Pattern Life*. This statement “without his knowing” reflected also in the *Bhagavad Gītā* Chapter 2 verse 32, “Arjuna, fortunate are the Kshatriyas when such a righteous battle has, *unprovoked*, fallen to their lot; they find therein an open door to heaven.”, (Yogananda, *The Second Coming of Christ*, 2004, p. 249)

<sup>267</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Mystic Life*, 2012b, p. 71)

<sup>268</sup> (Agnes, 2014g, p. 80)

not what.”<sup>269</sup> This conscious striving is what constitutes the aspiration of the mystic, that aspirant who engages in a definite spiritual curriculum (*sādhana*) under the guidance of his or her own still small voice (the voice of intuition) or who places himself willingly under the direct guidance of a teacher or spiritual preceptor. This Mystic Life, to a greater or lesser extent, is ‘for the few,’<sup>270</sup> and the aim of living that higher life and its inevitable end result is expressed most succinctly by the Apostle Paul with its correspondence to *Sāṅkhya* philosophy:

“It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body (*Prakriti*), and there is a spiritual body (*Purusha*). The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven ... If anyone is in Christ (immersed in this upward drawing Power, the Christ-power), he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”<sup>271</sup>

This striving “for we know not what,” fixing our eyes not on “what is seen but what is unseen.”<sup>272</sup> This constitutes the great mystery of incarnate life, as the spiritual aspirant starts to see life in this world as relative, apparently self-generated and arising out of nothing and coming from nowhere, but in truth, being an expression from a Higher Reality. (See Figure 2.1) The mystic starts to see the various functions and duties of life from a different perspective, such as worldly ambitions and achievements, personal and family life, mental interests and conceptions of truth, as transient. Through spiritual practice, the mystic comes to understand that there is a Real Life, an Inner Life. Liberation from the materialistic and relative existence of worldly life – striving for “that peace which surpasses all understanding,”<sup>273</sup> the realisation of the consciousness of the Divine within us and ultimately the only source of true happiness – is seen as a practical, attainable reality.

Within the philosophy of the OCM it is shown that this insight constitutes the

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<sup>269</sup> We know not what we shall be, but we shall be satisfied when we awake in His likeness. (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Message of Aquaria*, 2010c, p. 374)

<sup>270</sup> As expressed by HPB in *The Voice of the Silence* as those disciples and chelas who deliberately take their own spiritual evolution in hand (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015).

<sup>271</sup> 1 *Corinthians* 15:44,47 (KJV); 2 *Corinthians* 5:17 (KJV)

<sup>272</sup> While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. 2 *Corinthians* 4:18

<sup>273</sup> Drawing ourselves up into that Divine Mystic Power, ‘The Soundless Sound,’ immersing our attention into the Mystic Christ through spiritual practices such as prayer, aspiration, contemplation and Entering the Silence.

beginnings of a true spiritual philosophy (*Sāṅkhya*), placing the feet of the aspirant on the path mystic where he or she comes to understand that spiritual evolution is the only goal worth striving for. The lower nature that revels in desire, passions and outer attainments keeps the aspirant bound to this world of intermittent reincarnation or *saṃsāra*. Gaining mastery over the lower nature through ever greater expression of the Divine Self is the only way to attain that inner state termed God-realisation by the great mystics of the ages.<sup>274</sup> The mystic therefore strives to lead a perfected life, attains Divine realisation, radiates happiness and peace to all, understanding that all is consciousness, all is evolution, and all is 'God' or *Purusha*. This pilgrimage through matter, called the cycle of necessity,<sup>275</sup> evolves without fail to its destined perfection, eventually leading the aspirant in one form or another to the Path of Discipleship.

### 3.4 The Path of Discipleship

"Then will the Voice become the daily Friend, the everlasting Counselor, the Prince of Peace, the God of Love within your heart ... when the Master shall walk in His garden in the cool of the day to meet His disciples ..."<sup>276</sup>

God is all, and all is God. "God and His Archangels cannot manifest in the human kingdom except through us as *Their* instruments of expression. *They* are our Archetypes and we *Their* counterparts, *Their* mystic shrines, temples of the Living God."<sup>277</sup> Through their philosophy, the OCM states that it is the spiritual aspirant's destiny and privilege to ultimately surrender to the Will of God, the highest attainment, sacrificing his individuality, merging the drop with the ocean, dissolving, absorbing his very being into THAT.<sup>278</sup> THAT which is permanent, everlasting, without beginning or end, *The Soundless Sound*,<sup>279</sup> encapsulating the very essence of *Sāṅkhya* philosophy.

An inner knowing and comprehension of this grand mystery, the relationship between God and man, suggests outwardly a lifestyle of severe discipline and

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<sup>274</sup> This state of being can, ultimately, only be attained by the following of an inner path.

<sup>275</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a), Chapter XXI, The Cycle of Necessity.

<sup>276</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Soundless Sound*, 2012a, p. 21), and Foreword.

<sup>277</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Inner Radiance*, 2012c, p. 18)

<sup>278</sup> *Om Tat Sat* and *The Soundless Sound*, (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, pp. 1,22)

<sup>279</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Soundless Sound*, 2012a, p. 13)

asceticism. A true embodiment<sup>280</sup> of the ideal of the perfected man and initiate, as compared with merely an intellectual interest, suggests a steep ascent in rising above the crowd and becoming one of 'the few.' It speaks of a more rapid advance, a spiritual curriculum within the curriculum of general life and duty to our fellow man, accomplishing that which would require the general run of humanity and the race an age, compressing this rapid advance into a lifetime or a few at most.<sup>281</sup>

Living the life of an ascetic, placing oneself apart in a convent or monastery as has been done throughout the ages in the Orient and Occident to learn certain lessons, has its place. This lifestyle may be recommended for a certain stage in the aspirant's unfoldment. Yet, the teachings of the OCM state that even the higher lessons of spiritual life can be learned and comprehended through regular daily life. This requires the aspirant to comprehend the nature of the personality, the discipline and training of its normal and natural desires and, as the aspirant learns to respond to guidance from within, controlling his or her reactions so as not to respond to destructive emotional expressions. As stated earlier, the aspirant is not required to submit to:

“... the dictates of Abbot, Priest or Master; nor to the rigid discipline of a monastery, but to the discipline of 'living the life' of aspiration and devotion in the midst of the world's affairs, being 'in the world, but not of it' and subject only to the dictates of his own divine Higher Self ... Therefore, the Masters back of this Order set before its students, not rigid outer observances, discipline and physical requirements, but give them an understanding of the basic principles and laws of manifested life, letting each student discipline himself as may be necessary to live in accord with those principles and laws, under the guidance of his own Higher Self, each one progressing according to the effort he makes towards his own self-mastery.”<sup>282</sup>

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<sup>280</sup> Embracing the spiritual path, living out its ideals in word and deed, accepting the Will of God or your karma unresentfully, expressing true 'faith,' faith in the system that all is well and as it should be, being assimilated by the Christos-principle of the universe, the all-pervading, vivifying power which underlies all manifestations of the One Life.

<sup>281</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Mystic Life*, 2012b, p. 35), with the proviso of a general understanding and belief in the philosophy of karma and reincarnation.

<sup>282</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Message of Aquaria*, 2010c, pp. 100,101)

And also:

“Believe thou not that sitting in dark forests, in proud seclusion and apart from men; believe thou not that life on roots and plants, that thirst assuaged with snow from the Great range – believe thou not O Devotee, that this will lead thee to the goal of final liberation.”<sup>283</sup>

The mystic need not leave home and family to climb the high mountains of the East, struggling up the dangerous slopes to find a guru sitting in a cave that will explain these deep and inner mystical longings. That mountain is Mount Meru,<sup>284</sup> the Tree of Life (Figures 2.1 and 3.1) to be found within man’s constitution; the mystical quest then to climb that mountain and find within “the hollow of thy brain” one’s true Master, Guru and God.<sup>285</sup>

The Path of Discipleship is therefore accomplished by living *The Mystic Life* exactly where life has placed the aspirant, by lifting up and transmuting the lower nature and placing the attention (our love and aspiration) at the higher mystical centres where God is to be found. Through conscious effort, the mystic learns to listen to and follow the guidance of the Divine within, mastering and transcending the lower nature and leading to a life of purity and perfection. This is accomplished by living the higher life through aspiration; immersion and absorption in *that Divine Power* known to the Christian Mystic as the *Word* and the Mystic Christ, “until your finite mind becomes absorbed into the Infinite, when all things will be made plain.”<sup>286</sup> On the *Word* Professor Lane quotes Diem (1992:45) from his book *The Gnostic Mystery* that “I am the *Word* who dwells in the ineffable Silence. I dwell in undefiled Light, and a Thought revealed itself perceptibly through the great Sound... And it (the Sound) exists from the beginning in the foundations of the All.”

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<sup>283</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Message of Aquaria*, 2010c, p. 468), expounding on *The Voice of the Silence*.

<sup>284</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 333), and in Eastern philosophy signifying the peak of spiritual achievement

<sup>285</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Temple of Silence*, 2015d, p. 38), (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 353), also (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 16)

<sup>286</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Letters from The Teacher* Volume 1, 2013b, p. 125)

### 3.5 The Creative Word

“In the beginning was the *Word*, (Christos) and the *Word* was with God, and the *Word* was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.”<sup>287</sup>

In the philosophy of *Sāṅkhya*, the creative *Word*, as per HPB, is known as “The *Aum* throughout eternal ages.”<sup>288</sup> Yogananda defines it as “The Sanskrit root word or seed-sound symbolizing that aspect of Godhead which creates and sustains all things; Cosmic Vibration, *Aum* of the Vedas became the sacred word *Hum* of the Tibetans; *Amin* of the Moslems (*sic*); and *Amen* of the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Jews and Christians. The world’s great religions state that all created things originate in the cosmic vibratory energy of *Aum* or Amen, the *Word* or Holy Ghost.”<sup>289</sup>

The doctrine of *Avatāra*<sup>290</sup> – the descent of Divinity – emanating from out of the Supreme as *the Word* or *the Logos*,<sup>291</sup> (see Figure 2.1) also called “The first and only begotten son of God,”<sup>292</sup> is expounded profusely throughout HPB’s *The Secret Doctrine*. This is little understood within Theosophy, as shown by the lack of writings and publications on the subject. It is an integral part of the philosophy of the Hesychast tradition laid out in the *Philokalia*, “a collection of texts written between the 4th and 15th centuries by spiritual masters” of the mystical Hesychast tradition of the Eastern Orthodox Church (Ware & Sherrard, 1979, p. 10). “A man who is deaf to the *Word* of God is altogether deaf to His Voice ... But one who has the *Word of God* is like a man, who spends his days in the king’s (God’s) palace, clothed in bright princely garments, is always near to his king, speaks with him and hears from him clearly and directly his

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<sup>287</sup> *John 1:1-4* (KJV). See also Fragment 1 on the Sound and Light, (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015)

<sup>288</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 5)

<sup>289</sup> (Yogananda, *The Second Coming of Christ*, 2004, pp. 1577,1578)

<sup>290</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a), Chapter X, The Doctrine of Avatara.

<sup>291</sup> Madame Blavatsky expounds on the *Word* and *Logos* many hundreds of times in *The Secret Doctrine* as THAT (*Sat* or Absolute) from which creation itself emanates. The teachings of the OCM also refer to The Divine Mother as *Logos*, Holy Ghost, the Divine Voice and The Soundless Sound. (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Divine Mother*, 2012d, p. 14)

<sup>292</sup> Manifesting as the inner radiance or divine fire within man, the eternal urge upward, constantly pushing all forms to perfection. “God ... to man He gave the great focus of spiritual radiance, His only begotten Son, His first-born, the chief of all His attributes, the Spirit of His Love, the great and mighty Christ-love, to be embodied in each heart in potency, for man to unfold and let it become his light and life, and to manifest his [spiritual] destiny. (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Inner Radiance*, 2012c, p. 287)

wishes and commands (the still small voice of intuition)” (Kadloubovsky, 1977, pp. 129,130).

The first chapter and verses of Saint John, quoted at the head of this section, state that this primal emanation of God brings all of creation into being, “and the *Word* was made flesh and dwelt amongst us.”<sup>293</sup> It is this *Divine Emanation* through which the practitioner may become as “Sons of God,” by immersing the attention at the higher centres and literally experiencing the *Name of God*<sup>294</sup> in deep meditation. “But as many as received Him (the Word), to them gave He power to become the Sons of God (i.e., to become purified and initiated), even to them that believe on his *Name*.”<sup>295</sup> This Divine emanation is poured out for all the world so that all who believe in *His Name* (through inner practice) can be saved (from materialism). For God so loves the world that He continually gives His only begotten son, the emanation from Himself, Love – that whosoever believeth on this Son shall have eternal life (i.e., be freed from intermittent reincarnation and the experience of *saṃsāra*). It is by correlating life with, and an inner comprehension of this Divine *Word*, that the Man of Sin,<sup>296</sup> through a Divine upward ardour, is consumed by this manifestation of God and becomes once more ‘like unto Him.’

“I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee ... out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.”<sup>297</sup>

Says Lord Krishna, the Voice of Intuition, the Higher Self to Arjuna,

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<sup>293</sup> *John 1:14* (KJV).

<sup>294</sup> The *Name of God*, the *Creative Word* or *Verbum* which brought all things into expression. The *Ineffable Name* that man is unable to pronounce, as it is unpronounceable, it can only be experienced within. (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key to The Universe*, 2015b, pp. 130,131)(Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key to The Universe*, 2015b, pp. 130,131). “... tradition and Scripture alike point to ‘The NAME’ as the source of Light and Life, and [ultimate] deliverance from all evil. (Agnes, 2014g, pp. 21,22)” Kabir and Guru Nanak, believed to have been contemporaries, speak of *NAM*, the *Name*, the *Word*, and the *Divine Melody* amongst many other epithets. Their writings and poetry expound on this mystic philosophy to a superlative degree. See Kabir, the Great Mystic (Ezekiel, 2002) and Guru Nanak, His Mystic Teachings (Puri, 2004).

<sup>295</sup> *John 1:12* (KJV).

<sup>296</sup> The exoteric view on sin is when man contravenes the moral code of society. Esoterically, man sins by believing the great heresy of being separate from God, a belief in materialism. Once man reaches up into the Divine and becomes thereby a ‘Son of God,’ he is freed from sin and becomes from ‘sin exempt.’ See Fragment 1, (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, pp. 21,22).

<sup>297</sup> *Exodus 20:2-3* (KJV), see (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key to The Universe*, 2015b, p. 71)

“Leave all things behind, and come to Me for thy salvation.”<sup>298</sup>

By living *The Mystic Life*, the aspirant’s consciousness learns to live within this ever-present emanation of the Divine *Word* in ever greater measure. By schooling itself to listen to and obey this inner voice as intuition, it at last so stills the human intellect that this inner power becomes infallible and an ever-present guide for ‘the purpose of revelation.’ This Christ-consciousness then becomes a continuous flow, and then, as the Master Jesus says, “I and my Father are One.”<sup>299</sup> The creative *Word* has now truly incarnated in the flesh, bringing forth within man his spiritual life and destiny. It is this “lost word”<sup>300</sup> with which the meditating aspirant must identify, finding again that ability to hear the call from the Father-in-heaven above. “For in this sacred shrine of *The Mystic Life* we find the great Hierophant who gives us the “lost word,” who shall touch our foreheads that the Eye of the spirit (the third eye) may open.”<sup>301</sup>

This creative *Word* rings throughout Creation, without beginning or end and is ever-present. By following its guidance, it becomes the friend and everlasting counsellor of man.

*The Word* then is the voice of the personal God to be found within man’s constitution, his own Higher Self, overshadowing the personality and manifesting as the Christ within, the Mystic Christ.

### 3.6 Finding the Mystic Christ

“What in this imperfect world of Nature speaks so distinctly, so persistently to your heart? It is *The Soundless Sound* – *that Divine Power* which lies veiled behind all the imperfections.”<sup>302</sup>

There is a *Divine Power* (also represented in *Sāṅkhya* as *Om* or *Aum*), a descent of grace that when comprehended,<sup>303</sup> will so transform the spiritual aspirant that the soul

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<sup>298</sup> *Bhagavad Gītā*, 18:66 (Mascaro).

<sup>299</sup> *John* 10:30 (KJV).

<sup>300</sup> The ‘lost word’ of the Freemasons. See also *The Lost Word*, (Agnes, 2014g) and *The Word*, (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a).

<sup>301</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Message of Aquaria*, 2010c, pp. 21,22)

<sup>302</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Soundless Sound*, 2012a, p. 13)

<sup>303</sup> As stated previously, to ‘comprehend’ or to become one with it; not to be understood as an intellectual study, but rather an experiential one.

will be liberated and freed from the cycle of *samsāra*, intermittent reincarnation into this world. Within the philosophy of the OCM, this *Divine Power* – experienced by the aspirant as sound and light – is given many names.<sup>304</sup> However, its transmuting aspect is most prominently named as that of the Mystic Christ, a power contacted by going within and placing the attention, the love and aspiration of the aspirant within the higher centres of the body at the *Ājñā* chakra or eye centre, the seat or command post of the soul.<sup>305</sup> Here, the meditator contacts the true MASTER,<sup>306</sup> his or her own Immortal Self,<sup>307</sup> most sublimely described and expounded throughout HPB's spiritual treasury, *The Voice of the Silence*, whose inner esoteric teachings and philosophy are quoted, mentioned and referenced from and expounded over 80 times throughout the published works of the OCM.

The esoteric philosophy and teaching of the OCM,<sup>308</sup> to lift up and transmute the lower nature through inner practice, a literal raising of *kundalini*.<sup>309</sup> This power of absorption functions from the lower centre, and reverses the downward and outward wandering excursive mind<sup>310</sup> into an upward current through ever deeper levels of abstraction (*pratyāhāra*), accomplished through prayer, transmuting breath (*prāṇāyāma*), concentration (*dhāraṇā*) and meditation (*dhyāna*) or *Entering the Silence*. (See Figures 2.1 and 3.1)

“This electro-dynamic force, the *Kundalini* or serpent power, which when lifted up and dominated by the spiritualized Will makes of man an Initiate ... the control of the serpent power and the attainment of the wisdom it brings. For only as this power – under control of the spiritualized Will – is lifted up and guided until it reaches the sacred center between the eyes, can (God)

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<sup>304</sup> The Soundless Sound, The Higher Self, The Undercurrent of Power and Peace, The Voice of God, The Voice of the Silence, The Divine Voice, The Silent Voice, His Soundless Voice, The One Voice in the Soul of all, The Psalm of Life, The Divine Melody, The Harp of Life, The Voice of the Christ, The Spiritual Sound, a Voice that speaks where there is none to speak, The Music of the Spheres and so on.

<sup>305</sup> In Sanskrit *Ājñā* translates as ‘command’ or ‘giving an order.’ See also (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 244), also termed by Yogananda the Christ center, seat of the spiritual eye, and the Kutastha or *Ājñā* chakra, (Yogananda, *The Second Coming of Christ*, 2004, p. 1580), see also (Sivananda, *Concentration and Meditation*, 2009, pp. 28,29)

<sup>306</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Temple of Silence*, 2015d, p. 38) (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 16)

<sup>307</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key to The Universe*, 2015b, p. 334)

<sup>308</sup> Esoteric, in its spiritual sense, intended for or likely to be understood by only a small number of initiated or enlightened people specially prepared and trained for higher spiritual attainment.

<sup>309</sup> See chapters on The Serpent Power, (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Truth about Evolution and the Bible*, 2012f)

<sup>310</sup> The processes of thought, thinking and reasoning, ever excursive, the ultimate barrier in attaining that state of God-consciousness which lies beyond, and transcends the mind.

Realization be attained and the candidate become as wise as a serpent.”<sup>311</sup>

And further:

“When properly unfolded, controlled and used uprightly this serpent-power no longer twines around the spinal cord like a serpent, but passes directly up the central canal of the spinal cord to the brain, changing from a serpent into a rod of power, the God-power symbolized by the Rod of Moses and Aaron, the Wand of Hermes, and the *Brahmadanda* or knotted stick carried by Hindu ascetics. For there comes a time in the spiritual unfoldment of every Soul when the spiritual seed of Christhood, planted in the Garden of man’s physical body at the base of the spine, begins to put forth. Then the manifestation of this spiritual fire, this spiritual creative force, like a mighty volcano, begins to erupt; for it must push its way upward through all obstacles and make straight the path of God-consciousness, instead of following the serpentine path as during the less developed stages of spiritual evolution or when used for mere psychic development.”<sup>312</sup>

When, through the processes of abstraction (*pratyāhāra*), concentration (*dhāraṇā*) and deep meditation or *Entering the Silence* (*dhyāna*)<sup>313</sup> – preferably to be taught by a Guru<sup>314</sup> or a spiritual preceptor<sup>315</sup> – the aspirant learns to rest his or her awareness and attention at the eye centre and becomes immersed in this upward current or stream,<sup>316</sup> the Mystic Christ. Professor Lane quotes a former master of the *Radha Soami* movement, Charan Singh, where this master states that:

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<sup>311</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key to The Universe*, 2015b, p. 328)

<sup>312</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Truth about Evolution and the Bible*, 2012f, p. 133)

<sup>313</sup> The upper limbs of Patanjali’s *Ashtāṅga Yoga* as expounded throughout *The Voice of the Silence*.

<sup>314</sup> Preface, (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a). Much is said throughout the teachings of the OCM re the need of a Teacher for the higher spiritual attainments, but also regarding the inner Guru, The Higher Self or Sat (True) Guru, ultimately one’s own Divinity and ultimate teacher.

<sup>315</sup> It is imperative that the arousing of this Creative Force (*kundalini*) be done under the wise guidance of one who has walked this path before, as this “electro spiritual force, a creative power which, when aroused into action, can as easily kill as it can create.” This is the whole idea behind initiation, entering into a guru-disciple relationship. Without the requisite preliminary philosophical training and purification of the soul, vide Patanjali’s *yamas* and *niyamas*, the aspirant may find himself on the path of disease, insanity and even death. (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Truth about Evolution and the Bible*, 2012f, p. 132)

<sup>316</sup> “... he who the stream hath entered”, (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 46), mentioned many times throughout *The Voice of the Silence*, also referring to The Soundless Sound, The Sound Current of the Radha Soami’s and many others. (Lane, 2022)

“Our spiritual journey starts from the eye center, upward. So we have to withdraw our consciousness back to the eye center. And after that you have to travel with that light and sound within. That is why Christ said, ‘If your eye is single, your whole body is full of light.’ We have to open this eye and see that light. With the help of that light, we have to find our way back to God. Christ said that spiritual worship pleases the Father. And that Spirit, that Holy Ghost, that *Word*, that *Logos* that is in every one of us is here at the eye center. Indian mystics have given Indian names, Christ has given his own name, Persian mystics have given their own name, but those who have travelled within on that path, they have the same message to give. They are not bound by any ritual, by any ceremonies; they don’t have anything to worship outside of themselves, they only worship Him within” (Lane, 2022, p. 20).

Among the many precepts found in *The Voice of the Silence* and quoted throughout the teachings of the OCM, “written for the guidance of those ... definitely seeking Initiation,” we find the following: (See Figure 3.1)

“Bestride the Bird of Life, If thou would’st know ... let the fiery power (*kundalini*) retire into the inmost chamber ... then from the heart that Power shall rise into the sixth, the middle region, the place between thine eyes.”<sup>317</sup>

“Another task is to find that center within the body where the Bird of Life has its nesting place ... (at the eye centre) ... having found this nest attain sweet rest ‘between the wings of that which is not born, nor dies’.”<sup>318</sup>

Finding this ‘rest,’ resting the attention in deep meditation at the eye centre, there where ‘God,’ the ‘Master,’ the ‘Higher Self’ resides and alluded to in Christian Scripture:

“The Kingdom of God is within you.”<sup>319</sup>

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<sup>317</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key to The Universe*, 2015b, p. 328), also (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 126)

<sup>318</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key to The Universe*, 2015b, p. 328). Referring to the two ‘wings’ of the *Ājñā* chakra. See also (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 126)

<sup>319</sup> *Luke 17: 21* (KJV).

“The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.”<sup>320</sup>

Finding this ‘Mystic Christ’ and immersing, bathing the attention within through the practice of abstraction (*pratyāhāra*) and concentration (*dhāraṇā*), the meditating yogi and aspirant enters this upward stream rising ever closer to God-consciousness.

“Merge into one sense thy senses, if thou would’st be secure against the foe. Tis by that sense alone which lies concealed within the hollow of thy brain, that the steep path which leadeth to thy Master may be disclosed before thy Soul’s dim eye.”<sup>321</sup>

It is this ‘fiery power,’ the Great Creative Christ force based in the lower mystical centres, that when uplifted, and made to move up the spine to the higher centres, leads to God-realisation and liberation from this world and where “... this Mystic Power can make of thee a god, Lanoo.”<sup>322</sup> This Christ-power or *kundalini* force is the mediator between man’s personality and his Divine Self, and it will, through spiritual practice and growth, redeem and transmute the lower nature. Contacting this Christ-power, the Mystic Christ, becoming immersed within its radiance, its radiant grace, is what ‘saves’ the mystic from bondage to the lower nature and the world of matter.

“If anyone is in Christ (immersed in this upward drawing Power, the Christ-power), he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”<sup>323</sup>

This Mystic Christ, the inner Master or Sat-guru, which existed from the beginning, irradiating all of creation, must actively be comprehended through direct experience. This is attained through mental mastery – stilling the mind and paradoxically, by using the mind to still the mind – through the processes of *Entering the Silence* and experienced inwardly as *The Soundless Sound* or *Aum*.

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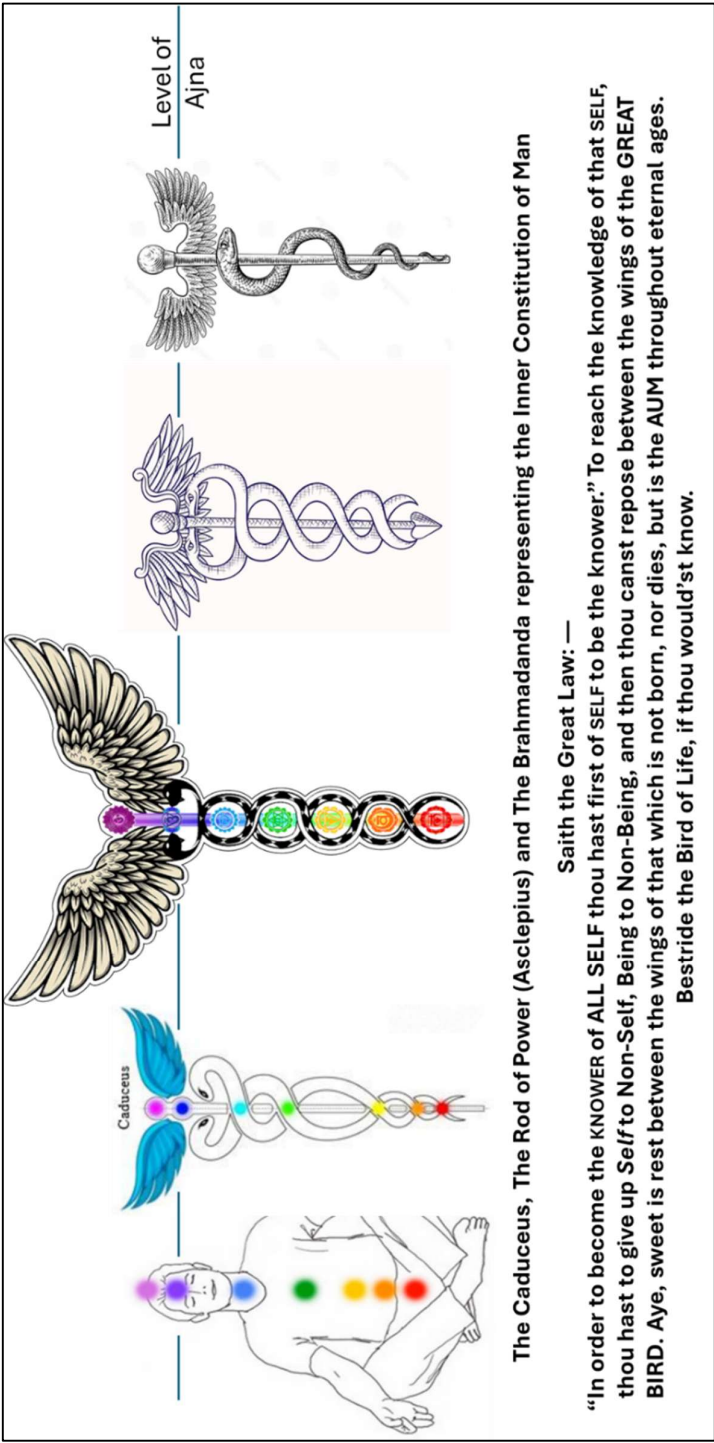
<sup>320</sup> See Chapter on The Third Eye, (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Inner Radiance*, 2012c, p. 251), and Matthew 6:22

<sup>321</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 12), (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 353), Chapter on The Silence

<sup>322</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 16)

<sup>323</sup> 2 *Corinthians* 5:17 (KJV).

“The light from the *One Master*, the one unfading light of spirit, shoots its effulgent beams on the Disciple from the very first.”<sup>324</sup>



**Figure 3. 1: The Caduceus and the Rod of Power as the Inner Constitution of Man**

<sup>324</sup> (Blavatsky, The Voice of the Silence, 2015, pp. 17,18)

### 3.7 The Temple of Silence

“I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”<sup>325</sup>

“I am the Way and the Master who watches in silence. Thy Friend, and thy Shelter,  
and thy Abode of Peace.” <sup>326</sup>

The Silence is that state beyond and transcending the mind (*Purusha*), where the mind is not at play. It is in this Silence where everything is potent and from which everything ultimately comes into being on the downward arc of manifestation. (See Figure 2.1) Simplified into three main divisions, called the manifested universe, being the physical, astral and mental spiritual spheres, within which terrestrial man ‘lives and moves and has his being.’ Depicted spatially for ease of understanding, this manifested universe is separated by a ‘state’ or a ‘vast expanse,’ beyond which lies the unmanifested universe, the Divine Realms or that which is Absolute, Permanent, the never-changing *Purusha* (*SAT*).

“Man has a spiritual evolution which comes from above (*purusha*), and a material evolution, which belongs to this earth (*prakriti*). His physical body is the highest attainment of a physical evolution through all the lower kingdoms ... His spiritual evolution is the result of voluntary descent of Immortal Egos into more or less perfected bodies ... human, animal bodies ... and their subsequent efforts to control and spiritualize these animal organisms.”<sup>327</sup>

Throughout the teachings of the OCM numerous references are found to the Temple of Silence, The Great Silence and *Entering the Silence*. To understand and ultimately internalise the teachings and inner practices to be found within mystical Christianity, an understanding of the original ‘state’ of creation, the ‘state’ of the aspirant’s current being of incarnation and that ‘state’ of God-realisation to which the aspirant ultimately aspires, is imperative. This understanding refers to spiritual philosophy (*Sāṅkhya*), and the more comprehensive and all-inclusive such a philosophy is, the greater the success

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<sup>325</sup> *John 14:6* (KJV) and referring to the Inner Christ Power, that Power which SAVES (i.e. liberates) and is experienced by the deep meditator as *The Soundless Sound*.

<sup>326</sup> *Bhagavad Gītā*, 9:18 (Mascaro).

<sup>327</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 229)

for spiritual advancement within such a philosophy.<sup>328</sup>

“As above, so below,” the great axiomatic statement attributed to Hermes, arriving thereby to the understanding that there is a macrocosmos – The Heavenly Man – and that terrestrial man is the microcosmos, the reflection of THAT which is Above, the Supreme. The practitioner seeks to enter the Great Temple of Silence, the unmanifested Temple to be found within man, and it is the spiritual duty and quest of man to merge once more with that Great Silence. As the Curtisses’ explain:

“There is a mystic and holy Temple of Silence, the Soul of the Universe, where in the hush and stillness of Being the Divine Potency touches and commingles with substance, and from this commingling is brought forth that which shall manifest in all worlds. In its very heart is Silence, the Silence of intense vibration, so rapid that all seems motionless and at rest. This Silence is vibrant with life, thrilling with the creative force of that which is to be. Here, in the Womb of Creation, reigns Supreme the embodiment of Divine Love, the Bringer Forth of all manifestations in cosmos, nature, man.”<sup>329</sup>

It is in experiencing the unmanifested universe – the Great Silence – where the individual must lift himself up from the manifested state and ‘arise’ into that higher experience, “up to the distant home where all is peace,”<sup>330</sup> and find his Real Self, “the Master whom thou feelest but whom thou hast not seen.”<sup>331</sup> It is through a conscious and determined spiritual endeavour that the mystic may enter and worship within the inner Temple of Silence – to be found at the eye centre, the seat of the soul, the Ocean of Love – and do homage to the great Lord of Life, “... to become the knower of ALL SELF.”<sup>332</sup>

Man must find this inner temple within his being to ultimately know his inner self and to “turn away from evil,” mastering and overcoming the dictates of the lower self and to consciously lift himself up into an eventual permanent state of peace. In the system of *Yoga*, the aspirant strives to attain the ‘state of *Yoga*’, being permanently yoked to the

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<sup>328</sup> (Curtiss F. H., *Personal Survival*, 2014d), Chapter 1, Cosmic Philosophy.

<sup>329</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Temple of Silence*, 2015d, p. 8)

<sup>330</sup> (Karadja, 2014, p. 12)

<sup>331</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 16)

<sup>332</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 5)

Divine, ever being merged into this upward stream<sup>333</sup> of Divine Life. Thus, through living the Life Divine, learning to uplift the entire awareness and live at the eye centre, always being there, somewhat withdrawn and inward, the state of Silence of the Hesychast.<sup>334</sup>

It is this comprehensive turning away from the outer circumference of life inwards, practicing continuous abstraction (*pratyāhāra*), that the mystic finds that inner resting place within, the Temple of Silence. It is in this state uplifted, commingling with those who have attained this stage throughout the ages – the teachers, masters and guides of mankind – that true spiritual transformation takes place, becoming one with the Knower, drinking at the fountainhead of wisdom.

### 3.8 Entering the Great Silence

“The Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep Silence before Him.”<sup>335</sup>

The processes leading into the Great Silence must be studied, understood and internalised, for the stilling of the mind, by using the processes of the mind, is the greatest spiritual feat that man can aspire to. These processes, encompassing the practical aspect of *Sāṅkhya* philosophy, implementing what has heretofore been called *Ashtāṅga Yoga*. The precepts in Fragment I of *The Voice of the Silence*, expounded extensively throughout the teachings of the OCM, elaborate the processes required to still the mind and how to immerse the attention into that quality of consciousness described previously as *The Soundless Sound*.

“He who would hear the voice of *Nāda*, ‘the Soundless Sound,’ and comprehend it, he has to learn the nature of *Dhāranā*.”<sup>336</sup>

*Dhāranā* being the intense and perfect concentration of the mind upon some one interior object, (here the interior object is termed *Nada*, *The Soundless Sound*), accompanied by complete abstraction (*pratyāhāra*) from everything pertaining to the external Universe, or the world of the senses, leading to that deep inner state of Silence

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<sup>333</sup> “... he who the stream hath entered”, (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 46).

<sup>334</sup> Hesychasm, a mystical tradition that seeks stillness through prayer, with roots in Eastern Mystical Christianity and beyond and expounded in the writing called the *Philokalia* (Kadloubovsky, 1977).

<sup>335</sup> *Habakkuk 2:20* (KJV).

<sup>336</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 1)

or meditation understood as *dhyāna*. This end state of *dhyāna* is defined by HPB as a practice to attain: “a state of abstraction (*pratyāhāra*) which carries the ascetic practicing it far above this plane of sensuous perception and out of the world of matter,”<sup>337</sup> transcending the mind, going beyond the mind to the levels of the unmanifest. (see Figures 2.1 and 3.1) It is through meditation (*dhyāna*) and its accompanying transformative (transmuting) effect that final spiritual illumination and liberation from this world can be attained. It is the contacting of this *Nada*, “... the Soundless Sound, that *Divine Power* which lies veiled behind all the imperfections...” through which one may enter such a path, and thus to ‘comprehend’ or to become one with it; not to be understood as an intellectual study, but an experiential one.

The ways of attaining this state have been described by mystical systems throughout the ages, vide Patañjali’s Eight-fold or *Ashtāṅga Yoga*. As its essence, such methods must ultimately be the same, for only ONE *Divine Power* irradiates the manifestation, experienced as sound and light, and poetically described in the booklet by the OCM as *The Soundless Sound*<sup>338</sup> – into which the meditator immerses the attention and dissolves his awareness into that great ocean of consciousness, that *Divine Power*, making him one with God.

Comparatively, vide Patañjali and the teachings of the OCM, Professor Lane describes the writings of a Sufi initiate, Dara Shikoh as follows. “Dara Shikoh wrote a short but revealing text in Persian entitled *Risāla-yi Haqq Numāon (The Compass of Truth)*. Here he openly revealed what had usually been a closely guarded secret among Sufi masters; how to properly use breathing exercises (*prāṇāyāma*), holy repetition (*mantra*), focused awareness (*dhāranā*), and listening to the sound current (*dhyāna*) in order to free the petty mind from unnecessary distractions and experience a majestic unity with the Divine, also calling it *the great Voice of the Silence*” (Shikoh, 2020).

Professor Lane further quotes the great mystics Kabir (1440-1518) and Guru Nanak (1469-1539) from whom the inner traditions of Sikhism arise. Says Kabir: “Day and night, the celestial bugles vibrate the unstruck<sup>339</sup> melody. Then, one beholds the Father of the three worlds. There the Unstruck Music is sounded; it is the music of the love of

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<sup>337</sup> (Blavatsky, The Theosophical Glossary, 1892, p. 104)

<sup>338</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, The Soundless Sound, 2012a)

<sup>339</sup> Blavatsky mentions ‘*Anāhata-śabda*’ in the commentaries to *The Voice of the Silence*, p78, *Anāhata* meaning ‘unstruck’ and *śabda* meaning ‘Word’ or ‘Sound,’ literally then the ‘unstruck sound’ or ‘the soundless sound.’

the three worlds” (*Sāṅkhya*). Says Guru Nanak: “Various are the unending dulcet Melodies, one cannot describe their delicious strains. The glorious consummation takes place, when the Lord of the five Melodies comes.” (Lane, 2022, pp. 11-13)

Throughout the teachings of the OCM, preliminary meditation techniques and those methods to lift the consciousness out of the mire of earthly life into the higher expression of mental Silence are given much prominence. These techniques – engaging the faculties of ‘sound and light’<sup>340</sup> by using the imagination and mind to transcend the mind, both aspects of our consciousness found at the higher centres – leading the meditator into ever deeper states of abstraction (*pratyāhāra*) and *Entering the Silence* (*dhyāna*).

This higher ‘state’ of experiencing the inner Silence is attained through the foundation of correct living, devotion, prayer and aspiration, life-force control, mantra, visualisation, concentration, and ultimately leading up and into deep meditation (*dhyāna*) – understood as *Entering the Silence*. Only the briefest of descriptions, suitably referenced and juxtaposed to the system of Patañjali, is here attempted.

### **A Conducive Spiritual Life (*Yama and Niyama*)**

“No power in heaven or earth can keep the Silence from entering into you if you will let it, for the Silence is the peace of God that passeth understanding.”<sup>341</sup>

The teachings of the OCM present a comprehensive Cosmic Philosophy<sup>342</sup> within the Christian Mystical tradition to guide spiritual life and to ensure that the serious aspirant is well-grounded in his or her teaching of choice, “For within the heart of every true religion the Path of Attainment can be found if searched for diligently.”<sup>343</sup> A solid foundation is an essential part of spiritual life – termed *Dharma*<sup>344</sup> in Asian philosophy – vide the *yamas* and *niyamas* of Patañjali’s system of *Yoga* and the Commandments

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<sup>340</sup> In deep meditation we experience literal sound as expounded throughout this work, but also light, (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, pp. 20,21), termed by other philosophies the Ringing Radiance, i.e., sound and light.

<sup>341</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 33)

<sup>342</sup> (Curtiss F. H., *Personal Survival*, 2014d), Chapter 1, Cosmic Philosophy

<sup>343</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, 2013a, p. 152)

<sup>344</sup> *Dharma*, translated simply as religion, righteousness or that which upholds – a comprehensive term for the natural laws and eternal verities that uphold the divine order of the universe and of man, a miniature universe. *Sāṅkhya* philosophy thus defines true religion as “those immutable principles that protect man permanently from the threefold suffering of disease, unhappiness, and ignorance.”

of the Bible, the moral aspects and field of life where religion concerns itself. Yogananda compares the *yamas* and *niyamas* to 'The Power of Mental Resistance' and 'Adherence', respectively, qualities needed by the aspirant to engage in conducive spiritual discipline. He further states that:

“*Yama-niyama* are the foundation on which the yogi begins to build his spiritual life. They harmonize body and mind with the divine laws of nature, or creation, producing an inner and outer well-being, happiness and strength that attract the devotee to deeper spiritual practices and make him receptive to the blessings of his guru-given *sādhana* (spiritual path).”<sup>345</sup>

The OCM place special emphasis on identifying those duties that lead to the contemplative life, concentrating on the real, vital and primary duty of life to take care of one's Immortal Soul, the most sacred of all duties.<sup>346</sup> Then to so order one's life that this vital duty of attaining spiritual goals is not crowded out by superfluous, imaginary and self-imposed detractions from spiritual life, setting aside time for devotion and meditation and going within, taking care of this soul-duty above all else.<sup>347</sup> Comprehending in ever greater measure and understanding the role of correct living and self-discipline to protect against the materialistic 'pull of the world,' drawing the aspirant downwards and outwards away from the goal which is to be found within.

This requires a childlike faith and acceptance of one's position in life and society as it presents itself, accepting one's lot in life as all that is needed to make spiritual progress.<sup>348</sup> “To live life; to live life fully and harmoniously and joyously right in the environment where we find ourselves incarnated; in fact, where we have chosen to incarnate.”<sup>349</sup> Faith that there is a great plan and destiny for each unfolding soul, that all is well and as it should be, that the system defined as *Karma* and *Dharma* is correct as providing corrective action, pushing the soul to ever greater perfection. Thus, the

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<sup>345</sup> (Yogananda, *The Bhagavad Gita: God Talks With Arjuna*, 2001, pp. 74,75)

<sup>346</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a), See Chapter on Life's Duties.

<sup>347</sup> The great proponents of *Yoga* of the last century – Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Paramahansa Yogananda, Swami Sivananda – amongst many others, enjoining that meditation and meditation only leads to liberation and that supreme beatitude of God-realization. Says Swami Sivananda on the supreme practice of meditation: “Meditation is your only duty.”, (Sivananda, 2012, p. 1), “Meditation is the only real, royal road to the attainment of salvation.”, (Sivananda, *Concentration and Meditation*, 2009, p. 84)

<sup>348</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Letters from The Teacher Volume 1*, 2013b, pp. 44,113)

<sup>349</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Why Are We Here?*, 2014b, p. 7)

aspirant requires that peace, patience, poise and a mind unruffled by outer events, assisting him or her to enter into ever-deepening states of abstraction (*pratyāhāra*) (Goswami, 1980),<sup>350</sup> stilling the mental processes and *Entering the Silence*. What is required is a foundation of being kind, decent, honest and charitable with a social conscience, living the *Dharma* of life one day at a time, the accepted way of life within the aspirants social milieu and community, right there where he has been placed, and not becoming an antisocial eccentric that cannot function in everyday society.

Within these teachings, all the vagaries and temptations of life, work and family are accepted and to be expected. These are seen as spiritual opportunities that will strengthen the soul and lead to those essential spiritual qualities of forbearance, long-suffering, patience, non-judgement and an equal vision in all things.<sup>351</sup>

### **Life-force Control and the Science of Breath (*Prāṇāyāma*)**

Engaging in spiritual practice, immersing one's attention in the Mystic Christ, brings into play a comprehensive transmutation and alchemy of the soul.<sup>352</sup> As per the philosophy of *Karma and Dharma*, the aspirant reincarnating in this world is given a measure of energy or life-force that will see him through his 'three-score and ten' years, after which he blows out the last breath, passing back up into a higher state. This energy or life-force represents "those goods given to us by our Father,"<sup>353</sup> for use in this far-off land, that which belongs to the aspirant and with which he must make spiritual progress. This energy (or vitality) is used to lead the life material, a downward and outward life to attend to life's duties; "... as thy days, so shall thy strength be."<sup>354</sup>

But this downward and outward life becomes reversed for those who live the Life Divine, lifting up the Great Creative Power (*kundalini*) that lies dormant in the lower centre, reversing the downward inner current into the Divine Creative Force uplifted,<sup>355</sup>

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<sup>350</sup> Shyam Sundar Goswami, in his most scholarly work *Laya Yoga* (The *Yoga* of Dissolution) describes the inner process as fundamentally *pratyāhāra* (abstraction) and that the *Samyāma* (*dhāranā*, *dhyanā* to attain *samādhi*) are steps into and experiencing ever-deepening states of *pratyāhāra*.

<sup>351</sup> See Prayer for Demonstration, (Curtiss & Curtiss, The Message of Aquaria, 2010c, p. 147)

<sup>352</sup> Also called 'The Great Work', see (Curtiss & Curtiss, The Inner Radiance, 2012c), Chapter on The Great Work.

<sup>353</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, Letters from The Teacher Volume 1, 2013b, pp. 113,121,125), (Curtiss & Curtiss, The Voice of Isis, 2010a, pp. 208,209,287)

<sup>354</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, The Voice of Isis, 2010a, p. 29), See Chapter on Life's Duties

<sup>355</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, The Divine Mother, 2012d, pp. 76,77), (Curtiss & Curtiss, The Voice of Isis, 2010a, p. 325)

represented by the Caduceus, The Rod of Power.<sup>356</sup> (See Figure 3.1)

For those striving to live the higher life, a thorough understanding and implementation of life-force control becomes imperative the further one progresses, and the 'Science of Breath' is a great help for preparing the mind before sitting for meditation, concentration, and to *Enter into the Silence*. Says Yogananda,

"The life force is the link between matter and Spirit. Flowing outward, it reveals the spuriously alluring world of the senses; reversed inward, it pulls the consciousness to the eternally satisfying bliss of God. The meditating devotee sits between these two worlds, striving to enter the kingdom of God, but is kept engaged in battling the senses. With the aid of a scientific technique of *prāṇāyāma*, the yogi is at last victorious in reversing the outward-flowing life energy that externalised his consciousness in the action of breath, heart, and sense-ensnared life currents. He enters the natural inner calm realm of the soul and Spirit,"<sup>357</sup>

encapsulating the essence of *Sāṅkhya* philosophy. The deeper aspects of life-force control are best undertaken under the competent guidance of a teacher. The Curtisses caution the practitioner in their publication on health and healing that:

"There is a definite science of the breath into the technique of which we cannot enter [in these teachings]. Such technical exercises should not be taken except under the personal guidance of a qualified teacher. Never consciously use the breath without holding some constructive thought or idea; for what we hold in mind at that time is stamped upon the electrons of each cell."<sup>358</sup>

The deliberate change from unconscious breathing to focused and conscious breathing is already a form of abstraction (*pratyāhāra*) and concentration (*dhāranā*), assisting the aspirant to abstract inwards and to still the movement of the outward and

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<sup>356</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Truth about Evolution and the Bible*, 2012f, p. 133), and full Chapters on The Serpent Power.

<sup>357</sup> (Yogananda, *The Bhagavad Gita: God Talks With Arjuna*, 2001, p. 76)

<sup>358</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Health Hints for Four-Fold Health*, 2014e, p. 14)

downward *prana* or life-force. Nevertheless, throughout the teachings of the OCM, various breathing techniques are given to prepare the mind to *Enter into the Silence*, for health and vitality, and the sublimation of the lustful nature. Vide Patañjali's 4<sup>th</sup> limb of *prāṇāyāma* (life-force control) and "how to properly use breathing exercises" within *The Sound Current Tradition* (Lane, 2022, p. 11), the philosophy of the OCM enjoins using "The Complete Breath"<sup>359</sup> or "The Calming Breath"<sup>360</sup> prior to meditation. These are simple forms of square breathing or *sama vritti prāṇāyāma*,<sup>361</sup> and the holding of a specific thought-current while engaging in these breathing techniques. "During the inhalation hold the thought that you are breathing in the forces of love, strength, courage and purity or any other virtue you desire; that during the pause they are filling you full to overflowing, and that during the outbreathing you are breathing out all your troubles, anxieties and cares, and dissipating them like exhaust steam."<sup>362</sup> This relaxes the constitution and calms the mind to prepare for inner practice.

Further techniques, such as "The Cleansing Breath" and "The Vitalizing Breath" for the indrawing of vital life-force as *prana*, are given for everyday bodily health and vitality.<sup>363</sup> A breathing technique to assist in attaining the state of *brahmacharya*, a *sine qua non* of HPB's inner group teachings, Patañjali's *yamas* and *niyamas* and the higher life as per the OCM teachings is given for those who require help in transmuting (not repressing or killing out) the lustful nature. "The Transmuting Breath"<sup>364</sup> is a powerful breathing technique to lift up the lower nature and transmute the Great Creative Energy into an upward spiritual current or '*Ojas shakti*'<sup>365</sup>, a comprehensive yogic technique best practised under competent guidance. This form of sublimation and the spiritual

<sup>359</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a), Chapter on The Silence.

<sup>360</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Health Hints for Four-Fold Health*, 2014e, p. 15)

<sup>361</sup> *Sama* meaning 'equal,' *vritti* meaning 'mental fluctuations' and *prāṇāyāma* meaning 'life-force control.'

Using the breath to calm and still mental movement and to reverse the downward flow of *prana*.

<sup>362</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Health Hints for Four-Fold Health*, 2014e, p. 17)

<sup>363</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Health Hints for Four-Fold Health*, 2014e, pp. 17-20)

<sup>364</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Health Hints for Four-Fold Health*, 2014e, pp. 20,21)

<sup>365</sup> "If the sexual energy is transmuted into *Ojas* or spiritual energy by pure thoughts it is called sex-sublimation ... In Yoga it is called *Ūrdhvaretas* or one in whom the seminal energy has flown upwards into the brain as *Ojas Shakti*. The semen dries up in those who practice *prāṇāyāma* seriously. The semen-energy ascends up to the brain. It is stored up as *Ojas Shakti* or spiritual energy and comes back as *Amrita* or nectar. The process of sex sublimation is extremely difficult. It demands constant and protracted *sādhana* and perfect discipline. That Yogi who has achieved perfect sublimation has perfect control over lust. Complete sublimation is achieved through ceaseless meditation on *Ātman* and Self-realization. That Yogi or Jnani who has attained the highest Nirvikalpa *Samādhi*, in whom the seeds of Samskaras are fried in toto, can claim to be a perfect *Ūrdhvaleta* or one who has complete sex sublimation. There is no fear of his downfall. He is perfectly safe. He will be absolutely free from impurity. This stage is a very high stage. A microscopic minority only have attained this sublime exalted state." (Sivananda, *Practice of Brahmacharya*, 2006, pp. 58,59)

discipline of celibacy<sup>366</sup> is given its due prominence, enjoined on advanced aspirants.

### **Aspiration, Prayer, Mantra and Devotion (*Pratyāhāra*)**

“Lord, make me an instrument of Thy Peace.”<sup>367</sup>

According to the teachings of the OCM, the devotional side of the mysteries, the ‘glue’ that binds all spiritual practice, cannot be overemphasised.<sup>368</sup> Aspiration and devotion, manifesting as prayer and *mantra*, are the easiest and most simple means of creating that ‘inner contact’ that will ultimately put the aspirant in touch with his or her own Divinity. Yogananda refers to “one’s spiritual mood, or *bhava*,”<sup>369</sup> and in this sense also refers to the interiorisation (*pratyāhāra*) of one’s awareness. “Patañjali’s *pratyāhāra*, the withdrawal of consciousness from the senses, the result of successful practice of *prāṇāyāma* or control of the life force (the astral powers) that enlivens the senses and bears their messages to the brain. When the devotee has attained *pratyāhāra*, the life is switched off from the senses, and the mind and consciousness are still and interiorized.” Closing the eyes, withdrawing the mind from sensory disturbances, placing the attention within and entreating the ‘Above’ in aspiration and prayer, however that is understood by the supplicant, sets the mood (*bhava*) and the scene for ever deeper inner abstraction (*pratyāhāra*). As to this most innate form of aspiration, as prayer, common to all forms of religious worship, the Curtisses state in their booklet *Potent Prayers* that:

“The object of all religions is worship of the Divine and the primary object of all worship is personal contact with, and realization of, the Divine within us. As there is a method or mechanism by which the whole manifested universe comes into physical expression (Figures 2.1 and 3.1), so is there a method or mechanism by which conscious contact is made between the human personality and those higher expressions of God toward which the

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<sup>366</sup> For a comprehensive discussion on the practice of celibacy see (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key to The Universe*, 2015b, pp. 376-379)

<sup>367</sup> The opening line to the well-known prayer associated with Saint Francis of Assisi, entreating the Lord to make the supplicant ‘like unto Him.’

<sup>368</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *OCM Hymnal*, 2016), Preface

<sup>369</sup> (Yogananda, *The Bhagavad Gita: God Talks With Arjuna*, 2001, p. 77)

heart aspires. While there are many avenues by which such contact is made, ranging from contemplation, meditation and silent aspiration to the sudden despairing cry for help and protection in times of crisis, nevertheless, the avenue most readily available to the average consciousness is prayer.”<sup>370</sup>

In the preface to their booklet *Christian Mystic Hymnal*, the Curtisses state that “prayers, mantras, music and song play an important role in the spiritual and mystic life.”<sup>371</sup> They explain how this aspiration and devotion (*bhakti*) to a power ‘Above’ invokes higher spiritual powers – a belief innate in all forms of religion and mysticism throughout the ages – and how such entreaty upwards brings forth a return current and a Divine influx downwards. It is this hungering for ‘God’ as a personal and lived experience, finding ‘God’ within, that provides the soul-satisfaction that the mystic aspires to. This aspiration develops the heart qualities of the aspirant, putting him in touch with this ‘innate’ power that prayer and aspiration bring – tapping into a power that has been generated by multitudes of seekers over millennia. This mystical effect is also stated by HPB, where she speaks of mantra as “a collection of words which, when sounded in speech, induce certain vibrations not only in the air, but also in the finer ether, thereby producing certain effects.”<sup>372</sup> Hence, we see the emphasis placed upon the inner and devotional side of the mysteries by the many masters and teachers throughout the ages. Says HPB about the higher qualities of devotion, in its essence, the fruits of attaining that state of inner quietude, that permanent ‘state’ of Yoga through meditation:

“Tell him, O Aspirant, that true devotion may bring him back the knowledge; that knowledge which was his in former births.”<sup>373</sup>

True devotion, that seeking of and seeing only the Supreme (Inner God) in all, mastering and overcoming the domination of the lower ego, and renouncing the ever-incessant pull of the lower worlds; wedding oneself to a Higher Contact in the ever

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<sup>370</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Potent Prayers*, 2012e), Preface

<sup>371</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *OCM Hymnal*, 2016), Preface

<sup>372</sup> HPB, *Collected Writings Volume IX*, Theosophical Publishing House, 1974, p118.

<sup>373</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, pp. 37,38)

growing joy of contemplative and meditative practices. That 'knowledge' then, is the aspirant's realisation of his or her final and high destiny, of not being separated from the Supreme, but one with IT, working towards and attaining, once again, that state called God-realisation. Regarding this power of prayer, the Curtisses state that:

"Prayer is a channel leading to the attainment of a fixed purpose. To pray for ourselves is, if rightly understood, merely recognizing the inflow of Divine Love and striving to make a place for and direct it. To ask for guidance is but to take hold of the Power of Divinity as a little child grasps its father's hand ... This does not mean that one must necessarily repeat certain stipulated words or mantrams as set forth by another, for each heart can usually formulate its own words to express its own desires and needs. As words both symbolize and embody definite ideas, set prayers and mantrams can be used to produce specific effects. They engender definite vibrations, whose use is designed to tune the consciousness of the user into the wavelength of definite states of consciousness, and to certain Hierarchies of Beings in the higher worlds."<sup>374</sup>

From a phenomenological point of view, prayer as abstraction or *pratyāhāra* is universally practised by people of all religions; that 'belief' and supplication to a Higher Power is the most powerful 'philosophical' argument that the believer and mystic aspires to a form of oneness with God, the Supreme. Blavatsky says on prayer:

"Prayer ... is rather an internal command than a petition. We pray to 'our Father in heaven' – in its esoteric meaning. The Theosophist addresses his prayer to his Father which is in secret ... and that 'Father' is in man himself. In our sense, the inner man is the only God we can have cognizance of."<sup>375</sup>

The Curtisses published a full booklet containing over 54 "prayers suitable for almost all occasions," their main "Prayer for Light" already forming a part of the pre-meditation practice of using the imagination as a tool of visualisation to effect abstraction and

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<sup>374</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Potent Prayers*, 2012e), Introduction

<sup>375</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy*, 1890), Blavatsky on Prayer.

concentration (*pratyāhāra and dhāranā*), lifting up the awareness to the eye centre,<sup>376</sup> exalting the consciousness as preparation to *Enter the Silence*.

### **Prayer for Light<sup>377</sup>**

“O Christ! Light Thou within my heart the Flame of Divine Love and Wisdom, That I may dwell forever in the radiance of Thy countenance and rest in the Light of Thy smile!”

**Visualisation:** “After repeating this prayer, see with the mind’s eye the Divine Light descending upon you like the beam of a gigantic searchlight, pouring down from above upon your head and flooding you with its radiance. See the beam of Light surrounding you with a circle of brilliant white Light, forming the Ring-Pass-Not, within which no inharmonious or evil thing can penetrate without being consumed by that Divine Fire. Then see it illumine your mind, expand your consciousness and deepen your understanding of life, love and law, and the experiences of your daily life. As the Light surrounds you, see it awakening within your heart a tiny, bright Flame. Watch this Flame spring up and grow until it illumines every fiber of your being with Divine Love and compassion. Feel the Flame send an actual glow of warmth throughout your physical body to the tips of your fingers and toes, purifying, spiritualizing and transmuting the very atoms of your flesh with its spiritual radioactivity. Then see it ascend and blend into and make you one with the Divine Flame that is pouring down upon you from above. Then ascend in consciousness within the column of this Divine Light to the realms of Divine Consciousness where you lose yourself in oneness with the Divine.”

Closing the eyes and going within, using the faculty of visualisation to still the mind by ‘anchoring’ it to the image used and placing the attention at the eye centre is an ancient technique<sup>378</sup> (Lane, 2022, pp. 11,12) of deepening the stage of abstraction (*pratyāhāra*), leading into concentration (*dhāranā*) and finally into meditation or *Entering the Silence* (*dhyāna*) as the meditator consciously feels himself being drawn

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<sup>376</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Mystic Life*, 2012b, p. 133), (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Why Are We Here?*, 2014b, p. 128)

<sup>377</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Potent Prayers*, 2012e, pp. 1,2)

<sup>378</sup> Vide Patañjali and the *Upanishads*.

up into the higher centre, the seat of the soul. Per OCM teachings, this prayer is also used for protection as it is believed that those who dedicate their lives to spiritual development draw open hostility from forces unseen, demons, asuras, obsessing entities; that eternal struggle between darkness and light, and that such prayer banishes any negative influence prior to the deeper stages of meditation.<sup>379</sup>

**Mantra:** In *The Temple of Silence*<sup>380</sup> the Curtisses define a mantram as “a formula or charm used in Hindu invocations, usually consisting of the name of some deity or a short address to him. As a charm it comprises a definite formula set to an appropriate chant; the rhythmic waves set in motion by its recitation are held to produce certain given results, varying with each mantram,” and that the vibratory force of the words, all words having back of them certain occult potencies and power, combined in a certain rhythmic cadence, producing a desired inner psychological effect, assisting the soul to abstract away from the outer world.

Throughout the teachings of the OCM the terms mantra and prayer are used interchangeably. Speaking of the power of mantra, ever repeating some one of their holy prayers, “to remind ourselves of this God-consciousness within and to aid us in focusing the creative power of our thought upon it, we should avail ourselves of every aid to this end, such as ceremonies, prayers, mantra, set times for devotion and worship, the occurrence of sunrise, noon and sunset or any other factor that will help to keep before our mind’s eye the ideal to be attained.”<sup>381</sup>

The effect, therefore, of continuous repetition of a mantram or prayer, placing the aspirant in a state of abstraction inwards into contemplation, arousing the awareness of Divinity within him, is a continuous background state of feeling uplifted and oneness with the Inner Divinity. In a sense, *Practicing the Presence of God*, the state of the Hesychast,<sup>382</sup> and “having the [sacred] names of God ever on one's lips” through the Asian spiritual practice of *Japa* or *Simran* – continuous mantra repetition.<sup>383</sup> “... from the chanting of the sacred mantra *Om Mani Padme Hum* of the Hindu and Tibetan

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<sup>379</sup> A comprehensive discussion on this topic is to be found within their remarkable work, *Realms of the Living Dead*, quoting the Bible and other scriptures and beyond the scope of discussion in this dissertation, (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d)..

<sup>380</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Temple of Silence*, 2015d, p. 17)

<sup>381</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Message of Aquaria*, 2010c, p. 473)

<sup>382</sup> Vide that remarkable work titled *The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence, and the continuous ‘Jesus Prayer’ of the Eastern Orthodox Hesychasts.

<sup>383</sup> See *Japa Yoga* by Swami Sivananda (Sivananda, *Japa Yoga*, 2019)

monks, the rhythmic reading from the *Granth Sahib* and the repetition of the sacred name *Wahguru* of the Sikhs, to the intoning of the service in many branches of the Christian Church. If these various forms of mantra are intoned slowly and with a rhythmic cadence a certain effect is produced.”<sup>384</sup>

Some mantras used by Christians vide the Aramaic word chanted ‘Ma-Ra-Na-Tha,’ meaning ‘Come, Lord Jesus’ or repeating the mantram ‘In Christ I Am’ and the varied prayers and mantrams within Latin liturgies. In *The Voice of the Silence*, HPB alludes to using the root mantra ‘AUM’ and ‘Om Tat Sat’ as suitable mantras for inner contemplation. She quotes from the *Nada-Bindu* Upanishad, “A Yogi who bestrides the Hamsa (thus contemplates on *Aum*) is not affected by Karmic influences or crores of sins.”<sup>385</sup> (See Figure 3.1)

Mantra and prayer are therefore used in combination with visualisation at the eye centre, to effect that inner state of abstraction (*pratyāhāra*) leading to concentration (*dhāranā*) proper.

“... mantra, while apparently but affirmations, nevertheless contain the spirit of true prayer, for all prayer is but a recognition of the One Life, the great Universal Creative Force. This force is love in its highest conception, and it is with this conception of love, as being one with the creative energy of the Great Breath of Brahm, that we desire our students to identify themselves.”<sup>386</sup>

### **Concentration (*Dhāranā*)**

“Only those who feel an inward urge to know *the whole truth* need have it given them ... No one is ever required to do work for which he is not prepared.”<sup>387</sup>

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<sup>384</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key to The Universe*, 2015b, p. 24)

<sup>385</sup> The *Hamsa* as explained previously, the eye-centre or *Ājñā* chakra. (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 75), also Figure 3.1. *Om Tat Sat* is the group of three mantras in Sanskrit found in verse 17.23 of *The Bhagavad Gītā* (Yogananda), the eternal sound-pranava, representing the unmanifest and absolute reality as explained previously (See Figure 2.1). See also (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key to The Universe*, 2015b, pp. 130-132). regarding the pranava *AUM*, and Yogananda as the Primal Sound or Vibratory *Word*. (Yogananda, *The Second Coming of Christ*, 2004, p. 723).

<sup>386</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 409)

<sup>387</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Gems of Mysticism*, 2015g, p. 32)

The teachings of the OCM have much to say about the practice of concentration, comparable to Patañjali's 6<sup>th</sup> limb of *dhāranā*. The aspirant, having engaged in the preliminary practices of breath-control (*prāṇāyāma*) and prayer (*pratyāhāra*), now deliberately engages in the most difficult and often trying part of spiritual practice, and that is the discipline of concentration. It is rightly said that even in material life, nothing can be gained or achieved without the power of concentration, and this is exponentially more so in spiritual life. "Concentration is focusing the attention upon a chosen object or idea. It is the first step toward accomplishing any given end, either in the physical, mental or higher worlds."<sup>388</sup> Says Yogananda of this next stage:

"Dhāranā is concentration or fixity on that inner conception or object of meditation. Thus arises from this contemplation the perception of the Divine Presence, first within oneself, and then evolving into cosmic conception – conceiving of the vastness of Spirit, omnipresent within and beyond all creation."<sup>389</sup>

The aspirant now engages the inner faculties of the imagination (the eye of the mind), faculties centred in the higher centres, through visualisation and mantra or prayer repetition by visualising any object of choice<sup>390</sup> and placing the attention at the eye centre, using mantra and visualisation to anchor the mind to keep it steady. This stage of going within cannot be skipped, no shortcuts exist and should form the lengthier part of a meditation session prior to the next stage of *Entering the Silence* or *dhyāna*. It is this practice of concentration,<sup>391</sup> to be engaged in with determination and

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<sup>388</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Temple of Silence*, 2015d, p. 34)

<sup>389</sup> (Yogananda, *The Bhagavad Gita: God Talks With Arjuna*, 2001, p. 77)

<sup>390</sup> *Yoga Sutra* 1:39 can be interpreted as visualizing a pure object that is pleasing to the meditator.

<sup>391</sup> From the aspect of *Yoga*, "Concentration and meditation are the royal roads to perfection. Concentration leads to meditation. Fix the mind on one object either within the body or without. Keep it there steadily for some time. This is concentration. You will have to practise this daily. Purify the mind first through the practice of right conduct and then take to the practice of concentration. Concentration without purity of mind is of no avail. There are some occultists who have concentration. But they have no good character. That is the reason why they do not make any progress in the spiritual line. He who has a steady posture and has purified his nerves and the vital sheath by constant practice of control of breath will be able to concentrate easily. Concentration will be intense if you remove all distractions. A true celibate who has preserved his energy will have wonderful concentration. What is Meditation? Meditation is a mysterious ladder which reaches from earth to heaven, from error to truth, from darkness to light, from pain to bliss, from restlessness to abiding peace, from ignorance to knowledge, from mortality to immortality. Meditation leads to Knowledge of the Self which brings about eternal peace, supreme bliss. Meditation prepares you for the integral experience or direct intuitive knowledge." (Sivananda, *Concentration and Meditation*, 2009, pp. 86,118), and Introduction.

tenacity, that will bring the aspirant ever closer to that inner experience of literally experiencing *The Voice of God*, or *The Voice of the Silence* or *The Soundless Sound*. Says Blavatsky:

“He would hear the voice of *Nāda*, ‘the Soundless Sound,’ and comprehend it, he has to learn the natura of *Dhāranā*,” (concentration).<sup>392</sup>

And this comprehension is experiential; it can only be ‘known’ by actively taking the plunge<sup>393</sup> and going within, an intellectual understanding will give the meditator a rationale for following an inner path, but something more than an intellectual understanding is needed.

“Merge into one sense thy senses, if thou would’st be secure against the foe. Tis by that sense alone which lies concealed within the hollow of thy brain, that the steep path which leadeth to thy Master may be disclosed before thy Soul’s dim eye.”<sup>394</sup>

Of all spiritual obstacles, the great and final ‘barrier’ that stands between the aspirant and direct perception and experience of the higher superconscious states, the Divine, is the mind. (See Figure 2.1) The transcendence of the mind, its mental fluctuations and outward excursive nature, is the greatest feat that the aspirant can aspire to. This transcendence of mental movement, as expounded by the *Upanishads* and other Vedantic texts, starts with the practice of concentration. Through repeated concentration, mental movement is anchored, and as years of practice bring their results, mental movement and its cessation bring the inner Voice of ‘God’ to the fore.

“To acquire the ability to enter the Silence properly will take time; for you will find your mind fairly bombarded by thoughts, often of a trivial nature, which you must determinately still. This will require [continued] practice; for as you silence thoughts on one stratum of consciousness, your mind will still

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<sup>392</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 1)

<sup>393</sup> “What will a man gain by merely reasoning about the words of the scriptures? Ah, the fools! They reason themselves to death over information about the path. They never take the plunge. What a pity!” Saying by Ramakrishna Paramahansa, *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* (Gupta, 1952, p. 332).

<sup>394</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Temple of Silence*, 2015d, p. 38), Sloka from *The Voice of the Silence*.

be active, but in a more interior way ... When you find your mind wandering, bring it back and, if necessary, repeat, 'Peace, be still.' Often it is a help to repeat the word 'Silence' or repeat your given name again and again.<sup>395</sup> But when you have gained the power of Silence, stop even these helps. Your mind must be like a still mountain lake, without a ripple, capable of perfectly reflecting every passing cloud. If the surface of the lake is agitated, even by a ripple, the images on its surface will be distorted; so it is with the mind.

Only when you have attained to this quietude of mind can you hope to hear *The Voice of the Silence* without the intermixture of personality and observe without distortion the heavenly images reflected in your brain from your Father-in-heaven."<sup>396</sup>

### Entering the Great Silence (*Dhyāna*)

"Be still, and know that I am God."<sup>397</sup>

As the aspirant enters into ever deeper levels of abstraction, moving from breath-control to prayer, aspiration and devotion, to concentration and then, between those moments where the mind ceases to wander, *Entering the Silence*, comparable to Patañjali's 7<sup>th</sup> limb, *dhyāna*. It is in this state – resting at the eye centre, "bestriding the bird of life"<sup>398</sup> – where we experience our own Higher Self, our Master. A literal 'going home' and there "To the Silent Thinker become united."<sup>399</sup>

"Then from the heart that Power shall rise into the sixth, the middle region, the place between thine eyes, when it becomes the breath of the ONE-SOUL, the voice which filleth all, thy Master's voice."<sup>400</sup>

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<sup>395</sup> Vide the Yogic practice of *Japa* or *Simran* – mantra repetition. (Sivananda, Japa Yoga, 2019), also, the continuous prayers of the Hesychasts, repetition of the Jesus Prayer; also 'Ma-Ra-Na-Tha' which means 'Come, Lord Jesus.' Prayers and mantrams in the sacred languages, such as Latin or Sanskrit, have a unique ability to enable greater focus in meditation and entering into deeper levels of mystical prayer.

<sup>396</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Temple of Silence*, 2015d, p. 38)

<sup>397</sup> See Chapter on The Path, (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 301)

<sup>398</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 5)

<sup>399</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 3)

<sup>400</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 9)

It is in this state where concentration becomes ever deeper, *kundalini* as power of absorption (*laya*) rising ever upwards in greater degree that the inner mystic sounds become apparent and the aspirant, letting go of all forms and techniques of stilling the mind, absorbs or dissolves himself within THAT power, the Mystic Christ, experienced as light and sound or *Nada*.<sup>401</sup>

“Behold! thou hast become the light, thou hast become the Sound, thou art thy Master and thy God. Thou art THYSELF the object of thy search: the VOICE unbroken, that resounds throughout eternities, exempt from change, from sin exempt, the seven sounds in one, the VOICE OF THE SILENCE. Om Tat Sat”<sup>402</sup>

Says Yogananda of this stage, “*Dhyāna*, or meditation, is the focusing of the freed attention on Spirit. It involves the meditator, the process or technique of meditation, and the object of meditation.”<sup>403</sup> It is this merging of the senses that is experienced as an innate sound, the meditator’s consciousness merging into THAT for which there are no words, losing his sense of individuality and attaining the state of *samādhi*.

### 3.9 God-realisation and Liberation (*Samādhi*)

The further one progresses on the spiritual path as expounded herein, the less there is to say about the subject, as ‘realization’ or ‘God-realization’ is purely experiential. Yogananda speaks of the culmination of *saṃyāma* meditation: “Thus arises from this contemplation the perception of the Divine Presence, first within oneself, and then evolving into cosmic conception – conceiving of the vastness of Spirit, omnipresent within and beyond all creation. The culmination of *Samyāma* self-mastery is when the meditator, the process of meditating, and the object of meditation become one – the

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<sup>401</sup> “Now begins *Yoga* ... with the stilling of the movement of thought,” says Patañjali in Sloka 1 and 2, the true yoking of the aspirant to the Supreme. (Venkatesananda, 1998) The science of this absorption comprehensively expounded by Shyam Sundar Goswami in his masterful scholarly work, *Laya Yoga* (Goswami, 1980), summarizing the essence of the *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Tantras*, *Puranas*, *Itihasa Mahabharata*, *Darshanas* and the major works on *Yoga*.

<sup>402</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, pp. 21,22)

<sup>403</sup> (Yogananda, *The Bhagavad Gita: God Talks With Arjuna*, 2001, p. 77)

full realisation of oneness with Spirit.”<sup>404</sup> The shortest works on the subject within the field of these teachings, such as *The Bhagavad Gītā*, *The Voice of the Silence* and *The Soundless Sound*, all speak directly of, or allude to, a great secret of Silence. This secret, which cannot be taught and can only be realised through the necessary effort, as described previously.

“Know, O Disciple, this is the Secret Path ...”<sup>405</sup>

“Today I am revealing to thee this Yoga eternal, this secret supreme ... and also among secrets I am silence”<sup>406</sup>

“It is a voice that speaks where there is none to speak – it is a messenger that comes, a messenger without form or substance.”<sup>407</sup>

It is this great goal of realisation, overcoming the great ‘dire heresy’<sup>408</sup> of separateness, the aspirant experiencing himself as apart from God, the duality of *Sāṅkhya*. As the meditator places the inner gaze, the attention, the love at the higher centre – frequently, regularly and at length – he becomes ever more like unto THAT, absorption into that for which there are no words, attaining to that ultimate state of Oneness called God-realisation. This process is mystical, as the aspirant loses his love and attachment to this world without being able to put his finger on what is happening, and so is transformed and resurrected into a Life Divine.

“Where is thy individuality, lanoo, where the Lanoo himself? It is the spark lost in the fire, the drop within the ocean, the ever-present ray become the All and the eternal Radiance.”<sup>409</sup>

This ultimate ecstatic state (*samādhi*) in which the human consciousness is transcended and, while it lasts, all sense of personality is lost. The one and only goal of life worth striving for, attainable through every mystical system if searched for

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<sup>404</sup> (Yogananda, *The Bhagavad Gita: God Talks With Arjuna*, 2001, p. 77)

<sup>405</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, pp. 33,34,41,42,45,67)

<sup>406</sup> *Gita* 4:3 (Mascaro); 10:38 (Sivananda) and various other similar references to this inner ‘secret’ path.

<sup>407</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Soundless Sound*, 2012a, p. 17)

<sup>408</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, pp. 4,9,74)

<sup>409</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key to The Universe*, 2015b, p. 285) as quoted from *The Voice of the Silence*, (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 20)

diligently. The teachings of the OCM bring out this universality of the inner path, affirmed and summarised by the Curtisses stating that:

“Ramakrishna, the great Hindu God-realized Saint of the nineteenth century, said that he had followed and mastered all the different forms of *Yoga (sādhana)* and that they had all brought him to the one goal of realization, although along different paths. He also said that he had studied all the great religions, including two whole years spent in concentration on Jesus’ teachings and in meditation on the Christos, ‘living all alone like a Christian anchorite in the famous woods of Panchabati,’ and he found that they all led him to the same goal of *Advaita* (non-dualism) or identity with God. And the testimony of that great Saint who had experimentally followed each religion to its goal of realization should be conclusive.”<sup>410</sup>

### 3.10 Spiritual Transformation and Redemption<sup>411</sup>

“... you will find [your old] life swallowed up in a comprehension of the great Plan of Redemption. Give thanks for every step that has brought you to the realization that you are a conscious factor in this great work.”<sup>412</sup>

According to the Curtisses, the Law as *Karma* and Reincarnation, as a doctrine, has been taught throughout the ages and is well understood within all major systems of mysticism and beyond.<sup>413</sup> The aspirant descends from a higher world (the heavenly regions)<sup>414</sup> into physical incarnation and through the experiences of life, more or less predestined, pays his dues as *karma* and is guided thereby and processed to perfection. Gaining mastery and perfection takes many lives for the complete

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<sup>410</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Mystic Life*, 2012b, pp. 17,18)

<sup>411</sup> “Redemption means redeeming, a bringing back to the original condition; for you cannot redeem a thing that you have not once had and lost ... in accomplishing this you must place yourself unresentfully in the hands of the Lords of Karma, which means holding the attitude of ‘Thy will be done.’” (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Letters from The Teacher Volume 1*, 2013b, p. 88)

<sup>412</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Soundless Sound*, 2012a, p. 26)

<sup>413</sup> A concise and well elaborated exposition titled *Reincarnation*, seemingly the final publication of the OCM (Curtiss F. H., *Reincarnation*, 2015e).

<sup>414</sup> The philosophy behind *Karma* and Reincarnation, Life after Death etc., comprehensively discussed in the teachings of the OCM. (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Realms of The Living Dead*, 2013d), (Curtiss F. H., *Personal Survival*, 2014d)

unfoldment of the soul. While incarnate, the aspirant generates further *karma*, either good, bad or indifferent. As *karma* operates from life to life, setting up causes which will guide, influence and operate in the subsequent incarnation, the aspirant must work through and experience those causes set up by his previous life. So, the aspirant is caught up in the cycle of *saṃsāra*, intermittent reincarnation into this world.

Then comes a time when the still small voice calls out to the aspirant to arise and come home, the Father calling down to the son, the Higher Self to the lower self and personality. It starts to realise that living a good, moral, charitable and ethical life is not enough. For *karma*, having been set up by the individual and belonging wholly to him, utterly impersonal and indifferent, must be experienced and redeemed here in this field, this physical world. For as you sow, just so shall you reap,<sup>415</sup> and you cannot sow a crop in one field and reap the harvest in another. Something more is needed to attain that beatitude and final liberation from intermittent reincarnation, the transformation of the human nature into one that is Divine.

I will arise and go unto my Father,<sup>416</sup>  
Where I shall feast in joy and peace and health  
At His table in His house,  
Which is my true home.  
There He will give me  
Of His wondrous healing power,  
And lead me into His Realm of Divine Be-ness  
Whence flows the River of Eternal Life.<sup>417</sup>

Therefore, to free oneself from this *saṃsāra*, there must be some mechanism, some system, by which the aspirant can minimise, negate and transmute his karmic burden and so be freed to leave this world, attaining permanent residence in a higher one – attaining to *moksha* or liberation – the ultimate goal of the spiritual aspirant. This upward journey is represented within several mystical systems by the Tree of Life in

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<sup>415</sup> *Galatians 6:7* (KJV) “Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.”  
See also Chapter on The Lords of Karma, (Curtiss & Curtiss, The Inner Radiance, 2012c).

<sup>416</sup> *Luke 15:18* (KJV)

<sup>417</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, Potent Prayers, 2012e, p. 27)

the midst of the garden.<sup>418</sup> The aspirant starts to experience an aspiration upwards, listening to the call given by the Lawgiver above. Then, through the processes of devotion and prayer, up to the deepest abstraction experienced in meditation, he exalts his consciousness, thereby lifting up all his lower vehicles – physical, astral and mental (See Figure 2.1) – setting in motion the transfiguration and purification of the soul, the downward precipitation of, and ultimate negation of his *karma*. It is the love of the terrestrial world, manifesting as desire in its myriad forms, that represents those dues as *karma*, both positive and negative, that binds him to the world of matter as *samsāra*.

“... the desire of the Soul, after harkening to the voice of the Law Giver, to come out of and away from the land of spiritual darkness, where it and all its faculties have been in bondage to King Desire and the sensations of the lower self. They both refer to the 1st conscious steps that lead toward Initiation.”<sup>419</sup> But, before final liberation can come, each Soul must, of its own choice, take up all the accumulated odds and ends of *karma* and work them out or redeem them.<sup>420</sup>

Within the *Sāṅkhya* philosophy, the soul struggles upwards through the three great divisions of manifestation, mastering the *prakṛiti* below to attain the state of *Purusha* above. In Scandinavian mythology, this path refers to the Rainbow Bridge – exoterically a ‘path’ or ‘bridge’ that needs to be crossed to reach the Absolute Realm and esoterically attained through spiritual transformation. This Rainbow Bridge reaches from Midgard (terrestrial *prakṛiti*) to Asgard (spiritual *Purusha*), the realm of the gods and is named the *Antaskarana*,<sup>421</sup> a word seeming to originate from and used almost exclusively by Theosophy.

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<sup>418</sup> See chapter on The Symbol of the Serpent, (Curtiss & Curtiss, The Voice of Isis, 2010a, p. 241). “As all religions, sects and creeds contain at least a germ of Truth, our aim is to help each one to find that germ IN THEIR OWN TEACHINGS and purify and develop it into the Tree of Life in their own garden (i.e., within their own body and constitution), (Curtiss & Curtiss, Letters from The Teacher Volume 1, 2013b, p. 160)

<sup>419</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, The Key to The Universe, 2015b, p. 321)

<sup>420</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, Letters from The Teacher Volume 1, 2013b, p. 48)

<sup>421</sup> (Blavatsky, The Theosophical Glossary, 1892, p. 24), (Curtiss & Curtiss, 2013a, p. 113), (Curtiss & Curtiss, The Key to The Universe, 2015b, pp. 196,263-265), (Curtiss & Curtiss, The Key of Destiny, 2015a, p. 220), (Curtiss & Curtiss, The Inner Radiance, 2012c, pp. 162,252)

“The Higher Self, being purely spiritual (*purusha*), can have no direct consciousness in the physical world. Hence to enable it to complete its manifestation in all worlds and to become a redeemer it must send down a Ray of itself into the human-animal body that through this expression in matter (*prakriti*) it may complete its Destiny. This Ray is called the *Antaskarana*, the bridge which joins the lower to the higher, the earthly to the Divine. It is also called the bridge across the ‘Great Abyss’ over which the pilgrim must cross to the ‘eternal shore’ ...”<sup>422</sup> (See Figure 2.1)

Through the application of a practical spiritual curriculum, Patañjali’s *Ashtāṅga Yoga* or its equivalent within Christian mysticism, as laid out in this chapter, the struggling aspirant builds up the upward current through its devotional and aspirational practices and experiences the pain and suffering of leaving behind the world of illusion for that of Absolute Reality.

“The new current of spiritual consciousness from the Spiritual Self now begins the establishment of a new highway of communication with the personality. This is a bridge of understanding (*Sattva*) called *Antaskarana* which must ultimately span the gulf which separates the rational or so-called mortal mind from the Spiritual Mind of the Real Self.”<sup>423</sup>

At its end, an uplifted and transfigured constitution, the earthly man transfigured into the heavenly man.<sup>424</sup> The saints, having attained the final and ultimate purification of the soul, are freed from sin, “from sin exempt,”<sup>425</sup> depicted with a halo surrounding their heads and visible to others,<sup>426</sup> *The Inner Radiance*<sup>427</sup> of regenerated man.

Through spiritual life and an exalted, uplifted daily consciousness, the disciple places his being within this dissolving and transmuting *Divine Power*, the Mystic Christ,

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<sup>422</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Key to The Universe*, 2015b, p. 263)

<sup>423</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, 2013a, p. 113)

<sup>424</sup> “It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven.” 1 Corinthians 15:44,47.

<sup>425</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 22)

<sup>426</sup> The aura of radiance surrounding that of the enlightened soul depicted throughout most icons of religion . Moses coming down from the mountain and his face had become radiant. The transfiguration of the Master Jesus, “and his face shone like the sun,” and many other references.

<sup>427</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Inner Radiance*, 2012c)

causing a downward precipitation of *karma*. This Divine Inner Radiance within which he then lives and moves and has his being – leading to a permanent and purified state of being, bringing “all things to our remembrance” as enlightenment – the only way to free himself from intermittent reincarnation and to become one with the Father, Union with the One, his own Divine Higher Self.

“Give up thy life, if thou would’st live.”<sup>428</sup>

“Give up the life of physical *personality* if you would live in spirit,” says HPB.<sup>429</sup> This giving up of the lower life is the object of all legend, fable and myth and the core teaching to be found within the world’s great scriptures such as *The Bhagavad Gītā*, *The Voice of the Silence* and many others. A great secret, in plain view of all, but its deeper and esoteric truth to be seen, understood and comprehended only by ‘the few.’

This transfiguration of the soul, the experiencing of this inner alchemy, is a most difficult and trying experience and one of the core reasons to find a suitable teacher that can guide the struggling soul in his spiritual endeavours. Says HPB regarding this field of battle and *Sāṅkhya*: “It is only by the attractive force of the contrasts that the two opposites – Spirit and Matter – can be cemented together on Earth, and, smelted in the fire of self-conscious experience and suffering, find themselves wedded in Eternity. This will reveal the meaning of many hitherto incomprehensible allegories, foolishly called ‘fables.’”<sup>430</sup>

Entering into this upward Stream,<sup>431</sup> the River of Eternal Life,<sup>432</sup> brings about in the constitution of the soul, an inner War of Transmutation or the Principle of Resistance<sup>433</sup> and precipitation of its *karma*. It is this great inner battle, the fight of the Higher against the lower, the great holy war of the mystic.

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<sup>428</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 5), Give up the lower materialistic life if thou wouldst live the higher.

<sup>429</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 75), comment 13.

<sup>430</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine Volume II*, 1893, p. 103)

<sup>431</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, pp. 37,46,50,66,69,87)

<sup>432</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Inner Radiance*, 2012c, pp. 222,223)

<sup>433</sup> This inner battle, the holy inner war against the lower nature, sublimely put forth in *The Bhagavad Gītā* and *The Voice of the Silence* amongst many other writings, and a core tenet of the philosophy of the OCM and *Sāṅkhya*. See *The War and The Principle of Resistance*, (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Philosophy of War*, 2014c, p. 75)

“The world is a field of battle where liberty struggles with inertia by the opposition of active force.”<sup>434</sup>

“There is no greater good for a warrior than to fight in a righteous war. There is a war that opens the doors of heaven, Arjuna! Happy the warriors whose fate it is to fight such a war. Arise therefore, Arjuna, with thy soul ready to fight.”<sup>435</sup>

The inner battle of the soul, struggling for liberation from the attachments to this world, is an epic battle where the precipitation and transmutation of one's own *karma* is burned in the light of the Mystic Christ, and where “scarce one passes through without bitter complaint.”

“The War is also reflected in the terrible struggles through which the candidate for Mastery must pass during his Initiation; the struggle of the Christ within to slay the dragon of self; the Guardian Angel to slay the Dweller on the Threshold. It is also exemplified in the resistance of humanity to new or higher spiritual teachings; the misunderstanding, misrepresentation, condemnation, slander, persecution, final crucifixion but ultimate triumph, through which every Light bearer who comes to humanity has to pass.”<sup>436</sup>

The teachings of the OCM describe in great detail the inner struggles and battles of the soul on his quest for purification. The mental anguish arising from wrong thinking, the emotional struggles precipitated thereby and the physical illnesses that arise. These are the ‘dues to be paid’ by the aspirant in his struggle upwards to attain that mastery which will grant him “that peace which surpasses all understanding.” The aspirant is cautioned that this quest for liberty, the attainment of that ‘permanent peace’ alluded to in Scripture, does not come without its challenges and difficulties, and that a steadfast determination to endure is an essential quality for success.<sup>437</sup> As per the philosophy of the OCM, it is stated that:

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<sup>434</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Philosophy of War*, 2014c, p. 18)

<sup>435</sup> Lord Krishna to Arjuna. *Bhagavad Gītā* 2: 31,32,37 (Mascaro).

<sup>436</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Philosophy of War*, 2014c, pp. 93,94)

<sup>437</sup> See for example “The Rugged Path” by Sri Swami Sivananda, *Divine Life Society Magazine*, June 2025.

“Many individuals find themselves suffering from poverty, sickness or persistent adversities until hope seems dead. This is because they have turned their backs upon the world and hence find all the world against them. They no longer serve the world, and it no longer rewards them. They suffer because, having turned from the world, they have not yet sounded the keynote of the new life by which alone they can enter into its rewards. They are passing over the interval between the two notes, and it will be longer or shorter according to their ability to awaken to the new vibration. This period is symbolized in occult literature by the Great Abyss. There is, however, a narrow bridge over this Abyss builded of naked swords, which leads to the Eternal City, over which all must walk with bleeding feet. But there is a Hand to guide and a Voice to cheer you if you but seek them in the darkness. It is always darkest just before the dawn. All old karmic conditions must be swept away ere the new era can manifest. Let no earnest seeker after Wisdom grow discouraged but hold fast to the guiding Hand and trust to the Power which shall bring him safely through.”<sup>438</sup>

The Curtisses state the spiritual path to be a steep ascent.<sup>439</sup> The aspirant lifts himself out of the lower worlds to become a permanent resident in a higher one and this takes more than leading a good, normal, charitable life. One’s *karma* must be negated *in toto* and the lower self dissolved into the Higher. Every atom of the aspirants flesh, emotions and mental sphere must be transmuted to vibrate to the Higher. This requires the effort of a lifetime – and beyond. This philosophy – the transmutation or alchemy of the lower vehicles and its effects on the constitution of man – is expounded concisely throughout the teachings of the OCM. This provides a unique contribution to spiritual philosophy *per se*, explaining the seemingly ‘mysterious’ illnesses that the dedicated aspirant passes through, conditions for which no specific physical causes are to be found. It also explains those nervous conditions through which the aspirant must pass, termed by the Curtisses “neurasthenia” and “nervous prostration”<sup>440</sup> as his *karma* or the purification processes play out in his or her constitution.

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<sup>438</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Voice of Isis*, 2010a, p. 48)

<sup>439</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Mystic Life*, 2012b, p. 36)

<sup>440</sup> Conditions today termed ‘anxiety.’ See (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Inner Radiance*, 2012c, p. 264), also (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Health Hints for Four-Fold Health*, 2014e, p. 93)

“In the physical body ‘the War’ is expressed through certain storms of bodily inharmony, illness or disaster which sweep over those who are endeavoring to follow the Higher Guidance and striving to ‘live the life.’ When the ideal of a higher life is set up by the consciousness it ‘sounds’ a new and higher keynote throughout the body. Those atoms which can respond, answer the call and follow the new Lawgiver and are led out of bondage into the freedom of a new cycle or expression of Life. While in those atoms which belong wholly to the old dispensation, which have fulfilled their mission and are not sufficiently evolved to take on the higher vibration and enter the new cycle, the resistance to the higher call is so great that it brings on ‘the War’ in which they are vanquished and sloughed out of the body through a cleansing cataclysm of illness. This, while it leaves the body temporarily devastated and weak, has nevertheless cleared the field of opposition and prepared for the manifestation of a higher expression of Life. In the mental world the outlet will be found through the emotions. The expression of these emotions becomes a storm which sweeps away the control of those who open the door of their minds through irritation, impatience, anger, jealousy, envy, animal desires, etc., and leaves them devastated, yet relieved and ready, in the next time of trial, for an encounter which shall be more successful in proportion to the effort made to conquer in the past.”<sup>441</sup>

It is this spiritual transfiguration – drinking in that spiritual creative Power or Divine Life-force, which shall recreate us, which is the great mystery that will “Lanoo, make of thee a god,” enabling the disciple to once more see with clear and direct intuitive perception. Only as the spiritual aspirant, of his volition, determines that the inner Mystic Christ shall dwell in him, no longer as a sleeping, unawakened babe, but as a living Christ-consciousness, the Divine Indweller, only then can he eat of the fruit of the Tree of Life that shall nourish his immortal Spiritual Body and enable him ultimately to take on immortality.<sup>442</sup>

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<sup>441</sup> This philosophy comprehensively expounded throughout the teachings of the OCM, and summarised in *The Philosophy of War*, (Curtiss & Curtiss, The Philosophy of War, 2014c, pp. 91-93)

<sup>442</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, The Inner Radiance, 2012c, p. 360)

It is this immortal Spiritual Body, that the aspirant builds up atom by atom, each time he utters a prayer, meditates and goes within, which ultimately builds up what the mystics call the Spiritual Body, the Transfiguration Body, the Robe of Glory, the *Nirmanakaya* Body, the Crystal Body, the Light Body and many other names beside. For between the manifest and unmanifest worlds (see Figure 2.1) lies an expanse that must be crossed. This expanse, this river, separates the disciple from his true realisation that he and God are one, and through spiritual practice, he develops a body, a vehicle that can take him across to his true home.

“And yet there is a body that is ‘raised up at the last day.’ That is the Light Body which we finally build up by the purification, transmutation and spiritualization of certain atoms of our various bodies through ‘believing on the Son,’ as our text says, or following and manifesting the Christ within, until at our final incarnation we have built up a spiritualized vehicle or body through which we can manifest on any plane we wish.”<sup>443</sup>

Continuous immersion of the attention into this upward drawing power through devotion, aspiration and meditation brings into play an evolutionary power and process that pushes the aspiring soul on to perfection. From the lower to the higher, physically, mentally and spiritually, the aspirant becomes ever more like unto THAT which is above.<sup>444</sup> This brings forth the inner and true mystical transformation – something different from leading a good, moral and charitable life – attaining once more that sought-after ‘childlike state,’ this idea that we must have faith in God like a child to enter the Supreme abode, recurring throughout many of our scriptures.<sup>445</sup> From *The Voice*

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<sup>443</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Why Are We Here?*, 2014b, p. 21)

<sup>444</sup> (Agnes, 2014g, p. 80)

<sup>445</sup> “Only a tender, loving heart; only a steadfast desire to know and be one with Him; only an open, receptive, child-like mind that is willing to be taught of God and is willing to obey Him. That is all that is necessary.” (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Mystic Life*, 2012b, p. 14).

“Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of Heaven ... I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of Heaven ... whosoever shall humble himself as a little child, is the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven.” Matthew 18:3-5; 19:14. Also, Paramahansa Yogananda in his monumental work: *The Second Coming of Christ* expounds on these verses as follows: “The Lord cites the example of children as a reminder to the devotee of the childlike qualities so often subverted in the adult mentality and habits – lack of egotism, body consciousness, selfishness and attachment versus the presence of purity, guilelessness, innocence, obedience, humbleness, meekness, love, trust and joy. Only when a devotee becomes possessed of these qualities through deep meditation, and practice of self-discipline, does he prepare himself to receive and manifest Christ Consciousness. All men who have attained God’s Kingdom of Cosmic Consciousness are children in their simplicity and pure minds. Of truth I say

of the Silence, HPB further elucidates this ‘childlike’ state, so necessary to come into touch with that Supreme emanating power, *The Soundless Sound*.

“The pupil must regain the child-state he has lost ’ere the first mystic sound can fall upon his ear ... But, O Disciple, unless the flesh is passive, head cool, the soul as firm and pure as flaming diamond, the radiance will not reach the (upper) chamber, its sunlight will not warm the heart, nor will the mystic sounds of the *Ākāshic* heights reach the ear, however eager, at the initial stage.”<sup>446</sup>

Thus, according to the Curtisses and their teacher, the aspirant and disciple treads the slow and painful path up the evolutionary ladder, “the highest goal to which we can aspire is to resemble God,”<sup>447</sup> and to attain the highest state achievable by mankind, the crown of creation, the spiritually illumined initiate.<sup>448</sup>

### 3.11 Recommendations for Daily Spiritual Practice

“But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.”<sup>449</sup>

The teachings of the OCM recommend that the process of meditation, of going within, is done first thing in the morning hours, when the constitution is well rested and thought impressions of the previous day are not uppermost in the aspirant’s mind to interfere with his spiritual practice.<sup>450</sup> The morning hours are generally agreed to be the most vital and auspicious period for inner practice, as it sets the tone for the

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unto you, anyone who tries to attain Cosmic Consciousness without being simple, non-attached, truthful, good and trustful like a little child, cannot attain that divine state.” (Yogananda, *The Second Coming of Christ*, 2004)

<sup>446</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, pp. 17,18)

<sup>447</sup> (Karadja, 2014, p. 29)

<sup>448</sup> “The object of evolution among all forms is the perfect manifestation of the highest type-form of each species. Such a state of perfection is called Mastery in each species. This state we are told has already been attained in many kingdoms. Among the various earths the diamond has reached this perfected state of Mastery. Among metals it is gold. Among trees it is the oak, and among flowers it is the rose. Among animals it is man. Among mankind it is the spiritually illumined Initiate.” (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Inner Radiance*, 2012c, p. 111)

<sup>449</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Message of Aquaria*, 2010c, p. 18), (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Temple of Silence*, 2015d, p. 33)

<sup>450</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Temple of Silence*, 2015d, p. 35)

day. If, however, the morning hours are impossible, then any other time of the day will do, such as midday or the evening prior to sleep. To attain its transmuting effect and to enter the inner path properly, meditation should be conducted at least once within every 24-hour cycle without fail, preferably at the same time and in the same place. Sporadic meditation is bound to lead to disappointment and discouragement in its continuance.

Yogananda prescribes the correct posture (*āsana*) to be held for meditation, with “... a steady body with straight, and erect spine... eyes focused at the *Kutastha* centre between the eyebrows ... with body still and unmoving ... enabling the yogi to meditate for hours, if so desired, without fatigue or restlessness.”<sup>451</sup> The OCM recommend the following similar posture: “Assume the posture for meditation as follows: Sit in as quiet a place as possible where you can be free from interruption. Sit on a straight-backed chair, always in the same place and chair, facing the East in the morning and the North in the evening. Allow the hands to rest comfortably on the thighs with the palms up and with the thumbs touching the tips of the first fingers. Have the feet flat on the floor a few inches apart. Sit with the head erect, the chin in and the spine straight. Do not let the back touch the chair. The position is exactly that in which the Egyptian statues are seated (The Pharaoh’s Position). The position should not be stiff or rigid, but comfortably erect and well poised and with the clothing loose.”<sup>452</sup>

A *typical* series of disciplined and regulated steps for the higher attainment, as distilled from the teachings of the OCM, laid out in *The Temple of Silence*, The Scientific Method<sup>453</sup> and compared to the stages as set out by Patañjali, can be summarised as follows:

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<sup>451</sup> (Yogananda, *The Bhagavad Gita: God Talks With Arjuna*, 2001, pp. 75,76)

<sup>452</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *Health Hints for Four-Fold Health*, 2014e, pp. 15,16)

<sup>453</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Temple of Silence*, 2015d, p. 40)

- Breathing and inner relaxation (*Prāṇāyāma or life-force control*)
- Prayers for light, protection, healing (*Pratyāhāra or abstraction, interiorisation, sense withdrawal*)
- Concentration (*Dhāranā or concentration with mantra and visualisation*)
- Entering the Silence (*Dhyāna or meditation, immersion in the Soundless Sound*)
- Experiencing Oneness (*Samādhi or absorption*)

Thus does the Christian mystic practice abstraction in ever greater degree, the Curtisses summarising this method of meditation by interpreting the words of Jesus: “When Jesus told his disciples to enter into the closet and shut the door, the closet referred to the Silence, and the ‘door’ which they were to shut was the door of the mind. The Father which seeth in secret is the Higher Self, who does not require words, but who seeth in secret, i.e., in the Silence, through vibrations of love. The open reward is the peace, comfort and spiritual upliftment which comes as the result of such communing with the Father-in-heaven.”<sup>454</sup>

Doing one’s best to remain in an ever-inward contemplative state of mind throughout the day, remaining inward and uplifted so the awareness of the Divine becomes a permanent, static background awareness that never leaves, the essence of the teachings of the OCM of meditation and the inner path and termed by the Yogi’s, *Samyāma* (*dhāranā, dhyāna* and *samādhi*).

Summarising succinctly through the words of Yogananda: “The culmination of *Samyāma* self-mastery is when the meditator, the process of meditating, and the object of meditation become one – the full realization of oneness with Spirit.”<sup>455</sup> It is this realisation in Christian mystical terminology, where the ‘Father who seeth in secret,’ the immersion in the Great Silence, rewards the spiritual aspirant openly with inner Divine Realisation.

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<sup>454</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, *The Mystic Life*, 2012b, p. 96)

<sup>455</sup> (Yogananda, *The Bhagavad Gita: God Talks With Arjuna*, 2001, p. 77)

## Chapter Four: Conclusion

### 4.1 Conclusion

“Have we not all one Father, Has not one God created us?”<sup>456</sup>

This dissertation has brought to light the inner path within mystical Christianity as per the teachings of the OCM and has attempted to compare its philosophy to the more ancient Asian traditions. Its founders and teachers have put forth a comprehensive spiritual philosophy on how to lead a Divine Life and showing how to come into direct conscious contact with that *Divine Power*, the mystical Christ, to be found and experienced at the higher centre, the seat of the soul, and how to lift up the awareness to that centre through prayer, aspiration and meditation and thus become transformed thereby.

It has been shown that the inspiration received by the founders through the agency of Harriette Augusta Curtiss to put forth such a comprehensive philosophy, was none other than the departed Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, Founder of the Theosophical Society.<sup>457</sup>

HPB – called *the Teacher of the OCM* – in her final seminal work on the inner path, *The Voice of the Silence*, speaks of, amongst others, “*The Soundless Sound, Nada*, the *Aum* throughout eternal ages, *Ānahata Shabda* and from the *Nada-Bindu Upanishad* – contemplation on and of *Aum*”<sup>458</sup> – teachings to be found within the Asian philosophy of *Sāṅkhya* and *Samyāma Yoga*.<sup>459</sup> This fundamental teaching pervades the philosophy of the teachings of the OCM where the ‘Inner Divinity’ is called “The Soundless Sound, the Higher Self, the undercurrent of Power and Peace, the Voice of God, the Voice of the Silence, the Divine Voice, the Silent Voice, His Soundless Voice, the One Voice in the Soul of all, the Psalm of Life, the Harp of Life, the Voice of the Christ, the Spiritual Sound, a Voice that speaks where there is none to speak, the Music of the Spheres” and so on. This symbology and language have been shown to pervade other systems of mysticism, thus showing to a great degree that there is only ONE

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<sup>456</sup> *Malachi 2:10* (KJV).

<sup>457</sup> As put forth in this dissertation and expounded on by the author in *Priestess of the Flame*. (Truth, 2014)

<sup>458</sup> From that fount of eternal truth, knowledge and teaching, the Upanishads. (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, pp. 74,75)

<sup>459</sup> (Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence*, 2015, p. 80)

fundamental teaching, ONE pure religion common to all paths, termed by both the OCM and Theosophy, the one Ancient and Divine Wisdom-Religion.

Says *The Teacher of the Order* on the efforts of HPB in bringing this teaching, this Wisdom Religion, to the Western world:

“The chief work that she gave to the world, *The Secret Doctrine*, was made up largely from the Ancient Teachings, the fundamental principles of the Wisdom-Religion. These were gathered from the Ancient Teachings because there they were most accessible, and because they expressed most convincingly the essential principles of that religion.”<sup>460</sup>

This ‘Ancient Teaching’, a comprehensive turning inward and thereby upward (Figure 2.1), the direction that ‘God’ is to be found, is given a comprehensive, modern rendering by Professor Lane in his book *The Sound Current Tradition*. Here, this tradition is described as “the practice of listening to subtle, inner sounds during meditation to concentrate and elevate the mind and having a long history in various religions around the world, including Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism.”<sup>461</sup> The mystical path within Sikhism, represented today by the philosophy, teachings and publications of the Radha Soami Satsangi’s regarding the ‘Sound Current Tradition’ is simply extensive.<sup>462</sup> Paramahansa Yogananda, in his monumental work, *The Second Coming of Christ: The Resurrection of the Christ Within You*, expounds comprehensively on mystical Christianity and this same inner path and tradition for his many Western pupils and disciples, albeit from a Hindu perspective.<sup>463</sup>

This *Sound Current Tradition* to be found within mystical Christianity had been all but lost until, through the *Teacher of the OCM*, it had once again been revealed and provided to all, couched within the language and symbology of traditional Christianity, i.e., to be understood by those with a Western mindset. The mission of *The Teacher of the Order* stated that, “As all religions, sects and creeds contain at least a germ of

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<sup>460</sup> (Truth, 2014), A Message from Madame Blavatsky.

<sup>461</sup> (Lane, 2022)

<sup>462</sup> The published writings by this mystical sect number well over a 100, expounding comprehensively this inner tradition within Hinduism, the teachings of the Master Jesus and many of the Sufi mystics within mystical Islam.

<sup>463</sup> (Yogananda, *The Second Coming of Christ*, 2004, pp. 1577,1578), where Yogananda discusses the omnipresent sound of *Aum*, the *Hum* of the Tibetans, the *Word* and *Amen* of the Christians and coming into touch with the Holy Ghost, the Comforter and other epithets. See also John 14:26.

Truth, our aim is to help each one to find that germ *in their own teachings* and purify and develop it into the Tree of Life in their own garden.”<sup>464</sup>

“I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.”<sup>465</sup>

Thus do we see this selfsame philosophy of ancient *Sāṅkhya* and *Ashtāṅga Yoga* in its highest aspects, practised and attained using similar practical methods, but differing in symbology and language to suit the needs of Western aspirants. Showing the unity in all, the attainment of the ultimate reality where all paths lead towards God-realisation, the teachings of the OCM thus contribute significantly to Christian mystical thought.

## 4.2 Epilogue<sup>466</sup>

“What glorious bliss it was at last to fly,  
Away from cloudy earth in liberty,  
And to approach the sun, whose golden rays,  
Surrounded us with roseate brilliancy.  
Divinely fair is the eternal dawn,  
Which greets the first ascension of the soul.  
Its wondrous splendor mirrors faintly forth  
The great Creator’s own magnificence.  
Praise, glory and thanksgiving unto God,  
Who made the sun – an emblem of Himself.  
The human eye cannot endure its radiance;  
When spirits lift their glance to it they tremble  
And reverently bend in adoration,  
Of that sun’s origin, the Source of Life.  
Man can by virtue of his thoughts create,

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<sup>464</sup> (Curtiss & Curtiss, Letters from The Teacher Volume 1, 2013b, p. 160)

<sup>465</sup> *John 11:25,26* (KJV).

<sup>466</sup> (Karadja, 2014, pp. 28-31)

A tiny world of beauty for himself.  
The thoughts of God gave birth to lustrous heavens;  
The stars are a reflection of His glory.  
Life, Love and Light compose the Trinity.  
A myriad sparks proceeded from that source.  
Each spark must grow till it becomes a flame,  
Which through Eternity will not be quenched.  
How is the soul to grow? Through sorrow only,  
For grief makes man grow greater than himself.  
Affliction winnows tares from out the wheat . . .  
The wheat grows up . . . It is the crop of God.  
Behold the drops of rain, which fall from heaven;  
They mingle briefly with the dust of earth,  
Until the sun recalls them from the clay,  
And lifts each sparkling drop up to the skies.  
So shall at last each wand'ring soul return,  
Unto the Source of Life from which it flowed,  
There to enjoy communion with the Christ,  
And merge in perfect unison with God.  
There is no Paradise of idle rest,  
Where blessed spirits dwell in aimless joy.  
The highest goal to which we can aspire,  
Is to resemble God. To reach that end  
We struggle upwards through a million years.  
Eternal hope brings us eternal joy:  
We paradise create within our breast.  
When Sorrow comes to visit human hearts,  
That Angel's mission is to sweep the Temple,  
Where God Himself elects in grace to dwell.  
We follow in the mighty steps of Grief,  
With gentle tread and cool the burning wound;  
We kiss away the tear which hides the sky.  
Another Angel comes . . . His name is Peace.  
He finds in broken hearts a resting place.

To ev'ry spot on earth where prayers rise,  
We quickly fly and carry them to heaven,  
Descending swift with blessing from above.  
We watch in patience by the bed of pain,  
And guide the falt'ring steps of infant souls;  
We fill the poet's dreams with wondrous beauty,  
And bid him hear a strain of angels' songs.  
His silent sobs we melt in harmony . . .  
His highest thought is but a gift from us.  
Say! Can there be a fairer paradise?  
Can mortals dream a joy exceeding ours?  
Like Christ, we always sacrifice ourselves,  
Yet keep eternally more than we give.

***OM TAT SAT***

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