

ESSAY ON PRINCIPLES FUNDAMENTALS OF PRACTICE OF OCCULTISM.

The question is this: "What must I do to develop the latent powers within me?" While it is not possible to give a direct answer to such a question, we can, instead, shed some light on the subject by clarifying the fundamental principles upon which the Occult Schools of all the worlds were established.

These Mystery Schools, once institutions of philosophical, ethical, and religious culture, are comprised of enlightened men and women who have been accepted alongside the immortals. Reaching this superior position requires an almost inconceivable amount of preparatory work; for anyone who wishes to fraternize with these advanced examples of humanity must rise to their very plane.

Understanding that nothing is more dangerous than the indiscriminate dissemination of hidden secrets, the Mysteries established their schools for the purpose of safeguarding, rather than revealing, knowledge. They were the original and sole custodians of all divine sciences and arts, whose secret keys they revealed only to those they deemed worthy to receive them. The more human powers increase through knowledge, the more the secrets of Nature's subtle forces cannot be revealed until one has passed through these Mysteries, which test one's motivations and demand certain standards of moral and philosophical excellence.

Before the candidate is in a position to begin his studies of occult philosophy (which, if successfully completed, will culminate in his status as a disciple and his eventual admission into the Mysteries), he must first lay the foundations by familiarizing himself with certain systems of ethics and acquiring at least an acceptable knowledge of several specific arts and sciences.

1. The candidate must understand the value of education. While the ignorant may be capable of spiritual development, the fact remains that ethical progress is severely hampered by a lack of knowledge of the practical arts and sciences. Ignoring the great value of discipline, many scholars of the occult sciences ridicule modern educational systems, which have the merit of disciplining the mind. Learning how to study is a prerequisite for effective study. Before one can think, it is necessary to train the mind in reason, coherence, and logic: the foundations of thought. In the final analysis, all the so-called practical arts and sciences are reflections of secret wisdom. A person with mathematical knowledge will inevitably have a better understanding of the divine plan than one who lacks it. Pythagoras required training in music, mathematics, and astronomy from all candidates who wished to be admitted to his school.

Before a candidate can honestly aspire to enter the "Temple of Wisdom," they must prepare their offerings and present them at the Temple. The only possible offering they can make is that of themselves, and this offering is only acceptable if it is useful for the dissemination of wisdom. The closer to perfection that vehicle is, the greater its

usefulness. If they can speak a considerable number of languages, they have a positive advantage. If they are an expert in chemistry, or are gifted at oratory and have clear thinking, they possess valuable aptitudes that can quickly be put to the service of humanity. If the candidate, despite their sincerity, presents themselves at the Temple door ignorant and unprepared, it is necessary, first of all, to equip them for their work. This preparatory training requires years. The person desirous of selflessly dedicating themselves to the service of God—the first requirement for To enter the Temple—one should certainly yearn, first and foremost, to educate oneself by learning all that the material and concrete world can teach. One should never seek the Masters of wisdom until one has something of positive value to offer them, for usefulness is, to a great extent, determined by intelligence.

2. The candidate must understand the importance of continuity. The curse of the modern world lies in its inability to finish what it starts. Just as a child begins many things but completes none, so too does a childlike person waver between various activities. Failure to accomplish anything results from scattering mental energies by trying to encompass areas that are too large. No quality is more essential to a person's spiritual well-being than the ability to finish what they begin. Success in the material world is impossible without at least a reasonable development of the power of perseverance. The same applies to matters of the occult. A person who studies various philosophical schools of thought may consider themselves broad-minded, but if they do not carry any of these schools to a satisfactory conclusion, they are, in reality, a "blockhead." Time and again, such a person strays and tries a new path when a few more steps on the old one would have brought them closer to the goal.

3. The candidate must acknowledge his debts to society. If, in their zeal to develop their spiritual nature, the candidate neglects the daily tasks assigned to them in the material world, they will never attain true spirituality. Every individual born into the physical world has obligations, which, if not assumed by them, must fall upon others. Among Hindus, for example, the debt a Brahmin incurs to the race that gave them birth is deeply felt. This debt is not repaid until the Brahmin, in turn, has a son, to whom he will lavish the care and attention he once received from his parents.

Woe to those who neglect their loved ones to serve their God! In this world, it is necessary, first and foremost, to earn the right to free time, which is essential for personal improvement. The main reason for the problems that constantly overwhelm people lies in the fact that they seek to avoid them at every turn. Many say, "Life is nothing but one difficulty after another," when, in reality, it is the same difficulty that presents itself again and again because it is not mastered. The candidate is compelled to confront and solve every problem in their life. In this way, confusion is eliminated, and more free time is gained for ethical progress. The prosaic duties of daily life are the elements that shape character, and those who cannot cope with them are no better suited for spiritual matters than for material ones.

Occult development is an extremely slow process. Often, the results of the time and energy invested are imperceptible. This leads to discouragement; the candidate abandons the struggle, considering the task ahead hopeless. Discouragement is one of the temptations the Mysteries place in the candidate's path, for in spiritual matters, one who can be discouraged does not deserve encouragement. It is through discouragement that mediocre minds are eliminated. Recognizing the difficulty of maintaining mental continuity, the Mysteries demand this of their candidates, for only those who, year after year, strive toward the same goal, groping in the darkness, but with perfect and upright faith, deserve to enter the Temple: the Abode of the Immortals.

4. The candidate must understand the importance of motivations. An analysis of motivations generally reveals that they are fundamentally selfish, no matter how altruistic they may appear. Only those who undertake the study of the occult with the Those with higher and more selfless motives can aspire to success in this higher science. In the present age, almost everyone has ulterior motives, most of which are centered on the aggrandizement of the individual non-self, mistakenly considered to be the true Self. We desire power, to be recognized as

We, the powerful, aspire to wisdom so that we may be hailed as wise; we frequent important people, hoping to shine a little in the reflection of their glories; we seek virtue so that others may say of us, "There goes a pious man!" It is inconceivable to the common man that greatness should not be displayed. And yet, an analysis of the men and women who have possessed greatness—both in spiritual and material matters—reveals, in most cases, humble, withdrawn individuals whose greatness is never offensive. Those who study occultism, hoping to improve their material condition, fail completely. Before power can be safely surrendered, a person must feel absolutely indifferent to that power. Perfect disinterestedness is perfect consecration to the service of the One Universal Being.

Before anyone embarks on the study of mystical sciences, believing it will enhance their standing or increase their wealth, they should briefly consider the social, financial, and worldly positions of those who, in the past, have been regarded as exponents of occultism and philosophy. Let us consider Cagliostro, languishing for years in prison; Marshal Ney, an exile who lived under a false name; and Abbé Villars, who was killed for writing his History of the gnomes These are but a few examples of the rewards the world bestows upon those who strive to educate it. In order to serve more effectively, a few initiates (such as the Count of St. Germain and Francis Bacon) were placed in positions of worldly power. But with this increased prestige came increased responsibility. The crown of the spiritual initiate is far heavier than that of the ruler of the material world. The use of occultism for the achievement of personal ends constitutes the black magic.

This is why the applicant is asked: "What motivates you to undertake the study of these arts and sciences? Is your greatest desire to place yourself at the selfless service of humanity?" Some answer these questions by saying: "Gladly I would die" For the truth." The response to these is the following: "It is not enough. I would live" You for the truth?" A few moments, and the act of martyrdom is accomplished; a few seconds of pain, and the victim's soul is beyond the executioner's reach. This is a tremendous sacrifice... and a glorious death. But daily life, surrounded by problems and worries, with year after year of disappointments... here is the supreme test of selflessness. Until the soul finds perfect joy in giving, perfect companionship in solitude, perfect efficacy in the power of truth, perfect abundance in the gratitude of the few and the scorn of the many... Until the disciple has attained this state, he is not ready to leave the broad road the world treads and embark on the thorny path that leads to conscious immortality.

The Masters spend years testing the hearts of candidates. Those who begin spiritual development encounter difficulties of all kinds. Even the very meaning of human existence is challenged; temptations of every kind influence the aspirant, and only when they emerge triumphant from such trials are they useful for the grand plan of human progress. In a narrow-minded person, selfishness is a minor sin; but if that person could develop their mind and control the destinies of thousands of individuals, this small sin (if left unchecked) would become a major obstacle. It becomes a tremendous threat. The impotent selfishness of ignorance becomes the powerful tyranny of power.

Occasionally, we encounter individuals who, were they not somehow restrained by

Nature, would become champions of evil; but Nature, like a Delilah, has cut their hair. Just one such case may suffice to demonstrate the truth of this anecdote: a sarcastic iconoclast, with a tongue like a double-edged sword, who cruelly, and even gleefully, destroyed the hope, love, and faith in the hearts of his neighbors, was struck by paralysis which, affecting his tongue, made him speak slowly and painfully. His heart was still full of malice; in fact, it was more malicious than before, but he had been deprived of the power to harm others. All people are born with many of their faculties and limbs paralyzed. Some are filled with evil, restrained only by their inability to give vent to their resentments. All human beings have latent powers and faculties, but not all have the privilege of unleashing them in this age. Before safely unleashing the tongue of the evil one who calls himself a man, it would be necessary, first of all, to transmute the bitterness in his heart.

Similarly, it would be advisable, before freeing humanity from the natural paralysis of ignorance, to ensure that the faculties awakened within them will be a blessing to humankind, not a curse. Before the Masters grant humanity the power to free its tongue, the heart must be purified so that the power bestowed does not frustrate the plan of true spiritual development. This is the real reason for periods of trial. During these periods, the mind and heart are cleansed of those things which, if expressed, could do harm. When the supreme forces of Nature are placed in the hands of the newly initiated, their heart, mind, and soul must accept these gifts with reverent humility, without any reference to their personal ego, and must employ them to do the greatest good for the greatest number of people.

5. The candidate must distance himself from all kinds of psychic phenomena and phenomenalism. The fundamental purpose of occultism is not to endow the disciple with the power to see auras, elementals, or mental embodiments. Nor is it concerned with the processes of establishing communication between the dead and grieving relatives on the material plane. Occultism is, first and foremost, an ethical philosophy; secondly, it is a practical science. As the candidate obeys the laws imposed upon him by the Mysteries, and as he applies himself to the performance of the new duties he assumes, he gradually and subsequently develops the different parts of his being. His faculties become so sensitized that at each stage of his development he can see what is essential to him and perceive what he needs to perceive. Clairvoyance is a consequence, not a cause; it is the result of certain adjustments in life and a gradual regeneration of the limbs and bodily parts. True occult development is so slow as to be almost imperceptible; the faculties unfold from the inside out, like the petals of a flower. Accelerating these natural processes beyond a certain point endangers the candidate's integrity and health.

So-called clairvoyance can take various forms. It may happen that a student reaches a relatively high level of novitiate and still possess none of the sensory perceptions generally associated with spiritual development, just as it is possible that a person with considerable physical abilities may be completely incapable of even entering the novice category. One of the surest signs of true occult development is a peculiar increase in the sense of perception or mental sense of grasping, which may be called "clairvoyant foreknowledge." The neophyte will describe it as a form of clarity or acuity. Instead of being presented through the organs of sight or hearing, this hidden knowledge sometimes presents itself in a purely intellectual form; the mind truly grasps the hidden truths and philosophical axioms without any complication from the lower senses.

An example of this is the disciple who wishes to know the color vibration of a particular organ or body part. The mind instantly responds: red, without actually providing any impression of color—for the information presents itself more as words imprinted on the mind than in any other form—and yet the mind itself registers no awareness of words

spoken, either physically or spiritually. Apparently, the mind announces on its own that the color is red.

In matters pertaining to occult philosophy, this faculty, it seems, is the master's particular reward. If the lay instructor is truly in touch with the higher worlds, he will learn more while teaching than the disciples to whom he explains these subjects; "clairvoyant fore knowledge" spontaneously reveals those truths that the mental faculties, under normal conditions, cannot discover except through lengthy reasoning. This is the only faculty called physical whose manifestation should be accepted without reservation. The premature development of clairvoyance and psychic abilities is a serious impediment to the student's spiritual advancement, as he may wander disoriented and become lost on the intricate paths of the astral plane, ultimately leading to the dead end of transcendentalism.

6. The candidate should know that, with increased knowledge, comes a proportionate increase in responsibility. Along with acquiring knowledge, the student must develop discernment so as to use the received knowledge with the greatest intelligence. Almost all who undertake the study of occultism eventually become teachers of these abstruse sciences. It would be fitting for this to happen, for as they receive instruction, they could repay their natural debts by becoming instructors of others. However, the lay teacher should realize that he cannot control how others use the knowledge he imparts. He cannot transfer this burden to the Occult Schools; he must bear it himself. For this reason, the teacher must be as wise as the gods if he is to be saved from the karmic repercussions of the forces he empowers others to unleash.

In occultism, the initiate speaks only for himself. Unless he is truly acting on the official mandate of the School to which he belongs, he can never hold the esoteric Orders responsible for his statements and actions. Only when specifically ordered to do so do the emissaries of the Mysteries speak solely for themselves: never on behalf of higher initiates. Those enlightened minds who represent the Mystery Schools in the world need no proclamations, nor do they require credentials from the invisible Brotherhood to which they belong. They never announce themselves, for their powers are based not on their affiliations but on themselves. Why would an initiate have to tell the world that he is a superman? Unless he demonstrates it through his actions, the world will not accept him as such; and if his exceptional mental qualities demonstrate it, the claim is unnecessary.

Throughout the world, there are hundreds of individuals and institutions claiming to represent the Secret Schools of ancient wisdom. Very few of these organizations, and even fewer individuals, can successfully defend their claims against a critical analysis of their principles and systems. Those disciples truly dedicated to the service of the invisible Schools systematically avoid even mentioning the august ones organizations, which they so inadequately represent, until the moment when the invisible Order could no longer be discredited by their actions. The true disciple would rather die than compromise his Master or the School into which he hopes to one day be admitted. He can protect the institution only if he assumes personal responsibility for all he says and does. Then his faults harm no one and fall solely upon him. Only when he has reached the point of absolute spiritual enlightenment does he reveal the source of his knowledge, and only to a select few.

One of the laws of occultism is that to receive, one must give. Those who aspire to a greater understanding of spiritual matters must earn the right to this broader comprehension through the intelligent use of the knowledge they already possess. The teacher-student must know that they are personally responsible for any consequences

their theories and doctrines may produce in the minds and bodies of others. Through instruction, we truly change the course of other lives; we guide them toward new channels of mental and physical activity; we transform the content of their existence. If, directly or indirectly, these changes do not benefit them, we, who imparted the knowledge, become responsible before the gods for the results of our imprudence.

Similarly, those who teach us are responsible for our actions and how we use the wisdom they shared with us. Therefore, when the student fails, it is the teacher who suffers most. Above all, we are responsible if we place in the hands of those who are not prepared to receive it the knowledge of the forces of Nature that allows one person to harm another. If we have not reached the point in our mental development that allows us to determine, beforehand, with a reasonable degree of certainty, the integrity of the person to whom we are going to reveal hidden secrets, we have not advanced enough to possess those secrets ourselves.

However, to be fair to ourselves, no one should rush into serving humanity, because in their haste, they may destroy not only others, but also themselves. The plan should be established first, but when such a person feels qualified to deliver a message, they should do so reverently, with profound consideration, and without the slightest hesitation, repeating to themselves: "From now on, I am responsible for the use and interpretation that others give to the words that come out of my mouth. Therefore, I will choose them carefully, analyze them in the light of my truest and highest intelligence, and with each one, I will pray that they serve only the cause of good. I will not pretend to be anything or anyone, but will let my deeds speak for me, for I possess only the stature of my deeds. If it is the will of the Masters that, in due time, I attain a high position as their messenger, then (if they so desire) I will become the spokesman chosen and authorized by the Masters. But until the day of this supreme achievement arrives, when a person asks me who I am, I will answer that I am a voice crying in the wilderness. If they ask me who sends me, I will tell them that My soul sends me. If you ask me with what

If you ask me what authority I have to teach men, I will answer that I am my own authority. If you ask me what message I bring, I will say that I bring no message, but that I only interpret, according to my ability, the message that is eternally here. And if you ask me, "What reward will we have if we follow you?", I will tell you that the fulfillment of the task is the only reward for the work.

7. The candidate must maintain a constructive mental attitude. All intelligent people are dissatisfied with the existing conditions. They also understand The universe is governed by the law of cause and effect, and to improve things, it is necessary, first and foremost, to establish therapeutic and corrective causes whose natural results are universal enlightenment and peace. It is imperative that we accept things as we find them in this world; and instead of lamenting or criticizing them if they do not correspond to our desires, let us dedicate ourselves intelligently and diligently to creating new and better conditions. If the prospective candidate becomes bitter or accustomed to complaining, he renders himself incapable of serving the Masters.

Since life is such a serious matter, it is rightly said that a sense of humor is a saving grace. We become useless in helping our fellow human beings if we allow the weight of the world's suffering to oppress us. It is a mistake to believe that seriousness can take the place of integrity. There is no substitute for a happy smile or for a normal and healthy attitude toward life's problems. It is not necessary for the candidate to cultivate foolish optimism; rather, it is advisable that they adopt that mental attitude which sees the hand of God in all things and understands that all things work together for the supreme good of each individual. The iconoclast is a useful and important member of society, but they

never achieve the highest state of usefulness because their mind is tangential.

Men are much like apples: some ripen with age, while others rot; some people grow deeper and mellower through experience, while others become hopelessly bitter. The latter fail completely. They are mentally ill and incapable of constructive thought. Bitterness is often the result of self-pity, one of the subtlest and most terrible forms of egocentrism. It is this egomania This is what makes individuals believe they are so important that nature chooses them to bear the brunt of misfortune. No one who pities themselves has an inherent sense of justice. Without perfect faith in natural justice, humankind cannot reach philosophical or religious heights. Make the principle of never feeling sorry for yourselves the fundamental rule of your life. If you become slaves to self-pity, you will quickly become legitimate objects of pity for intelligent people.

These seven essential requirements, therefore, constitute the ethical foundations of occultism. Without a dedication of one's life to the attainment of perfection in these character traits, it is pointless to proceed—if such a thing were even possible. The foundations must be laid first. Many failures in mysticism and philosophy result from neglecting these ethical bases. The superstructure of esotericism must be built upon the solid rock of virtue and integrity, for without this foundation, it crumbles.

Man cannot prepare himself for philosophical endeavors in a few weeks or even a few years. He must build slowly and solidly, understanding that one well-chosen step is better than many misguided and haphazard ones. When his progress is sufficiently advanced, then is the opportune moment for the student to prepare himself for certain special efforts that will enable him to achieve occult understanding. This is not the first step but the second, and it should not be undertaken until the initial plan has been completely finished.

As the candidate progresses, he discovers that the rules of life become increasingly demanding and difficult to achieve, and that any deviation from these ideals causes him ever-increasing suffering. The demands of the law are much stricter for the initiate than for the ordinary individual, since the condition for the former to possess his transcendent powers is the renunciation of everything else. Once the prospective disciple of ancient wisdom, having studied the seven principles discussed earlier, must then attend to the choice of that particular enterprise and that particular Mystery School in which he believes he can render the greatest service. The qualities previously developed through the initial ethical training are now put to the test, for only with their help can the wise selection be made. While the paths to realization differ for each School, all Mystery Schools teach the same fundamental doctrines and ultimately arrive at the same results. Let us suppose that you have chosen one of the Eastern Schools. Before you can truly begin your studies, you must first familiarize yourself with the particular ethical code that this school promulgates. You will be taught certain concepts and attitudes that, when incorporated into your life, will exert a remarkable effect on your unseen nature. Only when these effects reach a certain point can you safely begin any special system of so-called spiritual development. While the seven fundamental requirements apply to all people, regardless of their life path (religious or atheistic), the more advanced requirements directly address the individual needs of the student. This higher code is open to consideration by all those who have conducted themselves worthily, in accordance with the basic requirements. But woe to those who, ignorant, selfish, or incompetent for any reason, dabble in occult science without first overcoming the most significant failings of their lower nature! The test of a person's sincerity lies in their willingness to sacrifice, and the student of occultism must sacrifice their own lower nature if they intend to enter the "Temple of Wisdom."

The student of occult philosophy continually laments his inability to distinguish between truth and falsehood. He expresses his dilemma by saying, "Oh, if only I knew which system of study I should accept! If only I were certain that this teacher is truly qualified to teach these subjects! If only I were certain that this is the book I should study! But I am afraid to trust my own judgment on these matters. Would you do me the favor of deciding for me?"

All these questions demonstrate, beyond a doubt, that the student's mind has not matured to the point of being able to discriminate. Unable to distinguish truth from falsehood, and incapable of establishing the boundaries between the real and the unreal, many students pursue higher spiritual instruction when their ethical education is still hopelessly inadequate. If one does not know what one wants to do, one is not prepared to do anything. First, it is necessary to develop sufficient ethical perception to know what one wishes to achieve. The lack of such discrimination is far more common among occultists than one might imagine, and it is frequently the unsuspected cause of their inability to achieve spiritual evolution. Many students consider this ethical training a waste of time and find it far more desirable to immediately absorb arcane traditions. This deficiency in their moral and mental culture positively incapacitates the candidate from fulfilling the subsequent steps; the inevitable result is sorrow, suffering, incapacity, and disillusionment.

Assuming you have carefully analyzed the seven basic requirements developed above, it is now necessary to study the more specific factors with which the candidate should become familiar.

1. The first—and most important—step is choosing the person or institution whose instructions will serve as your standard for occult practice. Let us briefly examine the position of Eastern mystics on this vital matter.

The help of a properly trained teacher is essential for the student's progress. Just as a plant grows in sunlight, whose pranic emanations provide it with warmth and vitality, so too does the disciple develop and flourish when nourished and aided by the spiritual radiation of their Master. The aura of a highly evolved adept also provides great assistance to the young student, who is not yet fully capable of producing certain atmospheres on their own. Gradually, the perfect and continuous communion between Master and disciple unites them closely in spiritual understanding. A beautiful friendship is born between them, which gradually transforms into a perfect and impersonal love. The teacher comes to know the innermost thoughts of his disciples. He tests the student, confronting him with temptation and fostering his strength. He perceives when the student is weak. He discovers the flaws in his nature that hinder his evolution, and, through wise counsel, helps his "spiritual child" avoid traps and dead ends.

Although the Guru He may have many students in group classes, but he rarely accepts more than twelve at a time in the esoteric phase of his instruction. He understands that no one can adequately guide the studies of too many students and give each one the individual help that is so necessary. He recognizes that he is the father of a spiritual child who will mature within his disciple, and that this spiritual child needs almost constant attention during the early stages of its growth. By carefully adhering to these guidelines, the Master protects the life and health of his disciples and leads them, step by step, toward the state of evolution they could not reach without help.

Studying for a few weeks, or even months, with an unknown teacher (however intelligent he may be), and then attempting to practice subsequent exercises and systems of development on one's own, is sheer folly. The daily practice of occult exercises requires

the intelligent supervision of a teacher prepared for any eventuality. Consequently, the disciple who undertakes the truly practical process of spiritual regeneration generally lives (at least for a time) with his teacher, so that he can call upon him at any hour of the day or night. In India, disciples remain with their teachers for a lifetime to ensure that each step of their evolution is properly accomplished and that the next task has been correctly planned.

Who is qualified to teach the practice of the mysteries of Eastern or Western occultism? The answer is this: only an initiate or the disciple of an initiate. An initiate is one who has attained a state of spiritual understanding in harmony with the laws of spiritual evolution. Therefore, they must be, and are, in accordance with the laws that gave them life. Not only this; they must also belong to the ray of the Mysteries consecrated to teaching. Many great initiates do not belong to the teaching ray; consequently, they never take disciples. In other cases, the disciples are so advanced that they can only receive instruction from initiates, as in the case of Master J. The laws of spiritual evolution demand purity of life and intentions, simplicity in manner and physical appearance, humility of mind and heart, selflessness, tenderness, intelligence, and complete detachment from worldliness and commercialism. And, on both sides of the narrow path the disciple must walk, lie the snares of magic. Dugga.

We should also bear in mind that there are very few—if any—Westerners qualified to teach the esoteric principles of Eastern occultism. Many try, but their botched efforts demonstrate their incompetence. The East operates with subtleties, and occultism is a subtle science where everything depends on nuances that are completely beyond the grasp of the average Western mind. While Westerners can learn to grasp the general outlines of Eastern occultism in India or Tibet, not even a lifetime of experience qualifies them as masters of Eastern esotericism unless, during their time in the East, they have been genuinely initiated into the Eastern Mysteries. There are even certain key secrets that Brahmins, for example, will not reveal to anyone of a different race or caste. For this reason, most of the concepts disseminated by Westerners are irredeemably wrong or, at the very least, incomplete. Apparently, only the East can truly understand the East, since it is a world entirely different, in its attitudes and ideas, from the world we are familiar with.

We insist, then, that even among Hindus themselves, although they constitute a more religious and philosophical race than Westerners, not all are qualified to teach these occult sciences. Just as the average Christian priest is ignorant of the deeper concepts of Christian mysticism, so too, a great number of Easterners know very little about the more subtle aspects of their faith. While it is true that the percentage of Easterners who understand their religion is greater than that of Christians who understand Christianity, the mere fact that a person was born in the East is no guarantee that they are qualified to teach the secret doctrines of their faith. A highly evolved Easterner is needed to adapt their doctrine to the Western world, for if it is presented without certain adjustments, it is practically useless. Therefore, when choosing an instructor of any persuasion within occult science, great care must be taken, and the choice made prudently, applying conclusive tests. The lack of true understanding is most evident in the business attitude, and if the student removes the pseudo-occultists from his list, he will be saved from most of the traps.

2. The second issue concerns the analysis of the element of time. Time is the prerequisite for occult evolution. The disciple must expect to need at least twenty years to achieve success, even in the early stages. In the first part of their training, they will likely need instruction from someone belonging to the physical world, but as they ascend and acquire the ability to separate their consciousness from the lower vehicles, they can receive

instruction from masters and initiates who work through the subtle essences of the invisible worlds.

No layperson, whether in the East or the West, is qualified to begin practicing occult exercises without special preparation lasting several years. Even in the East, where the mind is drawn to philosophy and occultism from childhood, special preparation is necessary before beginning even the simplest exercises. Even if a student has delved into occultism for years and attended countless lectures, their belief that they are prepared for deeper esoteric work is not justified. If, during those years, they have not completed a specific course of systematic and regulated training, they must begin to do so; and until they have successfully completed that course, they are not ready for deeper or more complex forms of learning. Despite considering themselves highly evolved, they must begin from the beginning and undergo the corresponding years of preparatory work, just like a disciple who appears to be less instructed. The true occultist knows that it is not always a question of how long one spends on something, but rather it depends on the intelligence with which we carry out our work; and there are many who, having spent a whole life in these occult matters, have achieved comparatively very little.

It is the Guru (and not the disciple) who decides when the probationary period is complete, for the master is capable of analyzing the invisible spiritual nature of man, where the record of spiritual evolution is imprinted. The first probationary period generally lasts between two and five years; Pythagoras of Croton required five years of purification before even beginning to discuss the question of spiritual evolution with a prospective student of his school.

Throughout these years of preparation, the disciple aligns his entire life with the work he aspires to accomplish. He becomes steeped in certain spiritual and intellectual attitudes, thus harmonizing with divine science. This means that every atom and molecule of his quaternary constitution must be purified and transformed. Every part of his being must be developed, vibrating and moving in a particular way. What does this mean? It means that the attainment of spiritual power is impossible unless life, mind, and body are entirely dedicated to this endeavor. Furthermore, it means that so much depends on the master, into whose hands the student places himself, that the matter truly becomes a question of life and death.

3. Thirdly, the candidate must understand that it is absolutely necessary to remain silent about anything concerning the esoteric secrets that may be revealed to him. He may discuss the theoretical aspects of occultism with any individual he deems worthy of such a conversation, but he must never reveal to anyone the active secrets of this science. These are handed down to him from Master to disciple, and they are for him alone. The wrath of the gods falls upon the man who reveals the hidden dwelling place of the Lord for thirty pieces of silver. Christ is, within you, the secret and powerful spiritual nature: the miraculous maker, the divine, invisible man. Whoever reveals the nature and power of this secret Lord betrays his divine Master (the spiritual nature) and hands his power over to the mob (his own lower animal nature). In the hands of the rabble, Christ (the secret power) is crowned with a crown of thorns and proclaimed, amidst mockery, as king. He is given to rule the realm of death and is flogged by soldiers. In the hands of the mob, the Nature of man, that secret and divine power which has thus been betrayed, is crowned with pain; divine science is prostituted so that ignorant mortals can, with the help of spiritual powers, secure material prosperity, marital happiness, or improve lagging commercial conditions.

It is therefore necessary to approach the subject of occult practices with the utmost care. It must be remembered that the esoteric secrets of occultism are intended for the use of

those few enlightened individuals who, having dedicated themselves first to developing the latent spiritual powers within themselves, have reached, after many years, the point that enables them to assume the responsibility of liberating their spiritual natures from the bonds of matter. For the layperson- who is ethically unprepared, and who is completely ignorant of everything related to the action of hidden forces and currents- It is almost certain that handling any form of occult exercises will result in disaster.

4. The candidate must understand the great danger of becoming entangled in black magic. The line between black and white magic is so subtle that even the most highly evolved must remain constantly vigilant to avoid the trappings of witchcraft. Dujpa To a large extent, the difference between white magic and black magic lies in the motivations. An impersonal and selfless attitude is the surest protection against black magic, but many other things are needed, especially self-control, for the candidate to avoid the dangers of witchcraft. Both the white magician and the black magician use identical forces. However, the former evolves through constructive application of the divine sciences, while the latter, slowly but inevitably, destroys itself through the perverse use of said sciences.

The attainment of transcendental powers is achieved either through the scientific regeneration and reconstruction of the body—the gradual liberation of consciousness imprisoned by form—or through sorcery, black magic, and necromancy. Woe to him who thinks, even for an instant, that he can dabble in black magic and survive! East and West are rife with it. Dujpas Black magicians who, through the perversion of occult forces, can temporarily manipulate cosmic energy. Gradually, but inevitably, these Dujpas They are swept into the maelstrom of their own wickedness and perish. The great danger faced by casual students lies in the fact that they must develop spiritual forces within their bodies to a degree that makes them susceptible to being used by the Dujpas...for any purpose, before those same students have been able to develop the strength and knowledge necessary to use those strengths for good. In this way, many genuinely well-intentioned people become unwitting agents of evil because they are not intelligent enough to understand the proper application of the forces that have been awakened within them.

5. The candidate must understand that applying commercial terms to occult values is a direct prostitution of the most sacred of all sciences. While a philosophy teacher, like a botany or mathematics professor, must and should be compensated for their efforts (compensation that must be accepted to a moderate degree that does not prostitute their science), the active secrets of occultism must never be mixed with any form of commercialism. They have no commercial value. Attempting to buy or sell these values is one of the most heinous sins. active secrets We mean the knowledge that should help the individual to personally develop, through hidden but scientific processes, the latent forces or faculties of their own nature. These processes should not, and cannot, be bought or sold.

When a man is decorated by a government for an act of bravery, he doesn't have to buy the medal placed on his chest. The same principle applies to secret doctrine, which is revealed to man as a reward for his spiritual, moral, and intellectual worth. When the disciple is prepared, it is an inconceivable and unforgivable sin to deny him what belongs to him by right of merit. To sell the secrets of the invisible world to one who does not deserve to know them, and is incapable of deserving them, is a sacrilege; to try to sell them to one who already deserves that wisdom by virtue of the superior qualities of his own nature is also a sacrilege.

Writing down the great secrets of the occult is dangerous and places a heavy karmic burden on anyone foolish enough to do so; and selling a document containing such

secrets complicates their karmic obligations. When these secrets are revealed to the public, all matters pertaining to active occultism must be concealed. When it seems advisable to reveal the theory supporting these processes, certain key points should always be omitted, so that the careless reader is not harmed by experimenting with the knowledge thus obtained. These facts are well known to those entrusted with esoteric information, and anyone who breaks these rules demonstrates their complete inability to instruct students in the mysteries of the occult sciences.

6. The candidate must guard against imbalance. Balance must be safeguarded through a continuous emphasis on the ideal of symmetry. The student should always bear in mind that a single virtue is not enough to create a saint. The excellence of any single virtue is irrelevant. Human beings must evolve symmetrically: their heart, mind, and body must coordinate and complement one another. They must achieve a state of mental, spiritual, and physical equilibrium. If the mind becomes overdeveloped, the scientist emerges; if the heart dominates, the religious fanatic and the sentimentalist appear; if physical nature predominates, the materialist inevitably arises. Only when these three parts unite in the glorification of divine nature—the composite unity—does the spiritual philosopher become a reality.

The most common occult exercises currently taught to the general public are the various forms of concentration and breathing. Many of these exercises are hopelessly incorrect. Concentration and breathing—when properly understood—have their importance, for both profoundly influence the overall constitution of man. But neither of these, separately or together, will produce lasting or satisfactory results unless, at the same time, the nature possesses certain other virtuous qualities, and unless they have been adapted to the general plan of spiritual evolution. We can use an absolutely correct form of yogic breathing, but if our body is impure, we will never achieve anything but harmful results. We can sacrifice ourselves to our gods and be vegetarians our whole lives, and yet practically nullify the good derived from these practices by being unable to control a stubborn temper that we tolerate, despite the efforts we have made to overcome other defects. The possible value of any concentration exercise attempted will be destroyed by a single trait of unrooted egotism. Uncontrolled egocentrism will continually hinder the culmination of a lifetime of effort. If one harbors hatred for even a single person, one will never be able to enter the path of white magic. Any occult advancement achieved without first mastering these defects of nature exposes the student to the dangers of witchcraft Dujpa and of black magic.

It is because of this need to control and transmute all the lower qualities of nature that the trial years are so essential. During this period of self-struggle, the sincere student frees himself from the bonds of his life and begins to make the necessary adjustments before he can begin the true spiritual work. It is not by destroying the lower nature that man becomes virtuous; it is through the transmutation and regeneration of each basic quality and attitude that he attains divinity. This gradual process of self-conquest ultimately leads the disciple to the state of complete self-control. From this perspective, the achievement is not so difficult, for having mastered himself, man becomes a Master of the universe.

All occultists know that true spirituality is not attained through extremes or excesses. Those who strive to become ascetics, withdrawing from the world and rejecting life's problems, those who rush, those who neglect the problems of daily existence: these do not achieve spiritual evolution, since, ultimately, only what is natural and in harmony with common sense can produce lasting benefit. Failure to observe these requirements has been the cause of so many current errors regarding occultism. People wish to develop clairvoyant powers and attain the state of Nirvana to obtain happiness, peace, and selfish enjoyment. They think that occultism will, by substitution, solve all their problems.

These notions are erroneous, for one cannot attain occultism without first discarding the desire for worldly happiness and without having tasted his courage and ability to overcome the problems that overwhelm him in this deadly realm.

7. The candidate must then analyze the esoteric interpretation of the so-called material arts and sciences. Astronomy, mathematics, music, rhetoric, geometry, grammar, and logic are often called the seven liberal arts and sciences. There are, in fact, forty-nine major arts and sciences. A summary of oculist anatomy will demonstrate how much esoteric science differs from material or exoteric science. Let us look at the chart of the seven chakras vertebral bodies. The drawing carefully preserves the general shape of the chakras with special emphasis on the correct number of petals. In esoteric teachings, each of these petals is assigned a letter of the Sanskrit alphabet. The human figure has been drawn almost transparently, just as it would appear to someone truly contemplating a Yogi in meditation. The Yogi is seemingly suspended in the air, for the power of sight that enables us to see the chakras He would not be aware of the physical ground on which the Yogi is sitting. Of course, the illustration is a diagram and should not be taken too literally.

Let us carefully examine the flower-shaped centers on the Yogi's spine. Through the center of the seven flowers passes the conduit Sushumna which corresponds to the sixth ventricle of science, a tiny tube that runs through the center of the spinal column. To the left of the Sushumna There is another conduit called Ida, and to the right, a third one called Pingal These are the poles of the central duct: the front and back of the Sushumna The same. These two passages are profoundly influenced by the nostrils on their respective sides. The Ida and the Pingal They pass through the base of the skull and both emerge from the four-petaled lotus at the base of the spine Ida, Sushumna and Pingal Together, they are the main ones Nadis And of the three, the Sushumna It is the most important. In the average individual, the conduit of Sushumna It is closed, but thanks to Yoga it opens, so that a direct connection is established between the Sacro plexus, at the base of the spine

vertebral column, and the pineal gland in the head. According to the Hindu allegory, Kundalini The goddess of serpentine fire enters man through the umbilical cord at the navel, but when the umbilical cord is cut, this serpentine power coils around the sacrum, where it rests upon the triangular bone at the base of the sacrum. This triangular bone is represented as an inverted triangle in the Muladhara The four-petaled lotus bud at the base of the spine. There it remains Kundalini coiled up, until, through occult exercises, it is forced to climb up the Sushumna penetrating the brain, where it awakens the function of the third eye: the pineal gland. This third eye is the link that connects man with the spiritual world or, to be more precise, with his own higher spiritual nature anthropos The superman, who never descends into incarnation, was called by the Greeks Cyclops The giant with only one eye, which was none other than the pineal gland, thanks to which the higher self was able to see human nature, and the human self was able to contemplate the Buddhi, or superman. The Kundalini is more or less prompted to rise, as a result of the essences that ascend through the Ida and the Pingal.

Here we have the caduceus of Hermes. The two snakes coiled around the staff are Ida and Pingal The central rod is Sushumna; the bulb at the upper end of the stem is Sahasrara, and the wings are Any The two-petaled lotus on the bridge of the nose. There are disagreements among Eastern occultists as to whether the pineal gland is, in fact, the thousand-petaled lotus. Some affirm it, others deny it, asserting that the highest center of the brain is actually the Sahasrara Let's analyze now the centers from the bottom up. The division or stage of Yoga called pranayama This is dedicated to awakening the Kundalini of its spirals, and force it to ascend through the chakras As the Kundalini It's their turn to

take turns chakras These result in an increased awareness. Each of the five lower centers distributes one of the five forms of prana, or fragmented energy from the sun. Each of the seven chakras It also has a corresponding tattva or breath: a movement or condition of spiritual breath. Starting from the bottom, that is, from the base of the spine, upwards, the centers are as follows:

First, Muladhara This one has four petals and an inverted triangle in the center. Power father-in-law the sense of smell is associated with this chakra It is probably related to the Temple of Ephesus mentioned in the Book of Revelation, and corresponds to the sacral ganglion of modern science.

Second, Svadhisthana It is the second one starting from the bottom and contains six petals with a crescent shape in the center. Its corresponding tattva It governs the sense of taste. It probably corresponds to the Temple of Pergamon, and is the prostatic plexus of modern science.

Third, Manipura This is the third one chakra Starting from the bottom, which contains the red triangle. It has ten petals and is associated with the epigastric plexus and the navel. Of the Seven Temples, it probably corresponds to Smyrna, and is related to the Tattva of the eyes.

Room, Anahata It is the fourth one starting from the bottom, and its symbol is two interlocking triangles. This chakra It has twelve petals and is associated with what is currently generally called the cardiac plexus. It is probably the Temple of Thyatira and its power father-in-law It is the sense of touch.

Fifth, Vishuddha It's the fifth one chakra Starting from the bottom, it consists of a white circle surrounded by sixteen petals. It is known in modern science as the pharyngeal plexus. Its corresponding tattva It provides the sense of hearing, and is probably related to the Temple of Sardis.

Sixth, Any This is the cavernous plexus of the brain, and it is the sixth one starting from the bottom. The lotus is formed by two petals produced by the fan-like unfolding of spiritual rays, one on each side. It is probably related to the Temple of Philadelphia and its power father-in-law grants the quality of thought.

Seventh, Sahasrara This is the thousand-petaled lotus, the highest of the seven sacred ones. Its power father-in-law It is purely spiritual. It is probably related to the Temple of Laodicea, and corresponds to the pineal gland or to an unknown center located immediately above it. When Kundalini At this point, divine consciousness is achieved.

The passage of Kundalini upwards, towards Sahasrara This is marked by a gentle warmth. As one ascends, the lower part of the body cools, until only the head remains warm. This state is also accompanied by other phenomena. Woe to the unfortunate mortal who prematurely raises the Kundalini All the way to the brain! The bite of the savage snake is highly deadly, as those who have witnessed the consequences of its premature ascent well know. It burns everything in its path to the brain and destroys the mind's reasoning abilities.

This, in short, is the story of the chakras and of that science called Yoga: the art of developing and controlling them. The history of these centers is clearly told in the Book of Revelation, where the seven seals, the seven trumpets, the seven flasks, and the seven voices are all referred to as the spinal centers and the various mysteries related to them. It can never be too much of an exaggeration to insistently stress the warning that, while the study of Yoga theory While it can reveal many of the mysteries of Nature and our own

constitution, the practice of Yoga should be limited to those affiliated with schools of Eastern philosophy that practice this type of esoteric work. It would be good for everyone to know the theory, but woe to the foolish mortal who attempts the practice without proper instruction and guidance!

The training system that disciples must undergo to prepare for the high honors of occultism is rigorous. Take, for example, the eight stages that a Yogi must overcome to unite with their divine Self. While these processes differ for each of the Schools, they are equally severe and demanding in all of them; for only after the neophyte has demonstrated their ability to master and direct every force within their organism are they given the secret keys by which they can control the destiny of creation. The four stages of the Yogi School are: yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana y samadhi What does each stage mean? What qualities must the disciple develop to reach the final state of perfect spiritual union with the Supreme Being? These are questions we will try to answer.

The first stage is yama Under the name of yama Then begins an excessively strict control of the mental nature, for the disciple touches the first step that leads to the Self. Here, all destructive activities must cease forever. He must never again kill the body, hope, or faith in any living creature. He must become absolutely truthful. He must think his words carefully before speaking them. Despite his truthfulness, he must never cause harm. He must cultivate absolute honesty. He must even stop desiring anything that does not belong to him; and he must also relinquish the sense of ownership over what is his, understanding that it has only been lent to him so that he may use it as a means of glorifying God. He must stop receiving gifts of any kind. He is only permitted to receive enough food for his subsistence and the clothes indispensable for covering his body. (The latter is not practiced literally in the Western world.) You must gradually cultivate an inner beauty of your own soul, so that it radiates peace, tranquility, harmony, and a powerful, yet compassionate, sympathy. You must live to do good, serving all things and loving all things. You must have no animosity, for you must love your enemies as your friends, and all of them with an impersonal love. Only when you have accomplished this can you be certain of having completed the first stage of this long path to the liberation of the Self. Only after we have achieved this perfect peace with ourselves are we prepared to continue; and yet, how many American students are trying to concentrate and develop spiritual powers when they have not even begun the conquest of their lower natures or the purification of their bodies! This is one of the principal causes underlying the tragedies of modern occultism.

The second stage is niyama This stage is even more difficult than the first because it requires perfect self-control. It also demands the perfect conservation of energy. The waste of vital energies must cease. Nothing should be lost; the tongue will be restrained to speak only when words are necessary; the energies of all parts of the body must be conserved and used only for what is essential. Then the mind, soul, and body must be purified, for unless all parts are clean in their structure and expression, spirituality cannot be attained. A sense of peace must be developed: the understanding that all things are as they should be; that all activity is united for the attainment of good; that the Supreme Being is truly in control of His world. At this stage, the disciple reads In the Book of Wisdom, he becomes familiar with the secret Scriptures and studies and analyzes the symbols and allegories. To fulfill this stage, he submits himself and all things to God, living only to serve God, existing only to fulfill God's commands, offering his hands and feet, his heart and mind to God, and claiming nothing for himself. He must hold nothing back. Ignoring his own likes and dislikes, he must offer himself to the Supreme Being without reservation or hesitation. Whatever God's commands may be, he will fulfill them; at any hour of the day or night, the disciple is at the Father's command. When he

has achieved this perfect state of wanting to be what God wants him to be, then the disciple is prepared to begin the study of physical postures: an art that serves many purposes.

The third stage is asana. The goal of this stage is to achieve control over the muscles and limbs of the physical body. It is one of the secret sciences and consists of a series of physical postures that engage various muscles and nerves that are otherwise unused. Its realization is the mind's ability to control the function of every organ and part of the human body so that, when the mind so desires, the heart ceases to beat and the individual continues to live. This complete bodily control has a considerable influence on the length of life and, according to Hindus, will extend the limit of human existence. A careful examination of these stages reveals that they are all directed toward the problem of mastering non-being and bringing tangible nature under the control of the intangible spiritual man. When this stage has been successfully completed, the candidate undertakes the next stage, which consists of controlling the solar force within the body.

The fourth stage is called pranayama. In a sense, this stage involves the science of breathing. Prana is the vital power emanating from the sun. The flow of this force can be controlled by the mind and, to a certain extent, by the breath. There is a certain independence of the breath. This independence can be altered by holding the breath, and to a certain extent, it can be governed by means of the nostrils used in inhalation and exhalation. Pranayama is closely related to the science of chakras. Through these examples, the goddess Kundalini is encouraged to rise through the spinal canal. It is also related to the purification of the nerves, as the energy scumbag flows along the nerve pathways. However, this is a risky procedure for the average Westerner, and they are advised to avoid it unless they have already progressed through many stages of spiritual development. It is far better and wiser not to analyze the exact method by which this breath is directed.

The fifth stage is pratyahara. At this point, the disciple begins one of the most difficult occult processes: mind control. Few people realize how untamed and erratic their minds are. The mind is always wandering. Control seems almost impossible, since the very element that must be controlled is the wandering element. Pratyahara can be described as the process of separating the mind from the illusion of the senses, to orient it ever more toward the contemplation of reality. The mind must be controlled; it must think only when it is asked to think, and only what it is asked to think; it must be directed by the will of the individual. When a person is master of their thoughts and feelings, when they are in perfect possession of their mind, they have completed the fifth stage. At present, the average person cannot think clearly because self-interest dominates their judgments. They think in favor of the things they love and against those they hate; they accuse some people and forgive others, even when both are guilty of similar offenses. This is because the mind is a slave to the senses and incapable of discerning reality. To produce free and unprejudiced thoughts. To correct this, the mind and senses are gradually separated, so that desires, lust, greed, and passions can no longer distract the mind from the contemplation of things such as

They are. Once this stage is completed, the disciple is prepared for the next. The sixth stage is Dharana. Once the mind has been controlled, it is now directed. It is directed to one point or another and held there without wavering. To be most useful to humankind, the mind must be capable of concentration. It must reach a state such that, like a single ray of light, it can be directed in any direction and remain there for as long as required. When the mind is placed in a certain position, it persists there until the will of its owner moves it. When the stage of Dharana is once achieved, the center of intelligence can evidently shift and concentrate on almost every part of the body. Sensitivity is restricted

to the designated area. In this way, the mind can be compelled to introject itself to contemplate the internal parts of the body. It profoundly influences any point toward which it is directed because it is so acutely attuned that its aim is solid enough to affect the physical organs. When thought can concentrate and limit itself to specific areas at will, it can be said that the objective has been fulfilled. Dharana The seventh stage is Dhyana This is a continuation of the previous stage, presented as a result of it. When the mind is able to concentrate on any part of the human body and remain there continuously, a state of contemplation arises. In this way, one achieves an understanding of the invisible causal nature of the contemplated object, or as an Eastern mystic puts it: "The mind begins to flow toward the fixed point." Gradually, everything else ceases to exist except the point, and the mind, absorbing its illusory lower nature, attains perfect knowledge and awareness of its true nature.

The eighth and final stage is Samadhi This stage is reached when the mind is able to ascend even further, through refinement or concentration, beyond the sense of self. The individual lives, is conscious, and thinks; but is above the sense of self. Temporarily, they have become universal, and when they return to their normal state of consciousness, they bring with them an overwhelming awareness of the interconnectedness of things, which they never previously possessed. Samadhi This is achieved through a tremendous effort of willpower, by which the mind concentrates its focal point on the contemplation of something superior to its own nature. By thinking about this tremendous reality, it temporarily participates in the thing it thinks about and dwells in unlimited space and infinite mind. When the mind returns from this state of Samadhi, enters the restricted realm of human intelligence, to experience a feeling of oppression equal to that which a person would feel if they were put in a small, poorly ventilated and poorly lit room.

A SYNTHETIC EMBLEMATIC CROSS

The cross is the most universal religious symbol. We find examples of crosses in the sculptures of almost all ancient peoples. A cross was hung around the necks of initiates of the Eleusinian Mysteries in Greece. It was painted on the foreheads of candidates undergoing the Pyramid Mysteries of Central America, and it is a symbol of God among Native Americans. It is a curious fact that the cross, or X, has been so frequently associated with the power of the decimal system, being the Roman numeral symbol for 10. Crosses have been discovered in Brahmin temples. One of the most remarkable cases is a cruciform emblem found in Brahmin temples, carved into the rock on Elephanta Island in Bombay Bay. When the Spanish arrived in Central America, they discovered that the Maya Indians worshipped crosses. At least one of these Maya crosses entered a Christian cathedral and is currently placed, unaltered, above the high altar.

The Egyptian cross of life – the ankh cross- was frequently considered as the key to the Mysteries. Many of the gods and goddesses of the Egyptian pantheon are represented with crosses ansadas in their hands, and it was common to bury these emblems with the deceased. Many Egyptian reliefs show blessings in the form of crosses emerging from the mouths of the gods, and when the pharaoh pardoned his enemies, the words of forgiveness took this same form. In his travels, the cross passed. It reached as far as the eastern islands, far from the coast of South America. There is currently a figure from an eastern island in the British Museum, brought there many years ago by a sailing ship, which shows the Egyptian cross of life, clearly and unequivocally, engraved on the back of the statue.

There is also a radiant spectrum whose colors symbolize the modes of vibration through which the seven creative spirits manifest. The spectrum is also a fitting emblem of the auric bodies that radiate from the purified and regenerated soul. From each of these twelve spheres flows a current of force. These represent the celestial zodiac: twelve eternal divine lights, each symbolized by a suitable color. The signs begin with the upper left sphere (which is red) and is called Aries; they continue from left to right throughout the entire zodiac. The second sphere is orange-red and is called Taurus; the third, orange, is Gemini; and so on, completing the full circle.

Therefore, the cross is a synthetic emblem that combines the emblems of the Mystery Schools, since these symbols are united in human nature. All these symbols of the Mystery Schools exist within humanity and are related to certain centers of consciousness. Thus, this cross is a macrocosmic and microcosmic figure, expressing the mystery of human regeneration as that mystery is preserved within the seven lower and five higher Schools of Divine Wisdom.

The custom of crucifying candidates at the time of initiation into the Mysteries is very ancient. The Greeks and Persians included symbolic crucifixions in the initiation rituals of their mysteries. Sometimes candidates were placed on altars in the shape of a cross, and other times they were actually tied to crosses of wood or stone. The Scandinavian Drotari used crosses in their rituals, and the gammadion or swastika is a sacred symbol for the Chinese, Hindus, Scandinavians, and Native Americans. It is also called the hammer of Thor. It is a twisted cross, and Eastern cultures use it to symbolize the swirling vortices of energy in the chakras of the spine. The Druids worshipped their god, Hu, in the form of an oak tree, whose crown was cut a few feet from the ground, and tied in the shape of a cross to the tip of the vertical trunk. The Persians also revered the cross and used it to symbolize Ahura Mazda, their god of light and truth.

Since the cross was an object of universal worship, it is difficult to find a more fitting

basis for a synthetic symbol. It is incorrect to consider the cross as an exclusively Christian symbol, or limited in any way to Christianity. Even the most zealous researcher must accept the universality of the cross: the supreme symbol of life, regeneration, forgiveness, and resurrection, among all pagan and Christian peoples.

Many ancient writers did not associate Christ with the cross. The story of his crucifixion appears to have originated some time after his death. Christians revere this emblem as a constant reminder of their leader's supreme sacrifice, while pagans see it as an emblem of the processes of nature, through which growth and development are perpetuated throughout the periods of cosmic manifestation. Among Buddhists and Brahmins, the cross is an emblem of life, light, and truth, and is not associated with the Passion of Jesus Christ. It is revered as a typical example of the supreme and eternal sacrifice of the spiritual forces of Nature, perverted and destroyed by the sins of the flesh, which must be regenerated and transmuted before the candidate can be accepted into the fellowship of the immortals.

In our drawing, the cross is white, the color of purity. The four arms of the cross are generally associated with the four elements, which embody the lower bodies of all living things. Man possesses a mental body, an astral body, a vital body, and a physical body. In the midst of all these dwells his spiritual nature, crucified in the form of a flower upon material substances. The cross with its four symbolic beasts—the famous Cherubim of Ezekiel and Revelation—symbolizes the mind, the heart, vitality, and physical nature. Physical substance is divided into four principal parts, generally called elements, and these are: earth, water, fire, and air, which science knows as carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, and oxygen. These four elements constitute the basis of all material forms and are aptly symbolized by the cross. The cross is the symbol of the visible and tangible constitution of the human being. By extending its arms, the human body assumes the form of a cross. In this way, the white cross symbolizes the purified body of the candidate, washed and prepared to enter the temple of the Mysteries. Egyptian priests wore only linen tunics when entering the temples of their gods. Although they often protected themselves from the rigors of the temperature by wrapping themselves in animal skins, it was considered necessary to leave these skins at the entrance of the temple, since nothing belonging to the animal realm deserved to enter the dwelling place of God. Of course, the animal nature of man is understood - the irrational part of himself - since only the rational part is capable of knowing and worshipping the gods.

The cross must be black to symbolize impurity, or white to symbolize purity. It can be made of silver to represent fertility, or of gold, as an emblem of spiritual virility. In all cases, it characterizes the state of human nature. When it is made of base metal, it represents the unregenerate person; if it is made of wood, the suffering person; when it is made of stone, the intellectually and spiritually impotent person. In short, the cross is a symbol that expresses the visible, objective constitution of humankind; and the materials from which it is made represent the spiritual state of that objective nature.

Behind our symbolic cross appears a zodiac surrounding a series of forty-nine emanating lines (which do not appear on the plate). The lines represent the forty-nine fires or spiritual centers that are objectified both in The macrocosm is reflected in the microcosm. The zodiac represents the twelve sacred animals. Pythagoras taught a peculiar doctrine of transmigration, asserting that the souls of men assumed animal bodies. What he really meant was that the soul of the human race, being created through the zodiacal band, assumed the forms of the constellation, since all forms of cosmic life manifest through one of the constellations, and that is why they are said to assume the forms of beasts.

Crucified upon the cross is the seven-rayed Logos: the one spiritual Creator, who manifests through his seven Logoi or Planetary Lords, each of whom is represented by a point of the star. The colors on the points are, to some extent, arbitrary, but there is a reason for showing them in that particular order. While Mercury is generally symbolized by the color yellow, here it appears violet, for this color is composed of blue (the spiritual nature) and red (the animal nature); the mind (Mercury) is the point of combination between the two.

The triangles at the ends of the cross symbolize the elements, and the diamonds, the spiritual essences manifested through the elements. The twelve protrusions on the arms of the cross are the twelve Mystery Schools and the twelve disciples of the Lord's Last Supper. The protrusions also represent the twelve initiates who constitute the Great White Lodge: the twelve Mortals—Immortals who control the destinies of the world. In the center of the cross appears a fifth diamond (a fifth element), the sacred element of the ancients. The center of the cross symbolizes the heart: the seat of humanity's divine spiritual nature. Outside the diamond appears a rose within the calyx of a ten-petaled lotus, thus combining the Mysteries of the Buddhists and the Rosicrucians. The diamond in the center of the cross is the Philosopher's Stone: the human soul embodied through a transmutation and regeneration of the four elements, which, imbued with the soul's spiritual power, are transmuted from base metals into gold.

THE SEVEN CHAKRAS THE SPINE

This representation of the chakras It is based on some original drawings brought from India by Mr. Hall in 1924. In the East, the diagrams of the chakras These symbols are relatively common, but some additional ones, not usually included, complete the image. The main additions are:

- 1) the interlocking triangles behind the figure, so that the Yogi's body itself forms the upward-pointing triangle;
- 2) the ray of golden light emanating from the BRAHMARANDRA, or GATE OF BRAHMA, at the crown of the head;
- 3) the SAHASRARA, or THOUSAND-PETAL LOTUS, at the top of the brain, which is usually depicted as an inverted lotus bud but here appears as a large flower open to the sun, with a white center and concentric rings of petals.

A SYNTHETIC EMBLEMATIC CROSS

The subject of this painting is a symbolic cross drawn by Mr. Hall in the early summer of 1923. The cross represents a composition of the emblems and representations of the various Mystery Schools, brought together to form a harmonious scheme, thus signifying the unification of all religious and philosophical doctrines into one perfect and beautiful unity: a condition that must occur before the ideals of Universal Brotherhood can be realized. The original design has not been altered in any way, but two additions have been made to the oil painting. The first addition is the luminous spectrum behind the cross, and the second consists of the chain of twelve spheres, the latter symbolizing the zodiacal constellations and their corresponding colors. Immediately after the painting was completed, the cross was reproduced in diamonds, platinum, gold, and enamel, and was presented to Mr. Hall by his congregation in Los Angeles.