

The Esoteric Quarterly

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**Esoteric philosophy
and its applications to
individual and group
service and the expansion
of human consciousness.**



The School for Esoteric Studies.

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The mission of the *Esoteric Quarterly* is to provide a forum for the exploration of esoteric philosophy and its applications. Full-length articles and student papers are solicited pertaining to both eastern and western esoteric traditions.

We also encourage feedback from readers. Comments of general interest will be published as Letters to the Editor.

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Path to the Future

In the Summer issue I announced my intention to retire as Editor-in-Chief of the *Esoteric Quarterly*. Since then a search has been conducted for a successor. We also took the opportunity to pose some larger questions about the *Quarterly's* editorial structure, and the outcome has been a decision to move to collective responsibility for editing our journal. This new group effort not only makes sense from a management perspective but accords with the spirit of the Aquarian Age.

It is my great pleasure to announce that Dr. Joann S. Bakula will serve as Review Editor, Dr. Dorothy I. Riddle will serve as Technical Editor, and Donna M. Brown will be the new Editor-in-Chief. These three outstanding individuals, all of whom currently serve on the Editorial Board, bring to their respective jobs a wealth of experience in academia, business, and the arts. They are also lifelong esoteric students who have published widely, in the *Quarterly* and elsewhere. They will continue to work closely with our sponsoring organization, the School for Esoteric Studies. Our journal is truly in good hands, and we can look forward not just to continued publication but to the attainment of new levels of excellence.

Some restructuring of the Editorial Board will also be initiated to strengthen support for the three principal editors. It is my pleasure to welcome René Fugere from Quebec, Canada, to the Editorial Board. At the same time, I must also announce Nancy Seifer's retirement from the Board. We thank Ms. Seifer for her work over the last two years and wish her every success in her future endeavors.

It remains for me to express my gratitude to all the wonderful people—authors, reviewers, members of the Editorial Board, and many others—who have worked with me to make

the *Esoteric Quarterly* a success. I also want to thank the officers and board members of the School for Esoteric Studies for giving me the opportunity to launch the *Quarterly* and nurture it during this early period of growth. As health and circumstances permit I shall be available to consult with the new team and help in any way I can.

In this, my last issue, we offer articles and many other features which we hope you will find of great interest.

Our first article: Dorothy Riddle's "Learning to Work with and Respond to Shamballa Will Energy," is the latest in a series that focus on understanding the Will aspect of deity and our role in its expression. Of the three divine aspects, Will is the most difficult to understand, primarily because the necessary centers of receptivity in the human entity are only now unfolding. We are indebted to Dr. Riddle and the other dedicated esoteric scholars who are working in this challenging field.

We are fortunate to be able to publish back-to-back articles by Zachary Lansdowne. The complementary articles explore two stories from the *Acts of Thomas*—a second- or third-century text which circulated widely among Gnostic Christians. It is one of many documents—some only recently discovered—that were not selected for the New Testament canon but provide insights into the richness and diversity of the early Christian experience. The *Acts* and other texts refer to the apostle Thomas by his full name: Judas Thomas Didymus, which literally means "Judas the Twin."

The *Hymn of the Pearl* tells of a prince who sets out to recover a precious pearl but temporarily forgets his mission. The *Hymn of the Bride* consists of praises for a spiritual bride, possibly the divine personage Sophia.

Both are written in the allegorical style, typical of Gnostic writings, and are capable of multiple interpretations. Dr. Lansdowne draws upon the teachings of Alice Bailey to interpret them as allegories of the spiritual journey and the expansion of human consciousness.

The last full-length article in this issue discusses the little-known field of ecstatic Kabbalah, with emphasis on the work of the 13th-century Spanish mystic Abraham Abulafia. Abulafia built upon earlier systems of meditation that involve recitation of divine names. His “names” consisted of permutations and combinations of Hebrew letters—as well as vowels which had made their way into Hebrew texts through the Masoretic vowel points. Abulafia provided detailed instructions on how to attain intense states of consciousness, offering the possibility of visions and new revelation from God. Long denounced by Judaic authorities as dangerous or heretical, the work of Abulafia is now being studied by both Jewish and non-Jewish scholars.

In addition to the full-length articles, we also offer a student paper, “Service: an Essential Factor in Spiritual Growth,” by Miguel Malagrea. Our intention is to publish such papers on a regular basis, giving students enrolled in esoteric training programs the opportunity to share ideas with a larger audience. Student papers will not be held to the same standards as our full-length articles, but we hope to attract works of high quality which will interest our readers.

In this issue we offer a new poem and two original paintings. Following our custom, we also provide thought-provoking quotes from the esoteric literature.

The mission of the *Esoteric Quarterly* is to share insights into esoteric topics. Readers are encouraged to share their reactions to any article or feature in our journal. Please let us

know what you think. Comments of general interest will be published as “Letters to the Editor.”

John Nash
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Publication Policies

Articles are selected for publication in the *Esoteric Quarterly* because we believe they represent a sincere search for truth, support the service mission to which we aspire, and/or contribute to the expansion of human consciousness.

Publication of an article does not necessarily imply that the Editorial Board or the School for Esoteric Studies agrees with the views expressed. Nor do we have the means to verify all facts stated in published articles.

We encourage critical thinking and evaluation of ideas. However, we will not allow our journal to be used as a platform for attacks on individuals, groups, institutions or nations. This policy applies to articles and features as well as to letters to the editor.

In turn, we understand that the author of an article may not necessarily agree with the views, attitudes or values expressed by a referenced source. Indeed, serious scholarship sometimes requires reference to work that an author finds abhorrent. We will not reject an article for publication simply on the grounds that it contains a reference to an objectionable source.

An issue of concern in all online journals is potential volatility of content. Conceivably articles could be modified after the publication date because authors changed their minds about what had been written. Accordingly we wish to make our policy clear: We reserve the right to correct minor typographical errors, but we will not make any substantive alteration to an article after it “goes to press.”

Poem of the Quarter

The Choice of Simplicity by Linda “Tiger” Francis

The simple things of joy,
Cannot be purchased with money,
Cannot be obtained from power.
The simple things are the smiles you get each day.
Think for a moment how the clerk, the banker
or just a stranger
Can lift your spirits with a smile,
And think too,
How when you give a smile each day
It almost always comes back your way.

The simple things of delight
Like the wiggle of your dog's tail,
The purr of your kitty's affections,
The arms of your child or grandchild around
your neck,
The glow of your beloved's eyes looking into
your own,
All make life worth hurrying home to,
As the days light fades into the night.
The choice to notice,
The choice of gratitude
Is up to us!
It is a
Choice of Simplicity.
We might call it Homemade Happiness.

Dr. Francis also shared with us the painting shown on the right, adding the following comment:

When the fall winds and Jack Frost had striped the limbs bare, I noticed the limbs seem to come together to spell COS. I was not sure of the meaning, but I knew the Native American would say this was a message from the Great Spirit, and so I captured it with my brush and then, with time, the message came to me as if the leaves were reappearing on the limbs to dress the tree up with definition again.

The words of this poem express the voice of the inner silent voice I heard from Spirit. Look at the picture and see if they call to you as well. Perhaps if I had looked long enough I might have found two “H”s in the tree's branches.



Picture of the Quarter



Dr. Miguel Malagrecia (whose paper: “Service: an Essential Factor in Spiritual Growth,” is published later in this issue) contributed this picture titled “Mandala.”

Quotes of the Quarter

Groups have always existed in the world, as for instance the family group unit, but they have been predominantly third ray groups with, therefore, a dominant outer expression and control, and originating as the result of desire. Their focus has been outstandingly material, and that has been part of the intended plan. Right objectivity and expression has been the goal, and still is, of the evolutionary process. But the groups now forming are a second ray activity and are building groups—building the forms of expression in the new age. They are not the result of desire, as the term is usually understood, for they are founded basically on a mental impulse. They are subjective in fact and not objective in nature. They are distinguished by quality more than by form. That they may eventually produce potent objective effects is to be desired and such is their intent in our minds, but—at the present stage which is that of germination—they are subjective and (occultly speaking) they are “working in the dark.” At some distant date, groups will emerge which will be first ray groups, animated by the will aspect and consequently still more subjective in nature and more esoteric in origin, but with these we need not concern ourselves.

Alice A. Bailey. *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*. Lucis, 1957.

Now when the apostle [Thomas] was come into the cities of India with Abbanes the merchant, Abbanes went to salute the king Gundaphorus, and reported to him of the carpenter whom he had brought with him. And the king was glad, and commanded him to come in to him... And the king said: Canst thou build me a palace? And he answered: Yea, I can both build and furnish it; for to this end am I come, to build and to do the work of a carpenter.

And the king took him and went out of the city gates and began to speak with him on the way concerning the building of the courthouse, and of the foundations, how they should be laid, until they came to the place wherein he desired that the building should be; and he said: Here will I that the building should be. And the apostle said: Yea, for this place is suitable for the building. But the place was woody and there was much water there. So the king said: Begin to build... And he said: I will begin in the month Dios and finish in Xanthicus. But the king marvelled and said: Every building is builded in summer, and canst thou in this very winter build and make ready a palace? And the apostle said: Thus it must be, and no otherwise is it possible. And the king said: If, then, this seem good to thee, draw me a plan, how the work shall be, because I shall return hither after some long time. And the apostle took a reed and drew, measuring the place; and the doors he set toward the sunrising to look toward the light, and the windows toward the west to the breezes, and the bakehouse he appointed to be toward the south and the aqueduct for the service toward the north. And the king saw it and said to the apostle: Verily thou art a craftsman and it belitteth thee to be a servant of kings. And he left much money with him and departed from him.

Acts of Thomas. (Transl: M. R. James.)

Eternity is the image of God; the cosmos, of eternity; the sun, of the cosmos; and man, of the sun. People call transformation death, because the body is dissolved, but in fact life withdraws into the unmanifest...

Consider this yourself. Command your soul to go anywhere, and it will be there quicker than your command. Bid it to go to the ocean and again it is there at once, not as if it

had gone from place to place but was already there. Order it to fly up to heaven and it will need no wings, nor will anything impede it, neither the fire of the sun, nor the ether, nor the whirlwind, nor the other heavenly bodies, but cutting through them all it will soar up to the last body. And if you wish to break through all this and to contemplate what is beyond (if there is anything beyond the cosmos), it is in your power...

But if you lock up your soul in your body, abase it and say: "I understand nothing; I can do nothing; I am afraid of the sea; I cannot reach heaven; I do not know who I was nor who I shall be." What have you to do with God? For you cannot conceive of anything beautiful or good while you are attached to the body and are evil. For the greatest evil is to ignore what belongs to God.

Corpus Hermeticum. (Transl: C. Salaman et al.)
Inner Traditions, 2000.

The Greeks with their first class mathematical and scientific brains made many discoveries in mechanics and other applied sciences but they never took whole-heartedly, with all their powers, the momentous step which western man took at the beginning of the modern period of crossing the bridge between the theoretical and the practical, of going all out to apply knowledge to produce operations. Why was this? It was basically a matter of the will. Fundamentally, the Greeks did not *want* to operate. They regarded operations as base and mechanical, a degeneration from the only occupation worthy of the dignity of man, pure rational and philosophical speculation. The Middle Ages carried on this attitude in the form that theology is the crown of philosophy and the true end of man is contemplation; any wish to operate can only be inspired by the devil. Quite apart from the question of whether Renaissance magic could, or could not, lead on to genuinely scientific procedures, the real function of the Renaissance Magus in relation to the modern period... is that he

changed the will. It was now dignified and important for man to operate; it was also religious and not contrary to the will of God that man, the great miracle, should exert his powers. It was this basic psychological re-orientation towards a direction of the will which was neither Greek nor mediaeval in spirit, which made all the difference.

What were the emotional sources of the new attitude? They lie... in the religious excitement caused by the rediscovery of the *Hermetica*, and their attendant Magic; in the overwhelming emotions aroused by Cabala and its magico-religious techniques. It is magic as an aid to gnosis which begins to turn the will in the new direction.

Frances A. Yates. *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition.* Vintage Books, 1964.

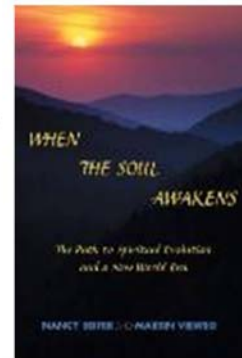
Paul Ricoeur... articulates the general problem for human discourse in general, and religious discourse in particular, from the eighteenth century until the present day. Technically stated, this problem is: Is the *Cogito* within being, or is it vice versa? In less technical and explicitly theological language, the problem may be stated thus: Is my life to be found within the reality of God, or is the reality of God derivative from me?... What Ricoeur would have us attend to is our lack of awareness of the transcendent order which is absolutely determinative for human life *as such*, that is for human experiencing, imagining, reflection and action. This transcendent order is referred to variously as the sacred, the holy, Being, God. However named, the sacred addresses us and we respond to it by means of symbols and the narratives or myths which related the symbols to one another. It is this response which constitutes and informs human life in all of its dimensions.

W. Taylor Stevenson. "Lex Orandi—
Lex Credenti." *The Study of Anglicanism.*
Fortress Press, 1998.

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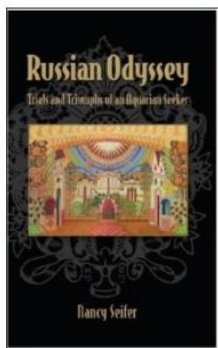
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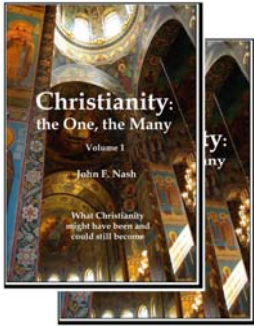
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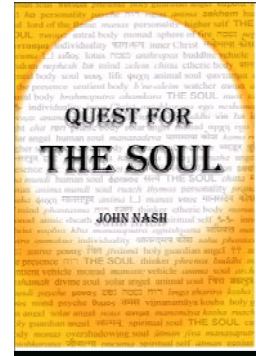
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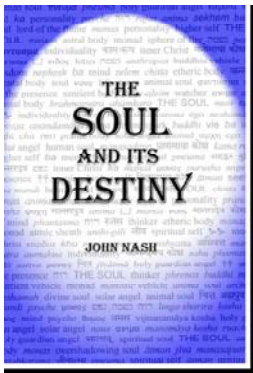
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