

## 10 VERA STANLEY ALDER

### 10.1 Vera Stanley Alder

<sup>1</sup>Vera Stanley Alder (called henceforth V.S.A.) is an English writer who has in five books done her best to popularize esoterics. She is well versed in the writings and gives an orientation in this literature that is on the whole successful. She is too good not to be noticed and reviewed, but her work also suffers from deficiencies that are too serious not to be criticized.

<sup>2</sup>The books she has published so far are:

*The Finding of the Third Eye*

*The Initiation of the World*

*The Fifth Dimension*

*Wisdom in Practice*

*Humanity Comes of Age*

<sup>3</sup>Her first book, *The Finding of the Third Eye*, presents new viewpoints on Indian yoga.

<sup>4</sup>*The Initiation of the World* is an attempt at esoteric world view. Unfortunately she based her presentation on Max Heindel, and so her account teems with errors some of which will be examined further on.

<sup>5</sup>*The Fifth Dimension* is in many respects a future vision of how awakening mental consciousness transforms our conditions.

<sup>6</sup>*Wisdom in Practice* should more correctly be entitled “Learning in Practice”, for wisdom involves the ability to realize theoretical learning in life.

<sup>7</sup>*Humanity Comes of Age* is an attempt at showing how the humanist’s dream comes true.

<sup>8</sup>In her commendable aim to unite the superphysical views of various “esoteric” schools, she happened to make the serious mistake of placing the authorities of those schools on a par, as if they all had the same capacity and competence.

<sup>9</sup>She perhaps considered that divergences in the views held by these writers were not very important when it came to orienting a mankind gone astray in the labyrinth of its fictions.

<sup>10</sup>We may certainly agree that at their present stage of learning it is more important that seekers are given a general orientation than fully exact details. The important thing is to show all those seekers the existence of superphysical reality. After that they should be informed about man’s five envelopes, the evolution of the monads through the natural kingdoms, the “rebirth” (continuous involution and evolution) of everything, the periods of rest between incarnations, and the laws of life. These simple facts suffice for them to be definitively liberated from traditional and newly produced ideologies.

<sup>11</sup>Nevertheless it is essential that seekers from the very beginning have an exact conception of what it is about. And if you want to gain the hearing of those trained in philosophy and science, it is important that they are not deterred by loose or vague or contradictory expressions.

<sup>12</sup>Therefore, you cannot, as V.S.A. has done, place writers like Swedenborg, Schuré, Steiner, and Heindel on an equal footing with Blavatsky or Bailey.

<sup>13</sup>She is thoroughly conversant with the writings, but refrains from taking up a definite position as to the different schools (theosophists, anthroposophists, Rosicrucians). She apparently is of the view that all the writers contribute and that for the good cause one should disregard their differences.

<sup>14</sup>If you are clear about this, you can enjoy the nimble manner in which V.S.A. is able to treat of her subject and afford perspectives through her brilliant application of the principle of analogy. A lambent imagination has made good use of a great store of esoteric facts. Also when treating of the “fifth dimension” she has managed to keep more within the bounds of probability than is otherwise usually the case.

<sup>15</sup>In most people, their “faculty of thought” is mere memory. They think what they have heard or read. They deem themselves cultured when having picked up the ideas of the last few centuries. Many views which they believe to be new ideas are the same fictions expressed in new ways. We are not astonished to learn that most people do not use more than a fifth of their brain cells. New ideas influence new cells, vitalizing them. Most people acquire no new ideas after leaving school.

## 10.2 *The Initiation of the World*

<sup>1</sup>In the following, some commentaries are made on that work of her which contains the “world view”: *The Initiation of the World*. The legitimate criticism is not intended to depreciate her work which in itself is a splendid achievement. It only intends to supply exact terms instead of the unclear ones used by most esoteric writers.

<sup>2</sup>The “initiation of the world” means the consciousness development of mankind, the individuals’ acquisition of consciousness of their own in the collective consciousness of ever higher molecular kinds, ever higher worlds.

<sup>3</sup>V.S.A. consistently uses the old term, “plane”, to denote the different worlds, which are always interpenetrating material globes.

<sup>4</sup>Also the misunderstood expression, “spirit and matter”, is used as an explanation. “Spirit” is the consciousness of matter. The ancients used the expression, “spirit and matter”, to indicate the opposition of higher and lower kinds of matter with their kinds of consciousness. The higher ones were called “spirit”, the lower ones were called “matter”, since the consciousness aspect dominates in the higher ones, whereas the matter aspect dominates in the lower ones.

<sup>5</sup>It is misleading to call only the physical world “material”, since all worlds are material, the difference being that the density of primordial atoms decreases in each higher world.

<sup>6</sup>The term “materialist” was used with reference to a man who considered the physical world to be the only one existing, physical life to be the only form of existence and to have no other meaning than the satisfaction of egoism. The correct term is “physicalist”.

<sup>7</sup>In a chapter on the “Plan of Creation”, V.S.A. ventures into a field which it is highly inadvisable to discuss, since the esoteric facts available at present are too scant. We are as usual treated to a mixture of symbols and facts, a blend that has a deterrent effect. The description of the solar system and the cosmos should not have been published in this form. There are those who think that something is better than nothing. They do not consider the fact, however, that it can only discredit the subject in those who, while being seekers, are puzzled by a multitude of vague and incomprehensible things. Ancient descriptions cannot be rendered in their symbolic form but must be completely remade.

<sup>8</sup>In ancient scriptures we read that the personal god divides himself, first into three parts and then into seven parts. That strange symbol is supposed to indicate the order in which the seven worlds of a septenary series are brought into being.

<sup>9</sup>In her description, V.S.A. starts from “the one about whom naught may be said”, called by her the “absolute”. This deity is said to have created his universe “out of His Own pregnant, potent atmosphere, which is named Chaos”, a universe that consisted of the “Seven Great Cosmic Planes”. It is not easy for the uninitiated to understand such things, and apparently V.S.A. has not understood them herself.

<sup>10</sup>The “one about whom naught may be said” is that globe made up of seven solar systems of which our solar system is one. Speaking of the “absolute” in that connection is meaningless, but it is a much-cherished word that impresses the reader. All solar systems are composed of primordial atoms (monads) that have been introduced from primordial matter (chaos) into the cosmos. And these primordial atoms have a long journey behind them from the first or highest atomic world down to atomic worlds 35–42 in which the aforementioned globe of seven solar systems was brought into being. Calling those seven worlds the

“universe” is of course erroneous.

<sup>11</sup>It is judicious that “nought may be said” of that system. For otherwise the irremediable presumption of all those who believe they are able to create the universe themselves would dish up additional imaginative excesses in great numbers.

<sup>12</sup>The old mystifying statement to the effect that the deity “decided for His Own inscrutable purpose to create a Universe” could be replaced with the information that the meaning of life is evolution and consciousness development in all who participate in evolution.

<sup>13</sup>The term “infinite” occurs in various contexts. The cosmos is “infinite”, everything is “sub-divided *ad infinitum*”, etc. However, the cosmos is by no means infinite, and nothing in the cosmos is infinite.

<sup>14</sup>“This Triangle differentiated again into the Seven Great Logoi, Who embodied and created the Seven Cosmic Planes, each Plane being differentiated again into seven sub-planes.” This concerns the manifestation of the cosmos. In hylozoics, this is described as the formation of seven series of seven atomic kinds. Each one of the 49 atomic kinds provides the building material of a cosmic world. The “Triangle” refers to the fact that each atomic kind, each cosmic world, and everything formed out of them, has three aspects. These three are matter, motion, and consciousness, not “Power, The Word, and Motion”.

<sup>15</sup>“The Seven Planetary Logoi which He sent out from Himself” – “He” meaning the Logos of our solar system – refer to seven collective beings each of whom manifests itself through a 49-globe of our solar system. Such a collective being is led by individuals from that divine kingdom whose task it is to form solar systems and planets.

<sup>16</sup>It is about time that all these misleading, meaningless expressions were eliminated, although they fascinate some mystically inclined people who do not desire exact data but rather wish to have an outlet of their unbridled imagination. Those expressions defeat their own ends, however: to afford seekers the clarity they must have to liberate themselves from the ruling fictional systems.

<sup>17</sup>Almost all “esoteric” writers hold different views as to the meaning of the word “monad”. It seems as if none of them had been told that Pythagoras was the first one to use that word and to denote by it, not only the least conceivable, but also the least possible particle of matter. V.S.A. apparently has not clearly realized that the monad, the primordial atom, the self, the ultimate self, the individual are one and the same thing in all natural kingdoms in the entire cosmos.

<sup>18</sup>Like other writers she calls man’s envelopes of incarnation the “personality”, and the causal being, the “individual”, thus exceedingly vague terms.

<sup>19</sup>It is an error by V.S.A. to consider that space has to do with only the lower worlds (“planes”). Cosmos itself is a space. What the ancients meant to say by their expression was that our usual concept of space with its three dimensions is not valid in higher worlds. “Space” indicates the existence of limits. Planet, solar system, etc., have limits and thus space.

<sup>20</sup>The atomic worlds occupy the same space in cosmic space. They interpenetrate and are separated by being of different dimensions and having different modes of vibration.

<sup>21</sup>The old gnostic expression to the effect that the worlds in the planet, etc., are the envelopes of god (“in him we live, and move, and have our being”) means that the highest monad in a world, a planet, etc., is the centre of this collective of monads and so is the centre of this collective consciousness, and he is the supreme authority in everything concerning the three aspects and the processes of manifestation. When such a monad advances to a higher kingdom, another monad steps in to fulfil that function. Many students have pondered on the problem how it is possible for many to exist as one without loss of identity. That problem is solved through the insight that all consciousness in the cosmos makes up one single collective consciousness in which everyone has an unlosable share, because the collective consciousness is a merging of the consciousness of all individuals.

<sup>22</sup>An evident error is the designation of both the Atlantean and the Aryan race with the

same figure (4). As everybody knows, the Aryan root-race is the fifth.

<sup>23</sup>As has almost always been the case with “esoteric” writers, her presentation is a mixture of symbolic and conceptual expressions indicating where the limits are to the author’s comprehension. This feature is what has deterred people with a philosophical and scientific training from examining the reality content of the esoteric literature. All of this literature has appeared to them as conveying just a semblance of knowledge.

### 10.3 *The Fifth Dimension*

<sup>1</sup>Also in her work entitled *The Fifth Dimension*, V.S.A. ventured into fields she does not master. She makes the same basic errors as all do who do not know of Pythagorean hylozoics and so do not know of the three aspects of existence.

<sup>2</sup>Just as most writers she presumes that everything superphysical is “beyond space and time” (especially time), not understanding that all manifestation must occur in space and time, although space and time appear radically different in each world of another kind and thus each dimension of another kind.

<sup>3</sup>“The universe is composed of two substances, energy and matter” is an erroneous statement. The “universe”, or rather, the cosmos is composed of atomic matter of 49 totally different kinds (primordial atoms of 49 different degrees of density). Energy and matter are not different substances but different aspects. The great mistake of the physicists is their modern dogma that “matter dissolves into energy”.

<sup>4</sup>The three aspects of existence may be drastically illustrated through three different dogmatic positions: According to an older scientific viewpoint “everything is matter”. The subjectivist philosophers of the West and the East say that “everything is consciousness”. The modern nuclear physicists assert that “everything is energy”. Before their eyes known physical matter dissolves into “nothing”, and from this they conclude that “matter dissolves into energy”, and do not know that it dissolves into matter which is invisible to them and has an immensely greater energy effect.

<sup>5</sup>V.S.A. makes creditable attempts at explaining what “dimension” means. She fails only because all attempts at explanation must fail a priori. Perhaps it is possible to explain why the inexplicable is inconceivable.

<sup>6</sup>The physical cosmos contains 49 different, interpenetrating atomic worlds of different density of primordial atoms. (In this connection we disregard the fact that the cosmos is a unity, one consciousness, one single cosmic being.) Each atomic world has its own mode of existence, its own kind of space and time, its own dimension.

<sup>7</sup>Dimension is a characteristic quality of each particular atomic kind. Since there are 49 atomic kinds in the cosmos, there are 49 dimensions.

<sup>8</sup>Dimension cannot be explained as extension in space, nor as the penetrability of matter, although this may appear to be true. Dimension is perhaps best explained as a circumvention which itself implies perviousness.

<sup>9</sup>In physical matter we can perceive “three” dimensions. That is the mode of existence of matter to physical consciousness in the physical world (world 49) with its physical space and physical time.

<sup>10</sup>We see only three dimensions in a physical object and would deem that person bereft of reason who told us that the object has in fact 49 dimensions like everything else in the cosmos.

<sup>11</sup>Dimension is a particular kind of space. Line and area are not counted as dimensions in esoterics.

<sup>12</sup>We visualize the cosmos as space without limits, space without space, and we must do so with our “three-dimensional” perception of space. Even in the next “higher” dimension, however, the “fourth” one in world 48 (the emotional world), the apprehension of infinity, inevitable in world 49 (the physical world), disappears.

<sup>13</sup>Dimension is a particular mode of perceiving space in a certain atomic world and in the different molecular worlds of that atomic world. Dimension in a lower world relates to dimension in a higher world as a world having a roof and walls relates to a world without such limiting factors. It appears as if in each higher dimension a previous limit of space disappeared.

<sup>14</sup>We are faced with the paradox implying that simultaneously as space expands it contracts so that to a 1-self, who has 49-dimensional vision in the highest cosmic world, the cosmos is like a single point. A 43-self, who has acquired seven-dimensional vision (nine-dimensional according to the current erroneous terminology), sees the whole solar system with its seven atomic worlds and 42 molecular worlds such as man sees a physical object.

<sup>15</sup>It should be clear that the attempts made by philosophers and scientists at explaining dimension, space, and time must be erroneous.

<sup>16</sup>Those people who leave world 49 (the physical world), leave off their organism with its etheric envelope and so automatically are in world 48 (the emotional world), cannot discover (“discover” is not the proper word here) the so-called fourth dimension of that world. A special interested study, under the guidance of a competent teacher, is required for exact apprehension in that new world to see more sides of objects than previously and to acquire a widened perception of space. Most people never learn how to see in the right way. They keep the “three-dimensional” vision they took with them from the physical world, and find events in the emotional world inexplicable. If it were possible for them to return to world 49 from world 48 without reincarnating, it would seem to them like crawling into a bag.

<sup>17</sup>If we start from the improper representation of the physical world as “three-dimensional”, we have:

world 49	physical world	3 dimensions
world 48	emotional world	4 dimensions
world 47	mental-causal world	5 dimensions
world 46	essential world	6 dimensions

<sup>18</sup>Physical existence (49) is dominated by physical space and physical time. World 48 is dominated by 48-space and 48-time, which are quite different from their physical counterparts. And the corresponding is true of all higher worlds. Anyone who is clearly aware of these facts need not talk much more about that matter to cause irremediable confusion of ideas with improper terminology.

<sup>19</sup>V.S.A. tries to replace the term “fourth dimension” with “radiation”, extension in all directions and capacity for penetration of all physical objects. But this is the case with all material energies in all higher worlds. They penetrate all lower worlds and control lower material forms and material energies. Thus “radiation” is a quality common to all higher atomic kinds, not just the fourth dimension. It is not strange that V.S.A. has difficulty in finding a suitable term for this concept, since man’s ability to form concepts of space does not extend beyond physical space.

<sup>20</sup>A characteristic of higher dimensions is that what we call distance appears to shrink immensely by each higher dimension. To the fifth dimension there are no distances within our planet.

<sup>21</sup>V.S.A. tries in many ways to find an explanation or a description of dimension. All such attempts are deceptive if you do not start from the fundamental fact that the differences between the atomic kinds are due to their different degrees of density of primordial atoms. From this follows everything else concerning the three aspects of existence. It is strange, too, that neither V.S.A. nor any other esoteric writer has emphasized or even noticed this problem of trinity as being the basic problem of epistemology.

<sup>22</sup>Another thing which is almost incomprehensible in the matter of an esoterician, is her calling all energies of higher kinds “electricity” in apparent ignorance of the fact that there are as many kinds of energy as there are atomic kinds and molecular kinds. The simplest terms by which to denote them all of course would be based on the atomic kinds of our solar system: 43–49. This presupposes, however, knowledge of the kinds of energy concerned. If you do not have that knowledge, it is easier to be contented with a common term for all the energies, even if it gives no real information.

<sup>23</sup>When V.S.A. leaves world view and passes to life view, her eminent power of representation and her lively, logical imagination come to the fore. What she has got to say here concerns matters of vital importance for mankind and its understanding of the future. Our only wish is that all “thinking” people informed themselves of her perspectives on the future. Unquestionably, what she discusses are problems of reality and no utopian imaginative speculation.

<sup>24</sup>Mankind is facing a complete revolution in all ways of looking at existence, reality, and life. Those who want to have a foreboding of what it may be about are wise to read these ponderings by a thinker familiar with esoterics. She brings up so many facts unknown to most people that this alone affords her book a great value compared with the speculation of the ignorant, a value that regrettably most of them are unable to appreciate.

#### 10.4 *Wisdom in Practice*

<sup>1</sup>The intention here is to give a brief account of the book *Wisdom in Practice* in the hope of promoting its translation into Swedish. It is too good not to have its commentary. It deserves to be translated into all other languages just as a later work of her, *Humanity Comes of Age*.

<sup>2</sup>The author is an esoterician at the pinnacle of the esoteric learning of our times (1950), highly intelligent, comprehensively informed in both history and culture, and a brilliant writer. She is as familiar with the writings of H. P. Blavatsky as with those of Alice A. Bailey. Unfortunately she was never an initiate of the Pythagorean Order, and so her world view is without that comprehensiveness which hylozoics alone can afford. This lack has not the slightest effect on her esoteric life view, however, which is a live expression of the one true religion: the religion of love and wisdom.

<sup>3</sup>To begin with, V.S.A. makes it convincingly clear that mankind itself made human life what it is and that each one of us shares in the responsibility for the state of human affairs today. We have no right whatsoever to cast the blame for it on others, on god or the devil. For it is all our work, our stupidity, our omission. We carry the responsibility for a better order of things. A sum total is made up of units, and each one of us is a unit. It depends on us, on our contribution, that it can and must be different.

<sup>4</sup>V.S.A. in this connection does not enter into a discussion of reincarnation to explain our inherent responsibility for the emergency. It is a fact, however, that each one of us has incarnated tens of thousands of times. Had we then done our best, the world would have been in a better shape today. Our retort in defence, that we did not know any better, is useless. Our ignorance of the laws of nature and laws of life does not sway those firm laws. We reap what we have sown in the past whether we know of it or not. We shall in the future experience what we have done or, above all, omitted to do in this life. Responsibility is collective even if we did our best. It is collective, for we have a share in the knowledge of the collected life experience of mankind.

<sup>5</sup>On the other hand, V.S.A. addresses this problem as a mental one, showing how we could have realized the unity of mankind long ago, if we had followed the advice given us by the wise men of all ages. Slowly, step by step, we have expanded our emotional sphere to include increasing numbers of people: family, tribe, nation, finally – faced with the threat of annihilation – to realize that all mankind makes up a unity. According to their stages of development,

people still restrict themselves, being dominated by the egoistic illusions of self-blindness, that we can isolate ourselves, exclude others from our community. This is an expression of hatred (fear, contempt) and the cause of the war of all against all. Anyone who does not love hates. That is the law and axiom of emotional life. And anyone who has not seen this is still far from understanding life. The whole of history demonstrates that those whom we do not love remain our enemies (seldom open enemies but always secret ones). The daily psychological proof of this is the fact that all slander those whom they do not love (even their benefactors in “spiritual” or physical respect). Spirituality of course includes everything concerning the consciousness aspect, knowledge, etc.

<sup>6</sup>V.S.A. looks deep when demonstrating the tendency to development and instinct that acts with irresistible energy in all natural kingdoms, making life bring forth ever higher, ever more expedient forms for slowly awakening consciousness. This striving towards an unknown goal, dim at the outset, emerges with increasing clarity as an expedient force, given different names by different people according to their characters, their emotional or intellectual attitude to life, an intelligence that asserts itself more definitely according as the conditions for this increase.

<sup>7</sup>The higher the form of life, the more kinds of vibration it is able to absorb and assimilate.

<sup>8</sup>In man, reason (the faculty of inference, principle, perspective, and system thinking) has been able to make increasing use of sense (the faculty of ascertaining facts and objective realities).

<sup>9</sup>Intelligence behind the phenomena of nature has the effect that plants and animals are urged by unconscious motives to grow, multiply, and defend themselves, while conscious motives in man become increasingly complex. What affects man’s actions is not so much his knowledge as his ability to shape his own motives. The importance of knowledge to action lies in the fact that it can afford him understanding of what are better and worse motives and the method of systematically strengthening the better ones.

<sup>10</sup>Man has learnt to love his family, to beautify his home and to give his children the best chance in life. Those are good and worthy motives. But they do not suffice, as is clear from the fact that the Germans, very good at family life, could under Hitler contribute to bringing their nation to the verge of ruin.

<sup>11</sup>V.S.A. demonstrates in a clarifying manner that egoism cannot grasp the exhortation: love your neighbour as yourself. She shows that this includes much more than mankind has been able to grasp hitherto. One implication is that we should love other people’s children as our own, etc. The more we develop, the more perspectives and boundaries widen. From private egoism via tribal egoism, local patriotism, nationalism, our understanding of all widens and so our sense of responsibility for all. The history books, in which every nation deems itself right in its pirate raids, plunderings, misdeeds, bear witness to the immense blindness of egoism.

<sup>12</sup>If we really believed in divine love, justice, brotherhood, in development into the perfection of all life, then we should find that we lose the tendency to hate, fear, envy, etc. Our motive power will be to live for many, for ever more, for mankind.

<sup>13</sup>Love is understanding and striving to help to the utmost of our intelligence. True patriotism implies responsibility for the actions of one’s own country, not that the country should earn the most but that it should give its best to the world.

<sup>14</sup>Our emotional life is dominated by countless opposite motives, which blind our judgement and paralyse our ability to act. Hitler showed what colossal strength unified opinion and motive can give. Had the Germans been able to think for themselves and to develop the same responsibility of patriotism, they would not so easily have succumbed to mass hypnotism and primitive fanaticism.

<sup>15</sup>Discussing national history V.S.A. broaches the subject of education. The right attitude to education must go towards the production of trainers and teachers of future generations. The question is whether the whole system of education should be reconstructed. Children are

being crammed with facts. It is all about developing memory, remembering what it says in books, what other people have said. We are the slaves of memory to the extent that we believe that to remember is to think. School does not teach us how to think, however, for to think is to think something different from what we already know. Ordinary thinking is parrotry. When people are discussing something, anyone who is familiar with the subject recognizes all the “ideas” being presented. There are even professors who only say what is already written in specialist literature. The expert may note: What he just said is written there and what he is saying right now is written there. People are compilers who diversify old ideas. To think, however, is to be original, to present new ideas. In respect of thought, everyday man is a complex of instincts, habits, imitations, echoes, and reflected images.

<sup>16</sup>Our opinions are copies of the opinions of others. We read to have opinions which we then believe to be our own ones. And those opinions generally are based on such flimsy ground that we are soon at a loss for an answer when we meet someone who has a command of the subject.

<sup>17</sup>By morality, properly conception of right, V.S.A. means those standards of behaviour which we set up or which are set up for us in respect of all our actions. In earlier times our conception of right bade us to hang the man who stole a sheep or burn at the stake the man who was interested in anything new or unusual, such as medicine or science. In sexual matters, the conception of right harboured the most monstrous contradictions. Women could be stoned, the squire of the village had the right to spend the wedding-nights of his subjects in their nuptial beds. For some generations much of the Italian aristocracy was built up from illegitimate children of the popes.

<sup>18</sup>By and large the conception of right was dictated by those in power, or by right of fist. Between equals in power the principle of tit for tat gradually emerged. Then came, under the influence of great psychologists of life, the principle of the good example: do unto others as you would that they should do unto you. And finally that fundamental law of life was proclaimed: You shall love your god (what is divine, what is superhuman) above everything and with all the powers of your consciousness; implicitly: for this is the only way of reaching what is divine. Essentiality (46) is the strongest factor in human life. The words of Jeshu have been conceived as commandments. There are no such things in the kingdoms of freedom.

<sup>19</sup>Of course Jeshu never said, “Whom God has joined together let no man put asunder.” That is a typical quasi-gnostic saying, dogmatic and fanatic, in the true spirit of Eusebios. What Jeshu said was that love is the strongest bond and that nothing can separate those who love each other. To exact absurd promises from people is in keeping with the usual ignorance of life. There are serious consequences to this. Christianity has managed to instil into people’s mind the notion that in order to become unselfish they must first develop a gigantic sin-complex. In so doing they degrade that which is divine in them (the instinct of development) and create that inner opposition which only paves the road to hell with good resolutions.

<sup>20</sup>This has brought about a condition where morality is a cult of lies the chief commandment of which is: You shall not let yourself be caught, and you shall conceal even your thoughts and intentions. Morality poisons all collective life with hypocrisy, slander, and condemnation.

<sup>21</sup>V.S.A. has found a happy formulation of a conception of right: a sense of active responsibility towards one’s fellow human beings. If we took nothing which would deprive or handicap another, nor which is more than our proportionately fair share, then there would be no poverty in the world. We should not waste or steal their time, their earnings, should not deprive them of their possibilities and opportunities of development, of their right to needed human sympathy, to the esteem of other people; should not sully their fair name and fame.

<sup>22</sup>Life is divine. The Christian fiction of sin, which has satanized human life, has filled us with such an immense multitude of psychological perversions that it will take a long time to purge them from our daily thinking and ways of looking at things. V.S.A. points out a number



of such perversions to help us do the necessary rethinking.

<sup>23</sup>Such sayings in the Gospels as have been construed as prohibitions, commandments, and demands are rather revelations of laws of life, laws of cause and effect, which are in force in higher worlds and which we must learn how to apply, if we want to reach higher. Thus they indicate the conditions of acquisition of higher kinds of consciousness.

<sup>24</sup>One law of life, which the individual as a rule discovers only at a higher stage of development, is the law saying that anyone who gives will receive. Or, in the fine formulation of the poet: “You are so rich that the more you give away lavishly, the more you have left.” When mankind has learnt to give instead of taking, begging (“borrowing”), there will be more than enough for everyone. According to that law of life, greed must engender poverty both for the greedy and for all the others. This is true of the individual as well as of the community and the government. The laws of life are universal.

<sup>25</sup>V.S.A. adds a chapter the content of which is taken straight from esoterics and deserves to be reported in some detail.

<sup>26</sup>If we study the science of the ancients concerning the cosmos and the pertaining laws, we will find that everything is a replica of something larger, with certain slight differences. Thus our solar system is a replica of an even larger giant system, and this downscaling goes on straight down to the atom. Man’s own solar system is found somewhere in this series of replicas which continues down to the embryo of life. If we could find the law of this universal analogy, we should discover the secret of the essential unity of all things.

<sup>27</sup>According to the same secret science, the sun in its system fulfils functions corresponding to those of the heart; not only the functions of the human heart, but of the heart in all living things. If you wish to proceed with the analogy of the solar system, you could add, for example, that Venus fulfils a function corresponding to that of the liver.

<sup>28</sup>In vibrational respect, everything consists of vibrations. Each unit – from atoms and combinations of atoms to organisms, planets, solar systems, etc. – has its particular vibrations.

<sup>29</sup>The individual vibration of every human being are his particular quality. They can radiate round the world without being confused with the individual vibrations of countless other living beings. A dog can scent this quality out, and it clings to personal belongings.

<sup>30</sup>A man’s mental envelope penetrates his organisms and therefore all his organs, etc. This means that there is a living intelligence in all parts of his body.

<sup>31</sup>We just learnt that every organ etc. of the body has the same kind of vibrations as has the corresponding organ in everyone.

<sup>32</sup>And in all of this network of links with all living beings, the individual has his own personal vibration.

<sup>33</sup>Authorities on superphysical science have told us that the major endocrine glands, while controlling the major organs and activities of the body, are themselves controlled by little “electrical” central organs, known of old as “chakras”. These are the centres that convey life forces, radiations, and impressions, according to the universal axiom saying that all matter has consciousness: every kind of matter has its own kind of consciousness and its own kind of energy. These centres have each their own wave-length which links them with certain cosmic forces that build and maintain things. These life forces have a decisive effect on chemical processes in the respective glands, which in their turn control the major organs, such as the heart and the liver.

<sup>34</sup>Each large organ is like a little community of cells, its total vibration differing from those of the other organs, and being under a physical government (the gland) whose real individuality and life-force lies within its respective chakra. These etheric chakras communicate with the chakras of the emotional and mental envelopes. It is not difficult to ascertain how emotional illusions or mental fictions can affect the whole organism or certain organs. The actual functioning and building up of both mind and physique are worked by the

same material energies as occur in light, heat, electricity.

<sup>35</sup>Therefore: If our mind is not governed by a strong life-motive, it is not itself in control of the organism, the organs, the chakras. This in its turn re-acts in such a manner that a habit which the organism has been allowed to set up without supervision has a definite effect on the function of thought. The individual then has become the slave of his glands. That is the end of the story the beginning of which lay in a man's lack of life-motive.

<sup>36</sup>Of course this is said in discussing normal cases, not the pathological cases in which people are born with abnormal glands.

<sup>37</sup>In one chapter, where V.S.A. broaches the subject of the constitution of man, she starts from the old gnostic division into body, soul, and spirit. "Body" she takes correctly as the physical, emotional, and mental envelopes of the self; "soul", as the causal envelope. Where "spirit" is concerned, however, her ideas are far from complete. She calls spirit "individuality". That is a relic from the first theosophical period when Colonel Olcott took great pains to separate personality and individuality.

<sup>38</sup>Personality was conceived as the renewed envelopes of incarnation; and individuality, as the permanent causal envelope, which incarnates.

<sup>39</sup>At a later stage, Annie Besant called spirit the "monad", which she placed in world 44.

<sup>40</sup>Sinnett, Judge, and Hartmann based their teaching on the lower five worlds of our solar system (45–49). Leadbeater and Besant made it clear that the solar system consists of seven different atomic worlds (43–49). Where "body", "soul", and "spirit" are concerned, "body" belongs to worlds 47–49; "soul" to 45–47, and "spirit" to 43–45.

<sup>41</sup>Every esoteric writer subsequently made his own division, the result being that there is still no terminology commonly agreed upon.

<sup>42</sup>The true state of affairs is that the monad in the causal envelope is the human self, properly speaking. When the monad in the causal envelope has acquired full subjective and objective consciousness in that envelope, it passes to the fifth natural kingdom. Till then the monad has no contact with its own "spirit". The monad acquires in the fifth natural kingdom envelopes in worlds 46 and 45, and when it has passed to the sixth natural kingdom or the lowest divine kingdom, it acquires envelopes in worlds 44 and 43.

<sup>43</sup>This is the normal course of development according to the law of self-realization.

<sup>44</sup>It stands to reason that since the entire cosmos has been built out by the monads of the highest divine kingdom and is being maintained by material energies from that kingdom, the monads of lower kingdoms are in that respect dependent on the work done at evolution by higher evolutionary kingdoms.

<sup>45</sup>As for our planet, this work has become exceedingly burdensome to the individuals of the fifth and sixth natural kingdoms. This is because the monads of the fourth natural kingdom of our planet are individuals of a repulsive basic tendency more than is usually the case, and also because the planetary government (perhaps in order to lessen the additional burden this has created for monads of attractive basic tendency) has decided to accelerate evolution, so that it occurs faster than otherwise is the normal tempo of development.

<sup>46</sup>Our planet has been called (and of course not without good reason) the slop-pail of the solar system, the planet of sorrow, etc., precisely because the repulsive monads have to such a great extent managed to idiotize and satanize the rest of mankind. The neutralization of this influence has called for special efforts on the part of higher natural kingdoms.

<sup>47</sup>If human beings are to have true knowledge of reality, it must be a gift received from individuals of the fifth natural kingdom. The individuals of the fifth natural kingdom receive knowledge of the cosmos from individuals of the sixth natural kingdom, and so forth. Otherwise no one can know anything of higher worlds. This was the knowledge that men received in Atlantis, the consequence being that this knowledge was misused and distorted. Misuse of knowledge leads to the loss of knowledge, and where whole nations are concerned,

to their annihilation. That was the reason why Atlantis had to be submerged. Since then the knowledge was given only in secret knowledge schools to (the reincarnations of) those who had not misused it.

<sup>48</sup>This is the explanation for the existence of the esoteric knowledge and why only the “harmless” part of the teaching on existence, reality, and life has been permitted to be public property. Mankind is still found at such a low stage of development that all knowledge which can be abused is abused. The harmless part of the knowledge is nowadays allowed for publication also because mankind has after Atlantis reaped what it has sown and also because the faculty of thought is now developed to such an extent that the “explanations” given by religion or philosophy cannot satisfy intellectuals and that the leading thinkers (being without the esoteric knowledge) threaten to disorient and idiotize mankind completely.

<sup>49</sup>The publicized part of the esoteric knowledge at present consists of certain fundamental facts necessary to a rational “vision” of existence. The need for more facts will grow to the extent that mankind makes good use of this basic outline and learns how to “rethink”, and such facts will be given, especially such as facilitate further consciousness development. Facts calculated to afford increased knowledge of the utilization of forces of nature will, as previously, be given in secret knowledge schools only.

<sup>50</sup>The meaning of life is the development of consciousness, the acquisition by the individuals of ever higher kinds of consciousness in ever higher kinds of matter. Every primordial atom is an individual who in the process of cosmic manifestation acquires consciousness in ever higher natural kingdoms, ever widening consciousness towards final omniscience.

<sup>51</sup>In respect of motives the planetary hierarchy calls the law of development the law of sacrifice and the law of service. The individual sacrifices something lower to reach something higher. In fact it is only to ignorance that it seems as a sacrifice. The young man makes no sacrifice when he gives away the toys he has outgrown. The whole of evolution is to consciousness a continuous identification with all higher things and liberation from all lower things. The “sacrifice” consists in giving up what is lower to reach what is higher, in the “sacrifice” preceding the understanding of what one gains in the process.

<sup>52</sup>All higher life implies service of life. To the ignorance of life this may appear meaningless. In all higher worlds the individual is a researcher exploring the world he has attained, and this exploration is done in and through service. A subordinate researcher learns by serving his superior. And by serving lower forms of life and further their development he learns how to better understand the laws of life and to apply them. In this respect, too, life in higher worlds is research. What makes up the radical difference between them and us is the motive. They long to share their overflowing bliss with all.

<sup>53</sup>In one chapter V.S.A. asks whether we are logical. What becomes of our lives depends on the motive, conscious or unconscious, which we allow to decide. Mentality is the link between the self (the monad in the causal envelope) and the organism. Whatever the self desires becomes a mental motive which wins in the long run. The direction given by the self drives the mental engine, and the heart is the fuel, the heat which makes the machine run. We are efficient if our will, mentality, and heart work together. Those who realize this and avoid one-sidedness in the expressions of their will, emotional, and mental life to become integrated personalities make all three envelopes cooperate in harmony.

<sup>54</sup>With a number of striking and highly instructive examples V.S.A. shows our almost total lack of logic in life and our manifest reluctance to put knowledge as well as experience into practice and way of life. Those who imagine that human beings have a right to consider themselves rational creatures must qualify such a daring proposition in essential respects. V.S.A. perhaps has not quite understood the difference between theory and practice, logic and the art of living, knowledge and ability, assumption and realization. Those are two different faculties. The art of living presupposes the ability to make one’s motives single and firm with

one-pointed determination and endurance.

<sup>55</sup>In a few chapters V.S.A. illustrates the esoteric axioms saying that all matter has consciousness, that consciousness is a unity, that all consciousness is both individual and collective, and that this is at the bottom of the fact of the unity of all life and the brotherhood of all living beings.

<sup>56</sup>Our share in the cosmic total consciousness is due to the level of development we have attained. We shall be consciously one with the whole cosmos only when we have reached the highest divine kingdom.

<sup>57</sup>V.S.A. demonstrates what horrendous mistakes we make in life on account of our ignorance of reality and life, how our understanding of the collectivity of consciousness and its consequences reshape our entire view of life.

<sup>58</sup>The closing chapters deal with the laws of life (spiritual laws) most important to mankind today and explains in some detail how Christos in a sovereign manner gave the Mosaic Decalogue a new meaning.

<sup>59</sup>Life is based on a system of give and take permeating all relations. The ruler is dependent on the ruled, and he can give them only that which he receives from them. The most successful ruler is the greatest servant of the ruled. That man can make the best use of power who gives the most.

<sup>60</sup>These laws of life have been proclaimed in all ages by representatives of the planetary hierarchy. Their application will shape a new world.

<sup>61</sup>Ignorance has applied the directly opposite methods. National egoism with its system of tariffs, rates, customs, wars, and persecutions, monopolies and rationings, has impeded the earth's circulation system. As a consequence we have got undernourished areas, overpopulation, hampered enterprise and overproduction with constant wars, a result of the fever raging in the diseased world-body, a constant imbalance in the interplay of forces through the long series of unsuccessful interventions.

<sup>62</sup>The remedy is as simple as seemingly unobtainable. A radical change of ingrained views and habits that we with all our power give instead of taking, share instead of demanding, unite instead of dividing, think as a whole and not as parts, a return of the erring son to the world of love and wisdom.

<sup>63</sup>Platon taught that the world of ideas is the truly being. The immensely learned philosophers of our times laugh scornfully at such an idea. What is science teaching us? It is beginning to understand that all matter is a state of motion of tiny particles, that all solids can be broken up, melted, volatilized, etherized, and seemingly be "dissolved into nothing". Not so with thoughts. Thoughts are material forms, objects which defy heat, cold, chemicals, explosives – and all other means of destruction.

<sup>64</sup>It is with thoughts that we do battle and with them alone! We have built our whole world with our egoistic ideas, vitalized by the emotional illusions of fear and distrust: fear of each other, fear of god, fear of our earth and her bounty.

<sup>65</sup>All of this must be changed. We must learn how to build the world of our thought with ideas taken from the world of true knowledge.

<sup>66</sup>V.S.A. describes vividly and dramatically the "struggle between soul and spirit". She certainly makes a graphic representation of the difficulties which the self encounters when it is about to acquire self-consciousness in the kinds of consciousness corresponding to the higher emotional, higher mental, and causal kinds of molecular matter, but this acquisition is not in the least due to any intervention by any spirit of the self.

<sup>67</sup>It is high time that writers on these subjects first mastered the esoteric world view with the three aspects of existence, the material structure of the solar system, and the envelopes of the self, or monad, in the seven atomic worlds (43–49) so that they could describe the self's process of development on the basis of facts, before they treated of the problems of life view, and did

not present downright false and misleading explanations of the pertaining processes. The entire history of philosophy is an attempt by ignorance at explaining terms and expressions taken from gnostics, an attempt that has in our times ended in declaring those terms to be figments of the imagination. This is what happens when benevolent ignorance wants to explain what it does not understand, not even comprehend. This should be a warning to esoteric writers lest the same fate befalls esoterics and acute intellectuals have reason to criticize and cast suspicion on superphysical science. We understand those well-wishing writers who do as best they can to make their contribution. A good contribution is not enough, however. It is required that they have learnt to master the material they are dealing with. Otherwise they just increase the prevalent confusion of ideas and discredit the cause they desire to promote.

<sup>68</sup>The difficulties the self encounters in its development consist in the continuous process of identification and liberation, a constant striving by the self's consciousness to identify with higher kinds of consciousness and to liberate itself from its accustomed desire for lower things. This ongoing process is generally depicted as a struggle between different wills or different natures or between spirit and matter, or between the higher self and the lower self, etc. The explanations given are erroneous even if the description of the psychological process can be factually correct and highly instructive.

<sup>69</sup>There are those who say that perhaps this does no harm. The main thing, they say, is that people come to realize the difficulty there is in the opposition between higher and lower and that there are those who find these hypothetical explanations useful.

<sup>70</sup>That old objection once again. Experience has taught us, however, that false explanations have a stubborn tendency to live on, aggravate the confusion of ideas, and discredit the work at teaching people how to comprehend, a work that is hard enough as it is, without unnecessary opposition.

<sup>71</sup>The different hypothetical explanations have the effect that those who do not understand form different sects which all consider themselves to be right although they are all wrong. And in so doing they raise obstacles in the way of development towards full understanding.

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*Endnote by the Translator*

10.2.21 "For in him we live, we move, and have our being." The Bible, Acts of the Apostles, 17:28.