

*William Quan Judge*  
*The Occult Nature of Man*



**Truth belongs to God and Nature, she the birthright of man. But she flees the touch of him who would make merchandise of her and barter her for gold, or who would retain her in his selfish embrace.**

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The first point of division of left hand path from right hand path is very subtle, very slight, easily overlooked, swiftly passed. It behooves us to take each step with care, to question the intuition, and to analyse with the brain; in short to *discriminate*.

If there be one unfailing test, one sure proof of error, it is to find material advantage of any kind mixed up with spiritual development. The two cannot mix; the very nature of Energy forbids it. Only *psychism* can go hand-in-hand with material gain or allurements — psychism of the left-hand order, such as ruins perpetrators (even the self-deceived) and victims, in other lives or in this. The victims suffer because causes are blindly set in motion against the innocent, or against the self-seeking (otherwise “innocent”), whose insidious human weakness has laid them open to the poisoned bait. Such causes act by Law; their course cannot be stayed. *Their* Karmic effect is brief compared to that which dogs the perpetrators of crimes against humanity, and of all such crimes, that is the darkest which attacks men through their ideals. It would be a crime impossible if men kept those Ideals pure, untouched by any material thought, held high like blazing torches against the darkness of our age.

**Our faults make the crimes of our brothers possible.**

There is no abomination known to man that has not been proclaimed in the name of the Lord, and marshalled in the cause of Truth. The unwary have thus been entrapped, and the ignorant imposed upon. Truth belongs to God and Nature, and is the birthright of man, and she flees the touch of him who would make merchandise of her and barter her for gold, or who would retain her in his selfish embrace.

On this plane where the forces of “evil,” or separateness greatly prevail, he is wise indeed *who takes no step not based upon Universal Brotherhood*, Spiritual Identity, and that has not, as its possible goal, the absolute final Unity of All. Put this test to all acts; if they divorce from it, crucify them. Yet, remember ever how far easier it is to fall than to stand; to arraign than to be just. Every inquirer must judge for himself. We cannot close our eyes to signs, though we may refrain from specific condemnation. Use your discrimination always.



Efforts have to proceed slowly; people must first be waked up and directed towards Theosophical doctrines before it is wise to open up that which is plain to those who know how to use their intuition. But the Western mind, for all its boasted progressiveness, is generally unable to know what is behind a wall unless a hole is cut through it. Others, however, can guess what is hidden when they perceive signs and sounds that are quite plain and made on purpose.

As we have to deal with the Western mind, now ours, all unused as it is to these things, and overburdened with false training and falser logic, we must begin where we are; we must examine our present possessions, and grow to know our own present powers and mental machinery. That done, we may proceed to see ourselves in the way that shall bring about the best result.

In consequence of the modern, Western system of education, we are apt constantly to forget the existence of the great force and value belonging to our supersensuous consciousness. That consciousness is the great register where we record the *real* results of our various earthly experiences; in it we store up the spiritual energy, and once stored there it becomes immortal, our own eternal possession. The true student of Rāja Yoga knows that everything has its origin in MIND; that even this Universe is the passing before the Divine Mind of the images he desires to appear.

Every act proceeds from the mind. Beyond the mind there is no action, and therefore no Karma. The basis of every act is desire. The plane of desire, or egotism, is itself action and the matrix of every act. Karma will therefore be manifested only in harmony with the plane of desire. A person can have no attachment for what he does not think about; therefore the first step must be to fix the thought on the highest ideal.<sup>1</sup> The substratum or support for the whole Kosmos is the presiding Spirit. All the various changes in life, whether of a material nature or solely in mental States are cognizable because the presiding Spirit within is not modifiable. The Perceiver of these changes is the Inner Man — the Self. All objects and all states of what Western philosophers *call* mind, are modifications. This Self must be recognized as being within, pondered over, and as much as possible understood, if we are to gain any true knowledge.

There is only One Life, One Consciousness. It masquerades under all the different forms of sentient beings, and these varying forms with their intelligences mirror a portion of the ONE LIFE, thus producing in each a false idea of egoism. FORM, as such, is nothing; phenomena are not realities *per se*; all must be referred to the Self. Rely upon the One Consciousness, which as differentiated in Man, is his Higher Self. By means of this Higher Self he is to strengthen the lower, or that which he is accustomed to call “myself.”

The One Consciousness pierces up and down through all the states and planes of Being, and serves to uphold the memory — whether complete or incomplete — of each state’s experiences. The One Consciousness of each person is the Witness or Spectator of the actions and experiences of *every* state we are in or pass through.

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<sup>1</sup> [See “Theosophical Jewels - Live in the Ideal” (PDF), in our Living the Life Series.]

There is but one Universal Mind. It is differentiated in human beings of the average order, and more or less vitiated by desire. When man broadens to the Universal — a condition only understood by Adepts who *are* themselves that condition — this Higher Mind in its original purity, is a State of Being, and not an organ. In order to realize this in any large degree it is necessary to withdraw our consciousness gradually and persistently from the illusion of the senses to the ecstasy of inward vision; that is, to gradually elevate the plane of consciousness.

Man may thus come to know the supersensuous world precisely as he knows the things of sense and time; viz. by experience. He may furthermore realize that the latter are pure illusions, while the former are the only realities. This is the key to the higher consciousness and the diviner life. Man's immortality is within his own hands, and he may recover the substance of all his past while he realizes his birth-right even now.

On every plane of Nature where Life takes form and consciousness manifests, such manifestation takes place through a vehicle. These vehicles are related and the life force manifesting in each interpenetrates all. The more man lives on the animal plane the less he manifests the human and divine. It is for this reason that the sages inculcate virtue. It is not known to us all that only among the virtuous can the sages be found. The passions and vices eternally becloud our perceptions of the meaning of what the Ego tries to tell us.

The expansion and range of unfolding of consciousness in man occurs through the Mind principle, the *active* aspect of Consciousness; while its passive aspect is conscience, the "Voice" of the Higher Self. Certain teachings, and even certain forms of intellectual belief that induce certain habits of thought and modes of life, may undoubtedly modify consciousness itself. One may contract or expand, cultivate or destroy, certain forms of consciousness.

The reason why such adaptation is the first step in Occultism must now be found.

Occultism has been defined by H.P. Blavatsky to be "the study of the workings of the Universal Mind."<sup>2</sup> Our primary study of that Mind is at first confined to its reflection in ourselves. We must endeavour to find some trace of it within our own consciousness or in one of the modes of that consciousness. But how can we find that? We are inclined to say it is too difficult a task. It is difficult, but not too much so. The very effort involved in the search is in itself helpful, for the greater emission of mental energy creates powerful centres or pictures in our sphere. It is through their constant reaction upon us, perhaps, that we at last discover the trace.

If we examine ourselves critically we see that there is, lying back of ceaseless mental change, of all the continual going to and fro of Thought, a power to observe, sum up, analyse, and direct the whole process. We find ourselves possessed of another mode of consciousness, above or behind the fluctuations of thought, which calmly observes the whole panorama moving before us. Through this power even the sinner who knows his sin still feels that sin not to be representative of his entire nature; feels himself at the core, to be better than that vile outward seeming. It is Patañjali who

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<sup>2</sup> [cf. *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, IX, p. 258]

says of the Soul that it is the Spectator, and when the question is asked: “Where is the soul at the time of concentration — or when the mental energy is at rest?” — he replies, “At the time of concentration the soul abides in the state of a Spectator without a spectacle.”<sup>3</sup>

Before the student reaches this state of concentration, he makes a preliminary step towards it when he discovers this centre, place, mode or state of consciousness in which he surveys his whole mental field as something not himself, and feels that Self to be the perceptive power *per se*. For he has then only to enter that mental plane as often as possible, and to realize it as vividly as possible, and he has evolved a rudiment — if I may so call it — of the Universal Mind. That Mind, that state of consciousness, observes the illusionary panorama spread before it as something apart from itself. The person who realizes that state of consciousness is nearer the Universal Mind. He has entered one of its phases or states. It is not a state of trance.

The best method to pursue is that of analysis along the line of the seven principles. So long as I look upon myself as a homogeneous whole, I contract my mental sphere into one dense and slowly vibrating mass. It is the picture of himself as uniform — as opposed to duality — which fetters the soul of man. The image he has made of himself is the prison house of his soul. When analysis comes into play he no longer says, “I crave,” “I win,” “I desire,” “I sin.” No longer intoxicated by the fumes of his own passions, does he plunge into the ocean of sensuality. He says, as one aspect of Desire comes before him, “In this the Kāmic principle is active”; another he ascribes to undue stimulus of the Linga-Śarīra; here he sees the lower Manas prevailing, and here the flash of intuitive perception. He ascribes each act to its principle; each becomes to him a result of one of these principles; they are no longer himself, but he is the judge of them all, and analysis destroys the heady fumes of Desire. *For Desire ceases to attract us when we no longer identify it with our self.*

John Stuart Mill once said that he lost, for a long time, the power of emotional feeling, the loss being caused by constant self-analysis which finally deadened all mental enjoyment. It is not probable that this deadness would have resulted had his method of thought permitted him to ascribe his actions to their real sources, the principles in which they have their rise. When the action of the seven principles is realized, we at the same time realize our self to be that which observes the said action, on the Centre of which the principles are modes or functions; that centre is consciousness itself. Or, if greater clearness is desired, let us say that there is *One Principle* which acts through *six vehicles*. All these so-called bodies and appearances are for the purpose of enabling the ONE — the Self — to fully comprehend Nature and “bring about the aid of the soul. The Higher Self of one is that of all and is universal; a Divine state, not a body or form.”

If any person desires to rid himself of a bad mental or physical habit, sincere and constant trial of the method above described must cause the habit to loosen its grip upon the mind. It is not a form of mind-cure, for that acts by denial, while in this case there are analysis and the tracing of effects to their true source, or at least, somewhat further upstream. By means of this cold analysis the personal mental im-

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<sup>3</sup> [Yoga Sūtras i, 3]

age is broken up into a series of thought forms true in themselves, each one an image of the Universal, each instinct with a life of its own. The prison house is rent asunder, and man, the prisoner of himself, dazed, startled, but unbound, finds himself slowly emerging into the large fields of Universal Thought.

At every act called death, a separation of elements, and consequently of planes of consciousness, occurs. The *Self*, or Real Ego, is alone self-existent. If, therefore, the personal experience has been largely confined to the lower planes, when the separation occurs at death such experiences can have no conscious permanency. If the spiritual and mental planes have been dwarfed during earthly life from lack of use, they cannot be supposed to convey or retain the personal self-consciousness, *because they had none or so little to retain.*

That which men call death is but a change of location for the *Ego*, a mere transformation, a forsaking for a time of the mortal frame, a short period of rest before one reassumes another human frame in the world of mortals. The Lord of this body is nameless; dwelling in numerous tenements of clay, it appears to come and go; but neither death nor time can claim it, for it is deathless, unchangeable, and pure, beyond Time itself, and not to be measured.

Of the seven planes of consciousness, three are above the entire chain of globes to which the earth belongs. But in man there are *seven states* of consciousness which correspond to these seven cosmical *planes*. He is to “attune the three higher states in himself to the three higher planes in Kosmos.” Necessarily, he must have in him centres or seats of energy correspondingly, and he must awaken those seats to activity, to life, before he can attune them to the higher planes.

The three higher planes of consciousness spoken of as being inaccessible to human consciousness as yet, does not involve a contradiction. For the attuning of our three higher *states* of consciousness to the three higher *planes* is possible, although attainment to those planes is impossible for ordinary human consciousness. The attempt has to be made so as to come into harmony in ourselves with those planes, so that the potentialities may be made active and development of new faculties made possible.

Every plane has its active and its passive aspects, its principles, its sub-divisions and theirs. It is only the higher plane forces that open the upper doors. What determines this difference in power?

Thought determines it. Motive determines it, for the motive determines the *quality* of Thought. Through motive, Thought becomes contractive or expansive. It is well known that Thought affects the assimilative faculties and processes of the body. It has always been a recognized factor in therapeutics. The introduction of the higher more spiritualized vibrations into the *secret* brain centres not only opens them to the influence of the higher spheres, but also it influences the selective action of the whole sphere.

A man must *live* what he knows. Until he has lived it he cannot know it; he must *be* that higher vibration; he must himself become that “lost word,” must always go to Nature for an explanation of Occultism. The best advice I ever found was:

- 1 Use your predominant gifts to the best advantage.
- 2 Do not impede your fellow in so using his.
- 3 Follow the methods of Nature: Find a current or a nucleus, and work in it. No matter whether it seems perfect to you or not. Leave results to the Law. But if no nucleus is found, become yourself a centre. The Divine will enter and work through you.

The first step in Occultism is to “adapt your thoughts to your plastic potency.” It is an epitome of the science of Thought. The many persons — and their number grows daily greater — who desire to study “practical” Occultism would do well to approach it by this, the only safe gate. What is now called “practical occultism” is an incidental to the journey along the Path. We admit the existence of hidden, powerful forces in Nature. Astral body formation, clairvoyance, looking into the astral light, and controlling elementals, is all possible, but not all profitable. In our view the attainment of true Wisdom is not by means of phenomena, but through the development which begins within. Everyone can understand right thought, right speech, right action. The very first step is to try to apprehend the meaning of Universal Brotherhood, without which the very highest progress in the practice of occultism turns to ashes in the mouth.

It is not sufficiently well understood that every one of those energetic emissions or processes which we call “a thought” does mold the subtle matter of the ether into etheric form. Such forms are held together by the formative power or plastic potency of the soul substance, just so long as the thought energy inheres in them. The more intense the thought — or the greater the thought tension, to put it differently — the longer does the etheric form cohere as such. The energetic pictures thus formed by the mental action of men are sensed by the Inner Man of each. Sometimes, even, the vibration thus sensed gets impressed upon the brain centres and enters the lower consciousness by avenues of which we have now but a feeble idea. The pictures inhere in the mental sphere of each of us, and the sphere is dense, turbid, contractive, or shows all the brightness of the higher vibration, according to the nature of these thought forms, which not only act outwardly, but also react upon their creators.

The importance of regulating our thoughts, in view of the plastic potency of the soul and its imaginative power, hence becomes apparent. As thought *is* dynamic, these pictures — often themselves an agglomeration of lives, for the atomic substance of the ether is, every atom of it, a life — these pictures are felt far and wide. It has frequently been said that a man could be shut between prison walls, and could yet work for Humanity, by the simple means of right thinking.

