

The Christian Sacraments: Significance, Relevance and Power

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Summary

This article examines the significance of Christian sacramental ritual in relation to the trans-Himalayan teachings and traditional religious teachings. It discusses the issue of sacramental efficacy, examining religious claims, possible effects on the etheric body, and the involvement of orders of angelic or devic beings. The article also examines the claim that the sacraments were instituted by Christ and finds alternative ways in which that may be true.

Sacramental ritual, which has deep roots in ancient cultures, has played and continues to play a major role in the Christianity liturgy. Ritual engages the senses on many levels, providing opportunities for spiritual expression through beauty and drama, as well as through underlying symbolism. As the Seventh Ray of Ceremonial Order comes into manifestation, ritual is likely to become increasingly important. Whether the sacraments we know will evolve into new forms remains to be seen.

Introduction

Ritual, the oldest known religious practice, quickly passed into Christian use.¹ The apostle Paul urged: “Let all things be done decently and in order,”² and instructions for performing baptism and the Eucharist circulated in the first century CE.³ By the fourth century the Eucharistic ceremony of the Mass had attained a form we recognize today. Despite efforts to “demystify” or “demythologize” Christianity, and despite continuing indifference toward the sacraments among major denominations, sacramental ritual remains the principal focus of worship for a majority of the world’s Christians. Moreover, there is no evidence that it is losing strength. In the West, liturgical movements in the 19th and 20th cen-

tures reinvigorated sacramental practices in the Roman and Anglican Churches, and the resurgence of the Russian Orthodox Church since the fall of communism has led to new vitality in the East.

The sacraments are defined as “outward signs of inward grace.”⁴ To believers they are vehicles through which divine force descends into the physical world. Such descent could scarcely leave the form-world—especially the immediate surroundings of sacramental ritual—unchanged, and the changes perceived by participants are ones of beatitude and beautification. In order to understand the sacraments, particularly the Mass, we must pay due attention to esthetics in addition to symbolism and religious significance.

The mechanism by which divine power is transmitted to the physical plane may well be shrouded in mystery. Many people are content to leave it that way. But others are moved to speculate on that mechanism, and some religious and esoteric writers have suggested that angels or devas serve as transmitting agents. Other esoteric writers have focused on effects on the etheric levels of the physical plane. These theories will be examined in due course.

Like all rituals the sacraments are governed by the Seventh Ray. Known variously as the ray of Ceremonial Magic, Ceremonial Order, or

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Ceremonial Ritual in the works of Alice Bailey, its “major function is to produce order, rhythm and established, sequential activity.”⁵ The seventh ray is now coming into cyclical manifestation, replacing the sixth that held sway through much of the Age of Pisces. The promised new world religion will undoubtedly include a strong service imperative, but predictions that the new religion will absorb aspects of masonic tradition suggest that ritual will play an important role.⁶ We understand that the Master Rakoczi, chohan of the Seventh Ray, now also holds the position of Mahachohan of the Division of Civilization,⁷ a “promotion” that leaves little doubt concerning trends in the Aquarian Age. While ritual forms may evolve over time or new ones emerge in the decades and centuries to come, it seems inevitable that ritual will receive increasing emphasis at the expense of religious devotion.

The present article seeks to examine the sacraments from an esoteric perspective but with a traditionally Christian understanding of their role and purpose. Accordingly it draws from both the esoteric and the religious literature. The esoteric writers whose works are cited will probably be well-known to the *Quarterly*'s readers, but some of the religious writers may need introduction. Two individuals' work is particularly important to this discussion.

The German Benedictine monk Odo Casel (1886–1946) took as the dissertation topic of his second doctorate the mystery religions of classical antiquity. In addition to his duties as chaplain to a convent in Westphalia, he served for 20 years as editor of the prestigious *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft* (“Yearbook for Liturgical Science”). His work was controversial—one reviewer in a theological journal called him a liar—but he was also lauded as the father of the 20th-century liturgical movement.⁸

Swiss theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905–1988), a scholar with a vast published output, was also controversial. His fortunes varied from being prohibited from teaching in Roman Catholic seminaries to being named a cardinal, only to die before receiving his red hat. Among Balthasar's contributions were monumental works on esthetics and drama in

theology and liturgy.⁹ An interest in esoterica was demonstrated by the afterword he wrote to Valentin Tomberg's *Meditations on the Tarot*.¹⁰

Other religious writers whose works are cited include John Henry Hopkins, Gregory Dix, Vladimir Lossky, Michael Ramsey, and Alkiviadis Calivas. Hopkins (1792–1868) was the first bishop of Vermont and eighth presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church. His research supported the ritualist movement in Anglicanism. Significant for its time though lacking the objectivity of modern academic scholarship, the work was published as *The Law of Ritualism* (1866). Dix (1901–1952) was an Anglican Benedictine monk at Nashdom Abbey, England, and a prominent liturgical scholar. His greatest contribution was *The Shape of the Liturgy* (1945), which influenced liturgical reform in the Anglican Church and beyond. The bishop of Oxford eulogized him as “the most brilliant man in the Church of England.” Lossky (1903–1958) was an influential Russian Orthodox theologian. Forced into exile in 1922, he spent most of his life in Paris, where he wrote numerous works and helped bring Orthodox teachings to a western audience. Ramsey (1904–1988), an Anglo-Catholic, served as Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University and eventually as 100th archbishop of Canterbury.¹¹ Finally, Calivas, a Greek Orthodox priest, earned his doctorate in theology from the University of Thessaloniki and served as dean and professor of liturgical theology at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts.

Christianity and Its Sacraments

Christianity's fundamental claim is that it was founded by Jesus Christ, the Son of God incarnate in human form. Scripture testifies that Jesus pursued an active ministry for three years, after which he was crucified, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven; through his death and resurrection he secured human-kind's redemption. What we know of Christ cannot be separated from what Christianity teaches about him. The selection, editing

and compilation of scripture, as well as the formulation of Christological doctrine, were the work of the emerging institutional church that went on to dominate Christianity throughout the Middle Ages. The Nicene Creed, formulated by the Councils of Nicaea (325) and Constantinople (381), affirmed the “one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church,” supporting later belief in a unified primitive church from which all later denominations, sects and traditions descended.¹²

On a number of key issues esoteric writers have offered perspectives on Christology that contrast with those of mainstream Christianity. Esotericists commonly distinguish Jesus from Christ, taking a position closer to Nestorianism than to orthodox Christianity—though the differences may well be reconcilable at a higher level.¹³ Phineas Parkhurst Quimby, “father” of New Thought, asserted that “Jesus embodied... an intelligence called Christ, embracing all the attributes of man, and being a revelation of a higher wisdom than had before appeared on the earth.”¹⁴ His former patient and founder of Christian Science, Mary Baker Eddy, declared: “The word Christ is not properly a synonym for Jesus... Christ is not a name so much as the divine title of Jesus. Christ expresses God’s spiritual, eternal nature.”¹⁵

The trans-Himalayan writers went further to recognize Christ as a distinct entity, an avatar who manifests the essence, energy and light of the Second Aspect of Deity.¹⁶ Alice Bailey referred to him as

the great Lord of Love and of Compassion... the World Teacher, the Master of the Masters, and the Instructor of the Angels. [T]o Him is committed the guidance of the spiritual destinies of men, and the development of the realization within each human being that he is a child of God and a son of the Most High.¹⁷

Christ, according to this perspective, overshadowed his disciple, Jesus, during his earthly ministry. However Jesus was no ordinary man. Theosophist Annie Besant claimed that Jesus was schooled in the ancient mysteries in previous lifetimes and possibly even the one in Palestine.¹⁸ Bailey stated that Christ attained

the sixth initiation, and Jesus the fourth initiation at the crucifixion. The latter went on to attain the fifth initiation in his incarnation as Apollonius of Tyana,¹⁹ whereupon we now refer to him as the Master Jesus. In any event, since Christ expressed the second ray and Jesus the sixth, Christianity combines the qualities of the two rays.

Esotericists—as well, it turns out, as Eastern Orthodox Christians—also tend to distance themselves from views of the redemption based on Old Testament notions of atonement. Instead they view “salvation” as a transformative or healing process, ameliorating humankind’s weaknesses and offering new opportunities for sanctification.²⁰ Significantly, the Greek verb *sozo* (σωζω)—usually translated as “to save” and which is the root of *soteriology*, the theory of salvation—more commonly meant “to heal.”²¹

Dion Fortune of the Golden Dawn tradition declared that the crucifixion and redemption were aspects of a drama that unfolded on multiple levels of reality: “The crucifixion of Our Lord at the hands of Roman authority was but the shadow thrown on the material plane by the struggle that was going on in the spiritual world. It was not the spilling of the blood of Jesus of Nazareth that redeemed mankind, but the outpouring of spiritual power from the mind of Jesus the Christ.”²² The notion of cosmic drama will be important to our later discussion.

Christianity conventionally regards Christ’s sacrifice on Calvary as the central act of redemption. Theosophist Charles Leadbeater pointed to the more general sacrifice Christ made simply by assuming physical form.²³ And Bailey placed Christ’s incarnation in the context of Sanat Kumara’s descent into manifestation during the Lemurian era. Sanat Kumara, in her words, “is the Great Sacrifice, Who left the glory of the high places and for the sake of the evolving sons of men took upon Himself a physical form and was made in the likeness of man.”²⁴

According to Bailey, the Master Jesus assumed responsibility for the Christian religion.²⁵ However there is little doubt that the *thought-*

form of Christianity was conceived in the mind of Christ, as Fortune seemed to suggest. That thoughtform—what apologists term the *ecclesia* or the “mystical body of Christ”—lay outside space and time, but it provided the archetype or model that guided Christian religious activity throughout history.²⁶ Religious activity, of course, covers a broad field, and elsewhere the present author has suggested that it can be divided into seven major paths: devotion, ceremony, knowledge, healing, service, activism and renunciation.²⁷ Ceremony has, with few exceptions, been an essential element of the Christian experience, and clearly sacramental ritual was one aspect of Christ’s thoughtform. Thus the claim that the sacraments were instituted by Christ is valid, whether or not they actually date from apostolic times.

Sacraments and the Church’s Mission

Christianity has always advocated both private devotion and public worship. The latter has traditionally been scripted, following some form of approved liturgy. The Greek word *leitourgia* (λειτουργία), from which “liturgy” is derived, originally referred to a work of public service; for example, it could mean outfitting a ship for war. But it could also mean “sponsoring a choir for the tragedies in honor of Dionysus,”²⁸ and eventually the term acquired its modern connotation. Today, the liturgy refers to the church’s official, corporate worship, or what the 16th-century Archbishop Thomas Cranmer called “common prayer.”²⁹

Two broad forms of Christianity will be referred to in this article, based on styles of worship and interpretations of ecclesiastical responsibility.³⁰ What we shall term “sacramental Christianity” was the norm in the medieval church, and today it includes, but is not limited to, the Roman and Eastern Orthodox Churches. It makes two interrelated claims:

- Christ instituted certain sacred rites to provide the principal vehicles by which divine grace can flow to the faithful.
- Custody of those rites was entrusted to the apostles, deemed to have been the

first bishops, and passed to successive generations of bishops via the apostolic succession: an unbroken episcopal lineage from apostolic times onward. In turn, bishops ordained clergy to perform the rites for local Christian communities.

Various rituals were performed in the early church, the most important being baptism and the Eucharist. During much of the medieval period the number of recognized sacraments varied from two to ten.³¹ After the East-West schism in the 11th century the Church of Rome declared that seven rites (the number seven had obvious symbolic significance) had been instituted by Christ and were guaranteed vehicles of divine grace. Those “canonical sacraments”—the three initiatory rites of baptism, confirmation and holy orders, together with the Eucharist, anointing of the sick (or the dying), penance, and matrimony—took precedence over rites like the burial service and profession of monastic vows.³² The Eastern Orthodox Churches eventually endorsed the same seven canonical sacraments.

Contrasting with sacramental Christianity is “evangelical Christianity,” which took early forms with the Waldensians in the 12th century and Lollards in the 14th and gathered momentum with the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century.³³ The German Lutheran churches rejected all but two sacraments: baptism and the Eucharist—or what they preferred to call “the Lord’s Supper.” The Calvinists, Baptists and Methodists further downplayed the sacraments, and Quakers rejected them altogether. Evangelical Christianity emphasizes Bible study, the conversion experience, and devotion.³⁴ Its future potential may be in question as the sixth ray of Devotion/Idealism passes out of manifestation.

Two major denominations straddle the sacramental-evangelical divide and in consequence have experienced inner tension between opposing factions. Whereas German Lutherans abolished the episcopate, the Church of Sweden preserved its episcopate, along with the claim of apostolic succession, and has always favored a more sacramental style of worship. Contrasting forms continued as Lutheranism

spread beyond Europe, but a shift toward the sacramental form has occurred over the last 100 years. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of America has reinstated an episcopate, and high-church Lutherans have embraced much pre-Reformation-style ceremony.

The high-church party within Church of England pressed successfully for preservation of the episcopate. It also emphasized the claim of apostolic succession and the importance of the sacraments. The episcopal lineage subsequently passed to independent daughter churches of the worldwide Anglican Communion. High-church Anglicanism in England, North America, and elsewhere has gained in strength over the last 200 years, no doubt reflecting incoming seventh-ray influence, and sacramental styles of worship have now become the norm. Ultra-high-church Anglo-Catholics recognize all seven sacraments and have sought to capture the full splendor of pre-Reformation ceremony.

The denominations that emphasize the sacraments also emphasize a sacred priesthood and claim the apostolic succession. The succession—assuming that it really did span the decades between the apostles' deaths and the beginning of the second century when historians can identify a well-defined episcopate—is not absolutely necessary to support the claim of sacramental authenticity. However it suggests a tangible thread of continuity between Christ's ministry, when the sacraments are said to have been instituted, and the sacramental church of later centuries. The apostolic succession offers a testament of legitimacy for sacramental Christianity. Furthermore, belief that Jesus Christ was the Son of God adds weight to the claim that the sacraments are indeed vehicles of divine grace.

Institutional Christianity views itself as a corporate entity with authority to teach, administer the sacraments, and exercise religious discipline. But some esotericists view the church in a more subjective, though no less real, manner. For example Theosophist Geoffrey Hodson referred to it as “a magnetic center, established at a certain point on the surface of the globe, at which special conditions have been created to permit the free passage of power,

life, and consciousness from the spiritual to the material level, and from the material back to the spiritual.”³⁵ Hodson explained that four streams of power flow to “a properly consecrated church”:

These emanate firstly, from the human and superhuman Hierarchy known to us as the Great White Brotherhood of Adepts...; secondly from the angelic hierarchy, reaching right up to the Seven Spirits before the Throne and to the angelic aspects of the Logos Himself; thirdly, from the center of the earth; and fourthly, from the sun. These four streams... each contributes its own particular influence and all are used by the Lord Christ, who... makes use of them a single instrument for the particular work which He does for the world through the Christian faith.³⁶

Hodson did not explain what constituted “proper consecration,” but as an ordained priest in the Liberal Catholic Church, which claims the apostolic succession, he probably included his own denomination. Hodson's church resembles Anglo-Catholicism in its embrace of ceremonial ritual.

Precedents for Sacramental Ritual

Christianity embraced a religious mission that differed in significant ways from what preceded it. But its priestly tradition, theology, and administrative structure, all built upon precedents in biblical Judaism, Greco-Roman culture, and elsewhere. Judaism provided monotheistic theology, a codified moral law, notions of popular religion, a liturgical calendar, sacred texts, and a strong sacerdotal tradition. Greek philosophy provided concepts of the Trinity and Logos, along with Platonic dualism.³⁷ Roman administration provided an effective ecclesiastical model, and an infrastructure for the rapid expansion of Christianity over a region extending from the British Isles to India.

Primitive Christianity adopted and modified many rituals from earlier, or in a few cases contemporary, religious systems. Esoteric writers, as well as some religious writers, have viewed the sacraments as the successors of the ancient mysteries. Eastern Orthodox Churches

still refer to the sacraments as “the mysteries,” drawing upon the Greek word *mysterion* (μυστήριον, “a secret rite”). The mystery schools, which dated back to ancient Egypt and possibly Persia, still pervaded the Greco-Roman world at the dawn of the Common Era. They were the custodians of sacred rituals that sought to establish favorable relationships with deities and maintain cosmic harmony. The word “ritual” comes from the Sanskrit *rita*, which captured the sense of order; Indra, the Vedic warrior god and champion of *rita*, slew the chaos dragon Vrtra. Whether mystery schools existed in Palestine is unclear; however the frequent use of Hebrew names in later mystical and theurgic practices suggests a debt to a Judaic mystery tradition.

The notion of a sacrament came from Greco-Roman culture. In Roman law, a sacrament (from the Latin *sacer*, “holy”), was a legal contract in which a god was invoked as guarantor of honest performance. Egyptians swore “by the God Amen,”³⁸ and we find the identical oath in *Isaiah*—though “God Amen” is rendered in virtually every English translation as “God of truth!”³⁹ “Amen” passed into Christianity as an affirmation of truthfulness. The sacraments came to be understood as ritual practices or objects through which the divine presence could be invoked. Typically, there was an implied guarantee of effectiveness, within the covenant between God and his church.⁴⁰

The liturgical calendar and scriptural readings of early Christian worship services were based on synagogue precedents, while some rituals developed from temple custom. Baptism may recall Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan,⁴¹ and Christ reportedly charged his apostles: “Go ye

therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”⁴² But ritual lavation was long established in the Jewish rite of *mikvah* (מִקְוֵה).

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Confirmation, in which candidates are anointed with oil, recalls Judaic and other rites in which kings, prophets and high priests were anointed.⁴³ Sacramental healing has extensive coverage in the New Testament. In addition to three incidents in which people were raised from the dead,⁴⁴ the canonical gospels record 38 healings.⁴⁵ The first charge to the apostles included healing the sick.⁴⁶

Rites involving bread and wine existed in both Judaism and Mithraism.

More directly the Eucharist (Greek: εὐχαριστία, “thanksgiving”) is said to commemorate—or in some sense reenact—the Last Supper.⁴⁷ Christ himself commanded “Do this in remembrance of me” and later said that he would be known “in breaking of bread.”⁴⁸ The traditional assumption—suggested by the synoptic gospels but contradicted by *John*—was that the Last Supper was a Jewish *Seder*, or Passover meal. But that assumption is now called into question. Gregory Dix identified it as a *chaburah* (Hebrew: *chaber*, חֲבֵר, “friend”), or religious gathering of friends.⁴⁹ Influenced by his work, a modern version of the Eucharistic prayer states: “On the night before he died he [Jesus] had supper with his friends.”⁵⁰ A contrasting theory is that the Last Supper had no factual Jewish precedent but was a creation of Pauline Christianity.⁵¹

Based on his research Dix concluded that eucharistic prayers varied from place to place in the primitive church, but the basic outline of the service—or what he famously called the “shape” of the liturgy—was surprisingly uniform. It consisted of the offering of bread and

wine, consecration of the elements, breaking of the bread, and distribution of communion. That fourfold shape, Dix asserted, had become customary before the epistles and gospels were written and before an intellectual understanding of the Eucharist had emerged and related doctrine formulated.⁵²

In addition to its commemorative aspect, apologists in the sacramental churches have related the Eucharist to Jewish ritual sacrifice. According to Bishop Hopkins: “The animal sacrifices [ceased] because they were only types of the great Sacrifice which the Cross of Christ had fulfilled. And He had Himself instituted the new memorial of His precious Body and Blood in the Sacrament of the holy Eucharist.”⁵³ The sacrificial aspect of the Eucharist will be discussed in more detail later.

Significance of the Sacraments

Sacramental Mystery

Mystery came under attack by western scholastics in the 13th century and by philosophers in the East a century later. Gregory Palamas (1296–1359), revered saint of Mount Athos, Greece, emerged as its champion. Vladimir Lossky described the assault as

a conflict between mystical theology and a religious philosophy... The God of revelation and of religious experience was confronted with the God of the philosophers, on the battleground of mysticism, and... the foolishness of God put to nought the wisdom of man.⁵⁴

The battle Palamas fought was important because Eastern Orthodoxy has always taken a mystical, rather than a moral, approach to Christianity. To take just one example, while western Christianity emphasizes the crucifixion as a subject of devotion (often in isolation from the resurrection), its eastern counterpart emphasizes Christ’s transfiguration.⁵⁵

Within that context Eastern Orthodox Christians regard the sacraments as powerful mysteries. Alkiviadis Calivas explained that they

prepare the faithful for the future life, but they also make that life real, here and now.

We are given the vision and have the foretaste of the things to come through them. They introduce us continuously and in various ways to the transforming power of God... In them we encounter Christ, in order to be Christ. We enter upon a decisively new reality: in Christ we learn to become fully conscious of what it really means to be human.⁵⁶

Odo Casel defined a mystery in terms of ineffability; it is “beyond utterance not only in the original meaning, that it might not be spoken, but further that its content cannot be exhausted by words.”⁵⁷ Even as a western Christian he depicted the sacraments as the mysteries of the new covenant. Christianity, in his words,

is not as it were a philosophy of life with religious background music, not a moral or theological training; it is a mysterium... a revelation made by God to man... full of life and power..., communicating the solemn entry of the redeemed Church into the presence of the everlasting Father through sacrifice, through perfect devotion.⁵⁸

Sacred mystery transcends mundane concerns and provides a route to the divine realm:

The sacred action becomes a mystery in the full sense when it is concerned not merely with strivings in this life, keeping the worshipping assembly in health and life, making nature blossom and thrive, but rather with union with the godhead which it honors and the blessed continuation of life after death as the center of religious strivings.⁵⁹

The religious strivings are directed toward salvation—or, we might say, healing and transformation. Casel explained: “The mystery is a sacred ritual action in which a saving deed is made present through the rite; the congregation, by performing the rite, takes part in the saving act, and thereby win salvation.”⁶⁰

The mystery, *par excellence*, in sacramental Christianity is of course the Eucharist. All sacramental churches claim that communicants receive, under the appearances of bread and wine, the body and blood of Christ. Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox Christians have always affirmed belief in an objective

real presence. Anglicans disagree over whether the real presence applies to the consecrated elements or only to the receipt of communion, but Anglo-Catholics, whose influence is increasing, affirm a localized presence on the altar. High-church Lutherans do the same.

The Church of Rome defined the dogma of transubstantiation: that the “substance” of the bread and wine is changed into the body and blood of Christ. Liberal Catholic Geoffrey Hodson agreed: “Of the reality of the Holy Eucharist and of the Consecration and Transubstantiation there can be no doubt. It is a glorious truth.”⁶¹ The Anglican and Eastern Orthodox Churches reject the possibility of reducing the real presence to a doctrinal formula, thereby allowing for individual insight and interpretation. Even the Roman Catholic Balthasar acknowledged:

It is evident that the “mystery” cannot be “explained,” neither the “transubstantiation” of bread and wine into Flesh and Blood nor the other far more important happening which can analogously be called “transubstantiation” of Christ’s Flesh and Blood into the organism of the Church (and of Christians as her members). What is important is not that we know *how* God does it, but that we know *that* and *why* he does it. It is on this that the stress must fall in the formation of liturgy.⁶²

Roman Catholicism further asserts that the Mass is a re-presentation of the sacrifice of Calvary. “The highest acts of every religion,” Casel asserted, “are prayer and sacrifice.”⁶³ Christianity is no exception: “[W]ithout this mystery, the Church would be an offerer without sacrifice, an altar with no gift, a bride cut off from her bridegroom, unconsecrated, knowing no way to the Father.”⁶⁴

Anglicans are divided over whether the Eucharist should be viewed as a sacrifice, but that view has become stronger as a consequence of the catholic revival movement. In either case it is a great act of praise. To quote Michael Ramsey: “If [the Eucharist] be called a worship of sacrificial offering, it is so because it is through Christ who is high-priest... If it be called a worship of glorifying, it is so because

it is through Christ who glorifies the Father.”⁶⁵ And “it unites those who partake with the glory of Christ as He now is—risen [and] ascended.”⁶⁶ Christ’s priestly role is mentioned several times in the *Epistle to the Hebrews*; for example: “we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God.”⁶⁷

Jesuit priest and paleontologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881–1955) viewed celebration of the Eucharist as an activity of global or cosmic dimensions:

[W]hen, through the mouth of the priest, [Christ] says *Hoc est corpus meum*, these words extend beyond the morsel of bread over which they are said: they give birth to the mystical body of Christ. The effect of the priestly act extends beyond the consecrated host to the cosmos itself.⁶⁸

The Eucharist, he added, is the means through which the divine presence in the world is increasing:

Christ is not yet fully formed: he has not yet gathered about him the last folds of his robe of flesh and of love which is made up of his faithful followers. The mystical Christ has not yet attained to his full growth; and therefore the same is true of the cosmic Christ. Both of these are simultaneously in the state of being and of becoming; and it is from the prolongation of this process of becoming that all created activity ultimately springs. Christ is the end-point of the evolution, even the *natural* evolution, of all beings.⁶⁹

Timeless Symbolism

Ritual accumulates power through successive reenactments, each of which is both the recapitulation of prior enactments in historical time and identification with a moment outside time.⁷⁰ The Christian liturgy exploits the power of repetition through a pattern of daily, weekly and annual cycles. In sacramental churches the Eucharist is celebrated at least once per week, and in monasteries and cathedrals it is offered every day. Monks observe the divine office, or “canonical hours,” consisting of the eight rites of Matins, Lauds, Prime,

Terce, Sext, None, Vespers and Compline. In non-monastic settings the daily office is simplified; for example the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* offers Morning and Evening Prayer. The annual liturgical calendar, with its prescribed scriptural readings, changing colors of vestments and draperies, days of penitence and great festivals, is an important pattern too. The annual cycle explores and relives Christian sacred history. In Casel's words, "The entire holy year is an image of the eternal design of God, contains the mystery of Christ; within this circle the mystery unfolds to the Vision that cannot yet see the whole as it is in the world to come."⁷¹

Christ's incarnation—including his life, death, resurrection and ascension—spanned multiple levels of reality. On the physical plane it occurred in Roman Palestine in the first century CE. But at higher levels, like Christ's thought-form of Christianity, it lies outside space and time; in a real sense it is taking place now. Accordingly, as Casel pointed out, when the sacraments draw upon the power of the incarnation they do so with a sense of immediacy:

The promise, "I am with you all days until the end of the world," is to be fulfilled not merely by the moral or spiritual protection of grace in abstract, but in a concrete yet Spirit-filled presence and objective nature. Therefore the Lord left behind for his Church not merely faith and Spirit but his mysteries; or rather, he ordained that the life of faith and grace should find continual celebration of the mysteries. The words of Christ, "where two or three are gathered together in my name I am in the midst of them" were to be quite literally fulfilled.⁷²

References in *Hebrews* to Christ's priestly role have already been mentioned. Casel took up the same theme, declaring that, in the timeless presentation of the mysteries, Christ is the overshadowing hierophant and the priest his earthly agent. Hodson saw Christ's role in the eucharist as part of his responsibilities as World Teacher and head of the Division of Religion, a position that allows him to access vast sources of power:

Of the three aspects of the Blessed Trinity, the Wisdom-Love of God is especially manifested through the Presence of our Lord [on the altar]. In His office as World Teacher, and as the Founder of the Christian Faith, He also manifests and releases power from the great reservoir of spiritual energy by which all the great religions of the world are inspired. One purpose of the Mass is to draw upon that reservoir, so that the waters of life... may be made manifest.⁷³

Sacraments capture timeless mysteries in symbols, through which, to quote high-church Anglican poet John Keble, "God speaks to us of a world out of sight."⁷⁴ Symbols conceal as much as they reveal; only initiates can fully grasp the symbolism and penetrate the mysteries. Nevertheless symbols provide essential hints; in Balthasar's words:

A sacrament is an ecclesiastical gesture that Jesus Christ directs to man. In order to be understandable, this gesture clothes itself in a generally intelligible cosmic image (the elements) or human image (the laying on of hands, the act of man forgiving man). But the image's universally intelligible symbolic content is itself only a pointer to Christ's corporeal and spiritual gesture [and at least in part] because of Christ's unique symbolic power as God and man.⁷⁵

With respect to the Eucharist Balthasar commented that it "constitutes an image which cannot in any way be affected either by the tastes of a particular time or by any kind of demythologization."⁷⁶

In themselves the outer forms have no value; the baptismal water, the chrism of confirmation, the unction for anointing the sick, the bread and wine, the laying-on of hands, and gestures like the sign of the cross are nothing. Similarly, church architecture and decorations in themselves are no more significant than well-appointed living rooms. But those forms are the instruments and storehouses of power. Calivas explained: "The outward signs of the mysteries convey grace tangibly not of themselves but by the very present of the Holy Spirit in them. And the grace given is not at all ambiguous or symbolic but real and actual,

in order to truly recreate and perfect each person in the image and likeness of God.”⁷⁷ Hodson added:

A physical symbol corresponds to a super-physical force, just as a word corresponds to an idea. When a word is uttered the meaning behind the word is manifested, and the power behind the idea for which the word stands is then released. When a symbol is constructed and exposed for ceremonial purposes, the spiritual forces, of which it is an expression in form, manifest themselves to a certain degree; when symbols are employed consciously, as in sacramental processes, they become ensouled with living power and the great forces behind them are then released.⁷⁸

Combined with devotion and sacramental intent, the liturgical words, and—believers assert—divine sanction, those external forms provide the physical-plane vessels into which, or through which, grace or divine light flows to recipients.

Sacred Esthetics and Drama

Sacred pageantry stands out from the affairs of everyday life and brings the whole person into intense participation. It evokes anticipation, captures attention, demands reverence, and leaves worthy memories. It instills a sense of awe before the majesty and glory of God.

Drama and esthetics are essential ingredients of sacramental worship. Many rituals are joyous and celebratory, like the Easter service, the marriage ceremony, the consecration of a bishop, and the coronation of a monarch. However, the darker emotions are not shunned, nor depictions of violence. The office of *Tenebrae*, the Good Friday liturgy, and requiem Masses explore the devastation of loss and the struggle to overcome despair. Confession, liturgical or auricular, exposes the depths of human weakness. The Stations of the Cross focus intently on Jesus’ passion and death. The crucifix is a shocking icon, but it has inspired millions of devotees, including some of the greatest mystics.

The esthetic dimension of worship was understood in antiquity: “Give unto the Lord the

glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.”⁷⁹ And “let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us.”⁸⁰ *Exodus* 28 described the priestly vestments prescribed for Moses’ brother, the first high priest:

And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty... a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a brodered coat, a mitre, and a girdle... that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office. And they shall take gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen.⁸¹

First Kings described the construction and dedication of Solomon’s temple.⁸² The best architect, Hiram, was hired, and the building he constructed evidently was impressive. Elsewhere we learn that temple furnishings included “the pure candlestick,” “the altar of incense,” “the altar of burnt offering,” “the cloths of service,” and “anointing oil, and sweet incense.”⁸³

Bishop Hopkins cited many of these passages in his research. He also described—not without some degree of imagination—elaborate rites in the Jewish temple: “we see the largest provision for the praise of God accompanied by all the instruments of music, in the Psalms given by inspiration and chanted morning and evening, every day, by trained and skillful choristers, in which the royal David sometimes bore his part.”⁸⁴ Seeming to anticipate Bailey’s definition of the seventh ray, Hopkins remarked that “*ritual and ceremonial order... were of the most grand and imposing character.*”⁸⁵

Judaism acknowledged the glory of God in the transcendent *Kavod* (Hebrew: כבוד) and the immanent, indwelling *Shekinah* (שכינה). Christianity followed its example. At the transfiguration the apostles Peter, James and John saw Christ in his divine glory.⁸⁶ The fourth gospel proclaimed that “the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”⁸⁷ “Dwelt among us” may have been an inten-

tional reference to the Shekinah.⁸⁸ The resurrection, Balthasar declared, “pours out its ‘sublime splendor’ (*kavod, doxa, gloria*) over the whole sphere of the Church and of the bestowal of grace.”⁸⁹

Writing in the 5th- or 6th-century, the Pseudo-Dionysius, father of Christian angelology, depicted God as the source of pure beauty, bestowed upon the righteous through the mysteries:

Now the Beauty of God, being unific, good, and the Source of all perfection, is wholly free from dissimilarity, and bestows its own Light upon each according to his merit; and in the most divine Mysteries perfects them in accordance with the unchangeable fashioning of those who are being perfected harmoniously to Itself.⁹⁰

The 13th-century English scholar Robert Grosseteste appealed to Greek concepts of harmony: “For beauty is a concordance and fittingness of a thing to itself and to the whole, and that whole to all things.”⁹¹ Thomas Aquinas agreed, declaring: “Beauty and goodness... are identical fundamentally; for they are based upon the same thing, namely, the form... [B]eauty relates to the cognitive faculty; for beautiful things are those which please when seen. Hence beauty consists in due proportion; for the senses delight in things duly proportioned.”⁹² What we perceive as beautiful we revere and adore.

Christians were unable to acquire large houses of worship until the fourth century, when Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire. From then on, and throughout the Middle Ages, vast resources were joyfully invested in the construction of churches, abbeys and cathedrals. The Gothic cathedrals that grace the landscape of Europe still inspire awe—and imitation. The great medieval cathedrals made unmistakable statements of the transcendence of God (and not incidentally the power of the church). They also provided opportunities for visual artistry, ceremonial pageantry, and sacred music.

Music has played a major role in Christian worship. Early in the second century Ignatius of Antioch urged the people of Ephesus to

form a choir, “that being harmonious in concord and taking the key note of God ye may in unison sing with one voice through Jesus Christ unto the Father.”⁹³ Ambrose, fourth-century bishop of Milan, and sixth-century Pope Gregory I both promoted sacred music and lent their names to chants that remain popular today.

Sacred music and art have not always been held in high esteem. Some early Christians linked music with paganism. Church father Origen opposed religious art, asserting that if Christ were portrayed at all he should be depicted as an ugly man.⁹⁴ Certain Byzantine emperors opposed the veneration of icons on the grounds that it amounted to idolatry; priceless treasures were destroyed in the waves of iconoclasm that followed. In the ninth century, the emperor Charlemagne wondered aloud whether the devotional use of art was appropriate. Three hundred years later, Bernard of Clairvaux denounced the decoration of monastic buildings because it undermined the austerity of religious life.⁹⁵

The Protestant Reformation saw another revolt against sacred esthetics. Both Zwingli and Calvin opposed organ music, and the former even outlawed congregational singing at his church in Zurich. Many newly constructed church buildings were indistinguishable from meeting houses; others were simply ugly. Even in his own time Hans Balthasar lamented that beauty is “no longer loved or fostered by religion,” adding that “beauty is lifted from its face as a mask, and its absence exposes features on that face which threaten to become incomprehensible to man.”⁹⁶

However, Christian worship recovered from Reformation austerity. In both Germany and England, composers of the baroque and classical periods left a heritage of music of timeless excellence, including settings of the Latin Mass. In the 19th century, the catholic revival movement spurred new interest in music in Anglican worship. During Bishop Hopkins’ own lifetime parish choirs were playing an increasing role in his church.

Sacred music, Odo Casel declared, “proceeds from the very heart of worship.” He continued:

[It] rises on the one hand from deep emotion, away from the triviality of daily life..., on the other hand it possesses a deep vision of harmony and beauty in rhythm and number. The plenitude of God’s power and the up-raising of the mind brings us into his freedom and order and lead to music, and music in pure, classical form.⁹⁷

Casel, whose vows committed him to daily participation, recognized the extent to which musical settings of the monastic office created the mood of the service or liturgical season:

The choral music which is sung to the psalm, changes according to the musical tone of antiphon. One can see how simple and yet great are the means which the Church uses her; the alleluia, for example, brings an Easter note to the whole office and exalted and joyful aura.⁹⁸

The psalms, he continued, contain “an immense and inexhaustible sea of teaching, prayer, poetry and wisdom for living.”⁹⁹ Michael Ramsey described the Psalter as “the voice of the Israel of God... [and] the prayer book of Christ Himself. In His own use of them its words of adoration, supplications and self-committal were brought to their perfect end.”¹⁰⁰ Settings of the psalms to Anglican chant are revered treasures of sacred music.

Nineteenth-century romanticism promoted efforts to recover the grandeur of pre-Reformation architecture and decoration. Gothic cathedrals and abbey churches—those that were still standing—were restored with a

Every physical object exists at both the dense and etheric levels. The etheric component contains chemical, magnetic and electric fields, and probably fields yet unidentified by science. The sacramental “magnetization” of objects and, most importantly, transformation of the Eucharistic elements can be understood in terms of phenomena at the etheric level.

sacramental focus. Gothic-revival styles became a trademark of Anglican church construction. Whether or not that was the appropriate style for the time, the objective was to make church buildings worthy settings for sacred ritual. The Episcopal rite for the dedication of a church thanks God “for the gifts of your people, and for the work of many hands, which have beautified this place and furnished

it for the celebration of your holy mysteries.”¹⁰¹

Beauty in sacred ritual has implications beyond this world. Balthasar described the sacraments as “an essential part of celestial esthetics.” In fact: “Not only does God’s invisible grace become visible and graspable in the Christ-form as such, but here, in the sacraments, the Christ-form itself in turn appears before us and impresses its shape upon us in a valid form which is free from all subjective ambiguities.”¹⁰²

Beauty “dances as an uncontained splendor around the double connection of the true and the good and their inseparable relation to one another.”¹⁰³ What Balthasar called the “theory of rapture” addressed “the incarnation of God’s glory and the consequent elevation of man to participate in that glory.”¹⁰⁴

Balthasar warned against naïve confusion between the revealed glory of God and human art.¹⁰⁵ He may have recalled a passage in the *Wisdom of Solomon*: “[I]f they being delighted took [beautiful things] to be gods; let them know how much better the Lord of them is: for the first author of beauty hath created them.”¹⁰⁶ Yet the beauty invested in ceremonial ritual is our response to the divine glory. Ramsey declared: “God has declared His glory to the end that all creation may give glory to Him... The end is a new creation, forged from out of the broken pieces of a fallen creation, filled with glory and giving glory to its maker.”¹⁰⁷ Humanity’s participation in the

divine glory is precisely what Eastern Orthodox theologians mean by *theosis* (θεωσις), or “deification.”¹⁰⁸

The Eucharist, in which the very Son of God is believed to be present, would seem to merit investment of the very best of human resources. Decoration of the altar and chancel, use of incense, gold or silver chalices and ciboria, and colorful Eucharistic vestments are considered as important as genuflection and elevation of the elements at the consecration. To offer less would invite rejection, as Cain’s offering was rejected by Yahweh.¹⁰⁹

Esotericists have placed their own emphasis on sacred esthetics. Annie Besant, whose ex-husband was an evangelical Anglican minister, but who became a member of the sacramental Liberal Catholic Church, saw special power in the Roman liturgy:

Some of the arrangements of Latin words, with the music wedded to them in Christian worship, cause the most marked effects on the supra-physical worlds, and any one who is at all sensitive will be conscious of peculiar effects caused by the chanting of some of the most sacred sentences, especially in the Mass.... [A]t the same time effects are caused in the higher worlds directly affecting the subtle bodies... and also appealing to the Intelligences in those worlds.¹¹⁰

Alice Bailey spoke of esthetics as a natural response to the seventh ray: “When the egoic ray is the seventh or Ray of Ceremony, Law or Magic, the method is that of the glorification and comprehension of form in approach.”¹¹¹ Also the seventh ray “holds hid the secret of physical color and sound.”¹¹² Theosophist Ernest Wood identified the seventh ray as the ray of beauty and the artist. Moreover, like Balthasar, he looked back with nostalgia to a time when sacred esthetics was appreciated more fully. Speaking of the ancient religious buildings of India, where he lived for 13 years, he declared:

These magnificent erections, beautiful in size, outline and proportion, as well as in detailed features of carving, remain with us as enduring monuments of former days, when men sought ecstasy and revelation

through beauty, and they are now a splendid instrument for refining, elevating and enlarging the consciousness of all who live near them.¹¹³

Noting the role esthetics plays in ceremonial worship, Wood proclaimed that “we are consecrated” by beauty.¹¹⁴ Archbishop Ramsey would certainly agree.

Science of the Sacraments

Divine grace is imparted by the sacraments, but precisely how is that accomplished? Hans Balthasar echoed the sentiment of the 16th-century Anglican clergyman Richard Hooker in insisting that the “how” is unimportant.¹¹⁵ But others have felt compelled to speculate on the underlying mechanisms, whether or not they would want their explanations to be dogmatized. Annie Besant explained the effects of sacramental ritual thus: “Magnetic changes are caused in the ether of the physical substance, and the subtle counterparts are affected according to the knowledge, purity, and devotion of the celebrant who magnetizes—or, in the religious term, consecrates—it.”¹¹⁶

The Roman Church would take issue with her comment about the celebrant’s disposition; its doctrine of *ex opere operato* (“from the work done”) asserts that sacramental efficacy is independent of the merits or holiness of the priest. Be that as it may, Besant’s reference to “subtle counterparts” is of great importance. Trans-Himalayan teachings assert that the physical plane includes both dense physical matter—solid, liquid and gaseous—and etheric matter. Every physical object exists at both the dense and etheric levels. The etheric component contains magnetic and electric fields, and probably fields yet unidentified by science. The sacramental “magnetization” of objects and, most importantly, transformation of the Eucharistic elements can be understood in terms of phenomena at the etheric level.

In addition to the various fields, the etheric body of every living being also contains the life-force that distinguishes that being from a corpse. Another term for the etheric body is the “vital body”—what Egyptian religion

called the *ka*, and biblical Judaism the nephesh (נפש). *Ecclesiastes* referred to the “golden bowl” broken at physical death: “the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.”¹¹⁷ The life-force—or *prana*—comes from both planetary and extra-planetary sources. The etheric body, Bailey explained, is the receiver, assimilator and transmitter of *prana*,¹¹⁸ it is a clearing-house for energy coming from different sources and going to different destinations. Sacramental healing operates at the etheric level but increases the flow of vitality to the dense physical vehicle. In sacraments such as baptism and confirmation, the intended benefit is for the soul, and the flow of energy presumably is to higher vehicles.

Our etheric bodies, we are told, are part of the etheric body of the planet.¹¹⁹ Accordingly, sacramental effects on the etheric body are shared; they have an intrinsic group quality. Christians everywhere have insisted that the Eucharist is Holy *Communion*, with emphasis on its communal aspect. Bailey points out another fact of great significance: “It is... the etheric body which is responsive to and developed by the incoming seventh-ray influences.”¹²⁰

Human participants may not be the only ones attracted to the drama, esthetics, and other aspects of sacramental ritual. The Pseudo-Dionysius depicted the divine beauty as streaming down from the godhead through a hierarchy of angels.¹²¹ Hodson commented: “A special section of the angelic hierarchy is concerned almost exclusively with religion.”¹²² Angels belong to the vast *deva* evolution, whose ranks extend from the tiniest nature spirits to the mightiest seraphim. Esoteric writers often speak of angels as *devas*, but the normal implication is that they mean *devas* whose level of consciousness is higher than our own.

The 12th-century mystic Hildegard of Bingen reported a vision of angels during the Mass:

[W]hen a priest clad in sacred vestments approached the altar to celebrate the divine mysteries, I saw that a great calm light was brought to it from Heaven by angels and

shone around the altar until the sacred rite was ended and the priest had withdrawn from it. And when the Gospel of peace had been recited and the offering to be consecrated had been placed on the altar, and the priest sang the praise of Almighty God, “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts,” which began the mystery of the sacred rites, Heaven was suddenly opened and a fiery and inestimable brilliance descended over that offering and irradiated it completely with light, as the sun illumines anything its rays shine through. And, thus illuminating it, the brilliance bore it on high into the sacred places of Heaven and then replaced it on the altar, as a person draws in a breath and lets it out again; and thus the offering was made true flesh and true blood, although in human sight it looked like bread and wine.¹²³

Hodson and Charles Leadbeater—the latter a bishop in the Liberal Catholic Church as well as a leading Theosophist—both reported visions of angelic participation in the Mass. Leadbeater described the participation of angels of various orders and suggested that transubstantiation is accomplished through angelic agency. Most important, in his account, are the “Angel of the Eucharist” and “Angel of the Presence.” With the collaboration of the celebrant and congregation, the Angel of the Eucharist builds a thoughtform encompassing the sanctuary, creating a “sacred space” in which the consecration of the elements can take place.¹²⁴ The Angel of the Presence reportedly facilitates the consecration itself. According to Leadbeater the priest creates a “tube” connecting the physical elements with the buddhic plane. When the words of consecration are uttered, “the Angel of the Presence appears, and the life of that higher world flows in, providing conditions under which can take place the wonderful changes of the Consecration.”¹²⁵

Hodson observed “the presence and attention” of an order of *devas* during the *Agnus Dei* (“Lamb of God”), which occurs in the latter part of the Mass. “They are also chanting, notably at the higher mental and upper subplanes of the formal mental level [presumably the

rupa subplanes].” Later he identified them as belonging to the “Ghandarvas, or music angels.” “The work of this order is almost entirely devotional, having been associated with such music in ancient days.”¹²⁶

Angels/devas are also reported to be involved in other forms of sacramental ritual. Besant declared that “the word and the sign of power [ritual gestures] summon to the celebration the angels specially concerned with the materials used and the nature of the act performed, and they lend their powerful aid.”¹²⁷ With reference to the anointing of the sick, Hodson added that “the Archangel Raphael is definitely attracted and he may either attend in person or manifest his power and his presence through the angels of his hierarchy who are already in attendance. This naturally increases the amount of power available.”¹²⁸ Elsewhere he described the involvement of lower angels in “operations [i.e., surgical procedures], recoveries, and the healing of wounds.”¹²⁹

Bailey identified the “violet devas” of a lower than angels order as being particularly relevant to the etheric body and the transmission of prana.¹³⁰ Hodson made the interesting comment that angels “are themselves the embodiment of the type of energy with which they work... so that their own vivid intelligence pervades them and governs all the results which they produce.”¹³¹

Ritual: Present and Future

External Aspects of Religion

How important are the external aspects of public worship, and to what extent should we follow traditional practices? In his response to those questions John Henry Hopkins declared: “The *life* of religion is indeed a spiritual principle, but that is no reason why the Lord should be indifferent to its *form*... [And] the love of form and order [is] implanted by the Deity Himself, in every human bosom.”¹³² Every Christian has made use of form and order in worship, even the puritans in their bare meeting house; the important question is: “which is the *best* system of form and order?”¹³³ The best one, Hopkins declared, was the system prescribed by the Almighty for

Jewish temple worship. The rubrics recorded in the Old Testament formed “a statute for ever unto him [Aaron] and his seed after him.”¹³⁴ The Jewish priests, or *kohanim*, were all descended from Aaron. Hopkins’ thesis was that the divine statute had never been revoked. Altars, candles, incense, vestments, and so forth, which had been used in temple worship, were adopted by the early Christian church, so far as their circumstances allowed, and should still be used.

Hopkins conceded that “The heart must be changed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, or outward forms can profit us nothing.”¹³⁵ He wrote at an early stage in the catholic revival movement, but he was insistent that externals matter and confidently predicted that “my children will behold the ‘glory and beauty’ of our public worship brought back to the first stage in the Reformation.”¹³⁶ That “first stage” presumably referred to the 1549 Anglican Prayer Book which preserved much traditional ritual.

A sacrament combines external activity with interior power. Could the same result be obtained without the external form? Perhaps, but to quote Odo Casel: “[T]he decisive thing is inward participation, which does not require unconditionally to be made external; but external participation does belong to the intense sharing of the experience, and to the completion of its symbolic expression.”¹³⁷ The precise way in which the external form and the inner power are combined cannot be explained fully by either science or metaphysics; if it could the sacraments would cease to be mysteries. The church—and Casel was not just referring to the building—“is like an ancient temple which can be only as it is; in it every stone, every pillar, every beam and every statue has its place and displays its own beauty; together all the parts form a single work of art from which no part may be removed without injury to the whole.”¹³⁸

Balthasar declared that the external form

must express and reflect its interior to the world in a credible manner, and the interior must be conformed, justified, and made love-worthy in its radiant beauty through

the truth of the exterior that manifests it. When it is achieved, Christian form is the most beautiful thing that may be found in the human realm.¹³⁹

He conceded that “a certain esotericism is unavoidable and where the proofs for the truth contemplated necessarily bear the character of ritual initiation.”¹⁴⁰

Although she came from an evangelical background, Alice Bailey offered a strong defense of sacramental ritual:

The sacraments, properly understood, serve to strengthen this link and realisation, and such a one as that of Baptism (when entered upon with understanding) will draw forth oft a response from the Great Lord Himself. It is almost as if a golden strand were directed from His heart to the heart of the servant—a strand unbreakable and unfathomable and which, with each administration of any of the holy rites in the succession of lives, becomes stronger, broader and brighter. Eventually these many strands will become reabsorbed into their source when the Body of the Christ—one of the seven Heavenly Men on the second or monadic plane—is completed in full expression, for each one linked to Him becomes, in a vital sense, a cell in His Body.¹⁴¹

Bailey acknowledged that many people mistakenly believe that they have moved beyond ritual:

There is so much revolt at this time against ceremonial, and so many good and well-meaning people regard themselves as having outgrown and transcended ritual. They pride themselves on having attained that so-called “liberation”, forgetting that it is only the sense of individuality that permits this attitude, and that no group work is ever possible without some form of ritual. The refusal therefore to participate in uniformity of action is no sign of a liberated soul.¹⁴²

She added that all service, whether performed by disciples or high entities in the hierarchy, “is governed by ritual.”¹⁴³ Clearly, “ritual” can take on a larger meaning than it has in common usage.

The sacraments form channels through which divine power or light can flow to the physical plane—or at least to the etheric subplanes. Those channels represent rents, or tears, in the fabric of the planes of nature. Bailey explained that precedents for such rents occurred during incidents in both the Old and New Testaments; in particular:

The second, and much the most important rent, was made by the power of the second aspect when the Christ subjected the Master Jesus to the fourth initiation and Their joint influence was triumphant over death. Then we read that the veil of the Temple was split in twain from the top to the bottom. The lawgiver assisted at the first rending as the climax to the third initiation, and there was a somewhat similar process of glorification. A similar event took place at the Transfiguration of the Christ, overshadowing or rather working through the Master Jesus. But at the triumph over death and through the Great Renunciation or Crucifixion episode, a great and major rending took place. The Law, when rightly kept and interpreted, defines man’s attitude upon the mental plane and serves to make a rent in the etheric veil, separating the etheric vehicle in its fourfold aspect from the dense physical form. The rending of the second veil at the time of the Crucifixion let in light on to the second level of the etheric plane, and a new type of illumination was spread abroad upon the earth. Law and Love could now penetrate into the consciousness of humanity in a new and direct manner.¹⁴⁴

On a much smaller scale the chakras, which are anchored in the etheric body, are channels through which energy flows to and from the physical plane.

The Future of Ritual

Christian authorities typically envision a continuation of sacramental ritual on traditional lines, enhancing it only when liturgical research recovers customs in the primitive church deemed to be superior to current practices. By contrast, esoteric writers have predicted important new developments. For ex-

ample, Bailey looked forward to a time when ritual will “reveal the true significance of water.” She explained that the new ritual, which could be viewed as a future version of baptism,

will revolutionize its uses and open to man the free passage to the astral plane. This plane is that of the emotional-desire nature, and its symbol is water. The coming Aquarian Age will reveal to man (and hence also facilitate the work of the seventh ray) that that plane is his natural home at this state of development. The masses today are entirely, but unconsciously, polarised on that plane. They must become consciously aware of their activity. Man is on the verge of becoming normally awake on the astral plane, and it will be through scientific rituals that this new development will be brought about.¹⁴⁵

Several esoteric writers have predicted the restoration of the ancient mysteries and the enactment of planetary initiations on the physical plane. Bailey affirmed that this will take place “through the medium of the Church and the Masonic Fraternity.” And in a comment that could perhaps be related to the passages in *Hebrews*, she added that Christ will serve as “the Hierophant of the first and second initiations.”¹⁴⁶ Sanat Kumara reportedly serves as hierophant for the higher planetary initiations.

Bailey contrasted the proficiency of the Sixth- and Seventh-ray disciples, concluding that the latter will enjoy an inherent advantage in building a better world:

The Sixth ray disciple, working with the laws of nature and of the soul, will qualify his results and produce his creative forms upon the astral plane; he has consequently to learn frequently to work through a seventh ray personality for several lives... before he will be able to bring through on to the physical plane his dream and his vision. The seventh ray disciple has no such problem. By his knowledge of ritual..., by his understanding of the “Words of Power” ..., and by using the potency of sound, the disciple of the future will work and build the new world with its culture and civilization.¹⁴⁷

We have spoken of angelic participation in ceremonial ritual, but avatars also play important roles. The ritual work of the Christ during his last appearance is of course well known, and we look forward to his work as initiator after his reappearance. We understand that he will bring with him “some of the great Angels... [who will] have much to communicate anent color and sound and the effect of these two forces on the etheric bodies of men, animals and flowers.”¹⁴⁸ We also learn that a “Seventh Ray Avatar will appear” during the 21st century, “when the Seventh Ray has achieved complete manifestation and the Piscean influence is entirely removed.” Bailey explained:

His [the seventh-ray avatar’s] work will demonstrate the law, order and rhythm of the creative process as it works out on the physical plane, blending spirit and matter. And as this ray is called the Ray of Ceremonial Order or Ritual, He will be largely instrumental in producing those conditions which will permit of the reappearance upon Earth of the Mysteries of Initiation, of which the Hierarchy is the custodian. He is necessarily connected with the Great White Lodge on Sirius.¹⁴⁹

Concluding Remarks

The purpose of this article has been to build a synthetic understanding of sacramental ritual from religious and esoteric writings. While the Christian sacraments were products of the early Piscean Age, their characteristics give them continuing relevance at the dawn of the Aquarian Age and as the Seventh Ray comes into manifestation. New emphasis on ritual over the last several decades, in what we have termed “sacramental Christianity,” no doubt reflects that incoming ray influence.

Institutional Christianity claims that Christ gave the apostles a sacramental mandate during his ministry in Palestine and that mandate passed on through the episcopal succession. Esotericists alternatively can view the sacraments as a response to the thoughtform which Christ created to launch Christianity on its sevenfold path. In either case the sacraments are vehicles through which the divine presence can

be localized in space and time—and we recall how the Shekinah’s presence was localized in the Ark of the Covenant.

The sacramental churches have faithfully preserved sacramental ritual, particularly the Eucharist, that might have been lost, either through negligence or under assault from evangelical religion and materialistic rationalism. Evangelicals charge that the external aspects of religion distract from inner spirituality. Church buildings can indeed become shrines to forgotten gods, decorations tasteless works of non-art, ritual superstitious proceduralism, vestments garish symbols of clerical ego, gestures pharisaical, and music distractive noise. For that matter, the church itself can become oppressive, bureaucratic, corrupt, materialistic and irrelevant. However those pitfalls can be, and to a great extent have been, avoided. Intelligent and careful attention to externals can enhance the religious experience and create more perfect vehicles for the receipt of divine grace.

In its disdain for the external forms of religion, evangelical Christianity has much in common with Theravada Buddhism, but its record of nourishing the inner life pales in comparison to what Buddhism has achieved. The evangelical denominations have always been suspicious of mysticism, with the result that, with very few exceptions, all the great Christian mystics came from sacramental churches.¹⁵⁰ The primary strength of evangelical Christianity lies not in its nurture of inner spirituality but in its record of service and activism. To take two outstanding examples, William Wilberforce spearheaded the abolition of slavery, and William Booth founded the Salvation Army.

Sacramental ritual expresses spirituality through symbolism, beauty and drama, all of which influence the human psyche on multiple levels. Attempts to explain the mechanisms underlying sacramental efficacy confront the basic fact that the sacraments are mysteries that transcend human understanding. Nevertheless, valuable insights are provided by theories that involve the etheric subplanes and the role of devic entities. The etheric subplanes—which deserve more detailed study by esotericists and particularly by religious philoso-

phers—provide a clearinghouse for energy flowing to and from the physical plane. One source of beneficial energy, or possibly its destination, is the buddhic plane, which we recall is the fourth cosmic ether.¹⁵¹

Clairvoyant studies have provided persuasive evidence that angelic or devic beings participate in sacramental ritual—whether because they are attracted by the music, color, and moving symbolism, or because they are assigned to that type of work. In either case we have opportunities to gain greater understanding of devic roles and perhaps the ability to cooperate more effectively with the deva evolution.

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- ¹ See also the discussion in John F. Nash, “The Power and Timelessness of Ritual,” *Esoteric Quarterly*, Fall 2007, 35-53.
 - ² *I Corinthians* 14:40. All biblical quotations are from the King James Bible.
 - ³ The *Didache of the Twelve Apostles*, which contains these instructions, may date from as early as 50 CE.
 - ⁴ That definition, found in the catechisms of most major denominations, was first suggested in the 4th-century by Augustine of Hippo.
 - ⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *Destiny of the Nations* (New York: Lucis, 1949), 5.
 - ⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy* (New York: Lucis, 1957), 511.
 - ⁷ Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation: Human and Solar* (New York: Lucis, 1922), 58-59, and elsewhere.
 - ⁸ Hugh Gilbert, “Odo Casel: Prophet and Mystagogue,” http://www.canonlaw.info/liturgysacraments_casel.htm, (accessed April 22, 2010).
 - ⁹ Hans U. von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, 7 Vols. (Fort Collins, CO: Ignatius Press, 1961ff; *Theo-Drama: Theological Dramatic Theory*, 5 vols., Ignatius Press, 1988ff).
 - ¹⁰ Tomberg’s authorship of *Meditations on the Tarot: A Journey into Christian Hermeticism* is now universally acknowledged. Balthasar’s afterword appeared in the original German version published in 1985. It was omitted from the first English translation (Element Books, 1993) but included in heavily edited form in a 1998 edition.
 - ¹¹ Ramsey is particularly remembered for opening up ecumenical dialogue with the Roman and

- Orthodox Churches. He has a special reverence for Eastern Christianity.
- ¹² Although modern scholarship questions the unity or homogeneity of the primitive church, the myth of a pristine “apostolic church” has inspired believers for centuries.
- ¹³ Nestorianism, questionably associated with the 5th-century John Nestorius, asserted that Jesus and Christ were distinct persons. The Council of Ephesus condemned it as heretical.
- ¹⁴ Phineas P. Quimby. “The Body of Jesus and the Body of Christ,” 1863. Quimby Library. http://www.ppquimby.com/articles/body_of_jesus_and_the_body_of_ch.htm, (accessed April 24, 2010).
- ¹⁵ Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (Boston, MA: First Church of Christ Scientist, 1875), 333, 336.
- ¹⁶ Christ could rightly be described as the Logos, in the original Greek sense of an intermediary. However esotericists tend to use “logos” to signify a planetary, solar or galactic deity.
- ¹⁷ Bailey, *Initiation: Human and Solar*, 43-44.
- ¹⁸ Annie W. Besant, *Esoteric Christianity* (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1914/19530), 89.
- ¹⁹ Bailey, *Initiation: Human and Solar*, 56-57.
- ²⁰ Jesus’ healing ministry could be viewed as illustrative of that larger healing process.
- ²¹ *Sozo* appears in several scriptural passages, for example *Mark* 5:23. Note also the similarity between the words “save” and “salve.”
- ²² Dion Fortune, *Applied Magic* (Wellingborough, Northants., UK: Aquarian Press, 1962), 20-21.
- ²³ Charles W. Leadbeater, *The Science of the Sacraments* (Adyar, India: Theosophical Publishing House, 1920), especially 198-199.
- ²⁴ Bailey, *Initiation: Human and Solar*, 28-29.
- ²⁵ Bailey, *The Destiny of the Nations*, 59.
- ²⁶ Russian theologian and scientist Pavel Florensky (1882–1937) described the ecclesia as “the unifying, preexistent, heavenly, mystical form” of Christianity. See also John F. Nash, *Christianity: the One, the Many*, Vol. 2 (Bloomington, IN: Xlibris, 2007), 279-285.
- ²⁷ Nash, *Christianity: the One, the Many*, Vol. 2, 310-348. The paths are archetypal in nature and labels like “devotion” have larger meanings than they do in everyday usage.
- ²⁸ Odo Casel, *The Mystery of Christian Worship*, ed: B. Neunheuser (New York: Crossroads, 1962/1999), 39.
- ²⁹ Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury under Kings Henry VIII and Edward VI, was the principal author of the *Book of Common Prayer* of 1549 and 1552, on which all subsequent Anglican Prayer Books have been based.
- ³⁰ Liberal Christianity has emerged as a third form, over the last 200 years, but it is less relevant to our present theme.
- ³¹ Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (London: Penguin Books, 1963/1997), 275.
- ³² The canonical sacraments were first listed by theologian Peter Lombard and subsequently confirmed by the Councils of Florence (1439) and Trent (1545–1563).
- ³³ The Waldensians’ origins are clouded, but they are generally associated with Peter Waldo (c.1160–1218) of Lyons, France. The Lollards were followers of English clergyman John Wycliffe (c.1325–1384).
- ³⁴ Over the last 200 years evangelical Christianity has developed a strong service ministry. And spiritual healing has been revived in charismatic denominations.
- ³⁵ Geoffrey Hodson, *The Inner Side of Church Worship* (London: St Alban Press, 1930/1975), 2.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.
- ³⁷ That dualism also owed much to Zoroastrianism.
- ³⁸ See the discussion in Leadbeater, *The Science of the Sacraments*, 41-42.
- ³⁹ *Isaiah* 65:16. The Hebrew word rendered as “of truth,” אֱמֶת, can scarcely be transliterated other than by “Amen.”
- ⁴⁰ Christianity claimed to be the “new covenant,” replacing the old covenant between Yahweh and the Jews.
- ⁴¹ For example *Mark* 1:9.
- ⁴² *Matthew* 28:19-20.
- ⁴³ *1 Kings* 19:16; *1 Chronicles* 16:22; *Psalms* 105:15.
- ⁴⁴ *Matthew* 9:18-25; *Mark* 5:22-42; *Luke* 7:11-17, 8:41-55; *John* 11:1-44.
- ⁴⁵ See the discussion in Morton T. Kelsey, *Healing and Christianity* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1973), 55-57. Descriptions of healings of one kind or another occupy an estimated 25 percent of the gospel.
- ⁴⁶ *Luke* 9:1-2. The apostles’ power over “unclean spirits” appears also in *Mark* 6:7.
- ⁴⁷ *1 Corinthians* 11:23-26; *Mark* 14:22-25; *Matthew* 26:26-29; *Luke* 22:13-20; *John* 13-17; *Acts* 2:42.
- ⁴⁸ *Luke* 24:30-34.
- ⁴⁹ Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (New York: Seabury, 1945/1982), 50ff.
- ⁵⁰ “Eucharistic Prayer E,” *Common Worship*, London: Church House Publishing, 2000.

- Comparable statements appear in Prayers G and H.
- ⁵¹ Robert W. Funk and the Jesus Seminar, *The Acts of Jesus: the Search for the Authentic Deeds of Jesus* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1998), 51-161.
- ⁵² Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 2-6.
- ⁵³ John H. Hopkins, *The Law of Ritualism: Examined in its Relation to the Word of God, to the Primitive Church, to the Church of England, and to the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States* (New York: Hurd & Houghton, 1866), 9.
- ⁵⁴ Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*, Crestwood, trans., Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius (NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1944/1976), 221.
- ⁵⁵ A. Michael Ramsey, *The Glory of God and the Transfiguration of Christ* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1949/2009), 135.
- ⁵⁶ Alkiviadis C. Calivas, "The Sacramental Life of the Orthodox Church," Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America: <http://www.goarch.org/ourfaith/ourfaith7106>, (accessed May 21, 2010).
- ⁵⁷ Casel, *The Mystery of Christian Worship*, 7.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 13.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 53.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 54.
- ⁶¹ Sandra Hodson (ed.), *Light of the Sanctuary* (Manila, Philippines: Theosophical Publishers, 1988), 104.
- ⁶² Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, 574. Parenthesis and italicization in original. All quotations are from volume 1 of the work.
- ⁶³ Casel, *The Mystery of Christian Worship*, 71.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 21.
- ⁶⁵ Ramsey, *The Glory of God and the Transfiguration of Christ*, 94-95.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 98.
- ⁶⁷ *Hebrews* 4:14.
- ⁶⁸ Quoted in P. Teilhard de Chardin, *Hymn of the Universe*, trans., G. Vann (London: Collins, 1965), 13 (Introduction by N. M. Wildiers). The Latin *Hoc est corpus meum* is translated as "This is my body."
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 121. Emphasis in original.
- ⁷⁰ Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return* (Princeton NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1954), especially 34-35.
- ⁷¹ Casel, *The Mystery of Christian Worship*, 70.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, 58
- ⁷³ Hodson, *The Inner Side of Church Worship*, 74.
- ⁷⁴ Quoted in Geoffrey Rowell, *The Vision Glorious* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1983), 27.
- ⁷⁵ Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, p. 579. Parenthesis in original.
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 575.
- ⁷⁷ Calivas, "The Sacramental Life of the Orthodox Church."
- ⁷⁸ Hodson, *The Inner Side of Church Worship*, 79-80.
- ⁷⁹ *I Chronicles* 16:29.
- ⁸⁰ *Psalms* 90:17.
- ⁸¹ *Exodus* 28:2-5. An *ephod* seems to have been an elaborate tunic.
- ⁸² *I Kings*, chs. 6-8.
- ⁸³ *Exodus* 31:8-11.
- ⁸⁴ Hopkins, *The Law of Ritualism*, 7.
- ⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 8. Emphasis in original.
- ⁸⁶ *Mark* 9:2-8, *Matthew* 17:1-9, *Luke* 9:28-36.
- ⁸⁷ *John* 1:14.
- ⁸⁸ Ramsey, *The Glory of God and the Transfiguration of Christ*, 58-60.
- ⁸⁹ Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, 38. Parenthesis in original.
- ⁹⁰ Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, *The Celestial Hierarchy*, ch. 3, trans., unknown, <http://www.esotericarchives.com/oracle/dionys2.htm/>, (accessed May 9, 2010).
- ⁹¹ Quoted in Umberto Eco, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages* (New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press, 2002), 48.
- ⁹² Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, book I, 4, (transl: Fathers of the English Dominican Province.) (New York: Benziger Bros., 1947).
- ⁹³ Ignatius of Antioch, *Epistle to the Ephesians*, 4:2, trans., J. Lightfoot, *Early Christian Writings*.
- ⁹⁴ Eco, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages*, 116.
- ⁹⁵ Nash, *Christianity: the One, the Many*, 244.
- ⁹⁶ Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, 18.
- ⁹⁷ Casel, *The Mystery of Christian Worship*, 78.
- ⁹⁸ Casel, *The Mystery of Christian Worship*, 82.
- ⁹⁹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰⁰ Ramsey, *The Glory of God and the Transfiguration of Christ*, 97-98.
- ¹⁰¹ "Dedication and Consecration of a Church," *Book of Common Prayer* (New York: Episcopal Church, 1979).
- ¹⁰² Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, 582.
- ¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 18.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 125.
- ¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 41.
- ¹⁰⁶ *Wisdom of Solomon* 13:3.
- ¹⁰⁷ Ramsey, *The Glory of God and the Transfiguration of Christ*, 91, 89.
- ¹⁰⁸ See for example Michael J Christensen & Jeffrey A. Wittung (eds.), *Partakers of the Divine*

- Nature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007).
- ¹⁰⁹ *Genesis* 4:4-5.
- ¹¹⁰ Besant, *Esoteric Christianity*, 231.
- ¹¹¹ Alice A. Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation* (New York: Lucis, 1922), 18.
- ¹¹² Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, Vol. I, 58-59.
- ¹¹³ Ernest Wood, *The Seven Rays* (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1925/1972), 131-132. Wood seems to have acquired his knowledge of the seven rays independently of Alice Bailey.
- ¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 138.
- ¹¹⁵ Hooker famously declared of the Eucharistic elements: “[W]hat these elements are in themselves it skilleth not, it is enough that to me which take them they are the body and blood of Christ.” Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, Vol. V, ch. lxxvii.12, 1597, *Works of... Hooker*, Vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1865), 92.
- ¹¹⁶ Besant, *Esoteric Christianity*, 234.
- ¹¹⁷ *Ecclesiastes* 12:6-7.
- ¹¹⁸ Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (New York: Lucis, 1925), 97.
- ¹¹⁹ Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. 1, (New York: Lucis, 1944), 698; *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle* (New York: Lucis, 1950), 7.
- ¹²⁰ Bailey, *The Destiny of the Nations*, 118.
- ¹²¹ See the discussion in Matthew Fox & Rupert Sheldrake, *The Physics of Angels* (HarperSan-Francisco, 1996), 31ff.
- ¹²² Hodson, *The Inner Side of Church Worship*, 8.
- ¹²³ Hildegard of Bingen, *Scivias*, (trans., C. Hart & J. Bishop (New York: Paulist Press, 1990), 237.
- ¹²⁴ Leadbeater, *The Science of the Sacraments*, especially 23, 119, 179.
- ¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 179.
- ¹²⁶ Geoffrey Hodson, *Clairvoyant Investigations* (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1984), 90-92.
- ¹²⁷ Besant, *Esoteric Christianity*, 234.
- ¹²⁸ Hodson, *The Inner Side of Church Worship*, 62.
- ¹²⁹ Hodson, *Clairvoyant Investigations*, 58.
- ¹³⁰ Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 92.
- ¹³¹ Hodson, *The Inner Side of Church Worship*, 4.
- ¹³² Hopkins, *The Law of Ritualism*, 1-2. Emphasis in original.
- ¹³³ *Ibid.*, 3. Emphasis in original.
- ¹³⁴ *Exodus* 28:43.
- ¹³⁵ Hopkins, *The Law of Ritualism*, 97.
- ¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 98.
- ¹³⁷ Casel, *The Mystery of Christian Worship*, 48.
- ¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 81.
- ¹³⁹ Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord*, 28.
- ¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 34.
- ¹⁴¹ Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 514.
- ¹⁴² Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, Vol. I (New York: Lucis, 1936), 363. Parenthesis in original.
- ¹⁴³ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁴⁴ Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* (New York: Lucis, 1960), 192-193.
- ¹⁴⁵ Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, Vol. I, 364.
- ¹⁴⁶ Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 514-515.
- ¹⁴⁷ Bailey, *The Destiny of the Nations*, 130.
- ¹⁴⁸ Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 508.
- ¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 298-299.
- ¹⁵⁰ Jakob Böhme and Emanuel Swedenborg were evangelical Lutherans.
- ¹⁵¹ See for example Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, Vol. 2 (New York: Lucis, 1955), 405.