

*Invoking the Solar Angel: Vajrasattva Meditation
in the Ageless Wisdom Tradition*

The Solar Angel,¹ variously referred to as the Higher Self, Ego, Soul, Solar Deva, Agnishvatta Pitri, Manasaputra, etc., lives its own life on its own plane. For the Solar Angel to bring the lower self under control, we are told in the Alice Bailey writings, is a thing distasteful to it, as its tendency is to rest content with consciousness and aspiration on its own plane.² When, therefore, a person undertakes to meditate, and thereby open from the personality side a channel to the Solar Angel, there is a need to somehow call or attract the attention of the Solar Angel at the beginning of each meditation session.

To do this effectively, one must call the Solar Angel in its own language. Human speech, as we know it, cannot reach the Solar Angels, the Fire Devas of the mental plane.³ Theirs is the “Deva-vani,” the “language (*vāṇī*) of the gods (*devas*),” otherwise known as Sanskrit. This refers specifically to Sanskrit as the language of mantras.⁴

We read in *Letters on Occult Meditation* that mantras “will some day be in common use among the students of occult meditation,” and that they “are now in use among those privileged to use them.”⁵ This privilege has from time immemorial belonged to the people of India, and for the last millennium, also to those of Tibet. Indeed, the Tibetan Master D.K. goes on to say that “mantrams are much more in use among orientals and in the eastern faiths than at present among occidentals. As the power of sound is more completely understood and its effect studied, these mantrams will be adopted in the occident.”⁶

Regarding these mantras, D.K. continues, “Some of them are very old and when enunciated in the original Sanskrit have unbelievably powerful effects.”⁷ When mantras were adopted by

the Tibetans from the Indians, the mantras were retained in the original Sanskrit, not translated into Tibetan. This was due to the widespread knowledge in the East of the power of mantras in Sanskrit, the “language of the gods.” In recent decades many of these original Sanskrit mantras have become available in the occident. D.K. did not give any mantras in his *Letters on Occult Meditation*, but closed the 1920 letter quoted above by pointing out that the subject of mantras was included because they “will some day supersede all preliminary meditation.”⁸

In the Tibetan tradition of occult meditation, the first meditation taught is the Vajrasattva meditation, or Vajrasattva mantra recitation. This is then regularly used as a preliminary meditation in the more advanced meditation practices. Occult meditation in the Tibetan tradition is called tantric meditation, being distinguished from non-tantric meditation by the use of visualization,⁹ just as D.K. says that the use of visualization will characterize all meditation in the new age.¹⁰ The primary part of the Vajrasattva meditation is recitation of the 100-syllable Vajrasattva mantra. Recitation of this mantra may be done with or without the accompanying visualizations. This mantra and its meditation have now become available in the West.¹¹

Vajrasattva is depicted as a white deity, who in meditation is visualized as sitting a little above one’s head. This is just where the Ageless Wisdom Tradition locates the soul or Solar Angel. About this the Master K.H. writes, using Sanskrit terms, “neither Atma nor Buddhi ever were *within* man,” but “always remained without the body; that it floated and overshadowed so to say the extreme part of the man’s head.”¹² This was in reply to a query about the Buddha’s famous teaching, “Remember that there is within man no abiding principle.” Exoteric Tibetan Buddhism thus does not teach the existence of the soul or Solar Angel. Vajrasattva is there taught as the manifestation of the collective purity of the Buddhas,¹³ so Vajrasattva meditation or recitation is used as the preeminent practice of purification. “Vajra-sattva” simply means “diamond being.” The adjective “diamond” is used in tantric writings to signify the indestructible or ultimate nature of something, the true reality behind the appearance. Like a diamond, this is hard to penetrate. So Vajrasattva is the

essential or true nature of a “being,” or person. The Ageless Wisdom Tradition teaches that the “solar Angels concern his [man’s] own essential nature,”¹⁴ and describes “the solar Angel, who is the true man.”¹⁵ Vajrasattva, then, would here not be a particular deity, but rather would be the Solar Angel. As such, Vajrasattva would refer generically to any and every Solar Angel. We will proceed on this assumption.

Letters on Occult Meditation enumerates different kinds of mantras for various purposes, including mantras to evoke the Solar Angel or Ego: “Mantrams that evoke the God within, and work specifically on the Ego.”¹⁶ Is the Vajrasattva mantra such a mantra? Mantras normally include Sanskrit seed-syllables, such as the familiar “om̐,” which cannot be translated. But such is the beauty of Sanskrit that the vast majority of mantras also have a straightforward grammatical meaning. This meaning of the Vajrasattva mantra is:

Om. Vajrasattva, keep [your] pledge. As Vajrasattva, stand near [me]. Be steadfast toward me. Be well pleased with me. Be well fulfilled on account of me. Be attached to me. Grant me all accomplishments; and in all actions make my thought beneficent, *hūm̐. Ha ha ha ha hoh̐.* O Blessed One, Diamond-nature of all the Buddhas, do not abandon me. Be of diamond-nature, O great pledge being.¹⁷

Since Sanskrit is so different from English, it is not possible in a single translation to adequately reflect the meaning of the original Sanskrit. The first sentence, “keep [your] pledge,” does not mean only “fulfill your promise,” but also uses “pledge” in a technical sense. “Pledge,” in tantric writings, is a technical term used along with “being,” together meaning an imagined being, one that is visualized in meditation. This is in contradistinction to a “wisdom being,” which is the actual being. A pledge being is imagined or visualized by the meditator, and then the actual or wisdom being is invited to merge into and become one with it. Thus, the meditator visualizes the pledge being Vajrasattva, and then requests the wisdom being Vajrasattva, the real Vajrasattva, to merge into and become one with the visualized Vajrasattva.

Vajrasattva, as noted above, is visualized as sitting above one's head. All this, of course, is from the standpoint of the human practitioner. If, however, the meditator were a Solar Angel, the Ego, a human would be its pledge being, what it visualizes in meditation.¹⁸ The Ageless Wisdom Tradition does teach that "the Ego . . . is in deep meditation during the whole cycle of physical incarnation."¹⁹ In the phrase, "keep [your] pledge," the word that I have translated idiomatically as "keep," more literally means "keep watch over, protect, preserve, guard." So the request to Vajrasattva to "keep [your] pledge" also means "watch over [your] pledge," what you visualize in meditation, the human being entrusted to your care, your charge or ward, or put more poetically, your reflection or shadow.

In this perspective, the meaning of the remaining phrases of the Vajrasattva mantra, "stand near," etc., is self-evident. The straightforward grammatical meaning of this invocatory mantra is, I believe, quite sufficient to show its nature. It would indeed be, in the Ageless Wisdom Tradition, a mantra to invoke what is there called the Solar Angel.

With the successful invoking of the Solar Angel, the task of the preliminary meditation is complete, and one may proceed to further stages of meditation, stages wherein the Solar Angel responds. Thus, for example, the first of the fifteen "Rules for Magic" given by the Tibetan Master D.K. is:

The Solar Angel collects himself, scatters not his force, but, in meditation deep, communicates with his reflection.²⁰

The Solar Angel or Vajrasattva, meditating from its side, is said to send out "streams of energy" that are typically registered as "higher impulses" to its "reflection,"²¹ a human being, to its pledge being. From the standpoint of the human practitioner involved, the real wisdom being Vajrasattva has merged with the visualized pledge being Vajrasattva. The meditating Solar Angel has infused its energy into its human pledge being, endowing it with its wisdom, thus making it for the moment a wisdom being in truth. So invoking the Solar Angel evokes in turn a response, and meditation proceeds.

It is obvious that an accomplished meditator has learned how to successfully invoke the Solar Angel, with or without the use of a mantra. But for most of us, this is not an easy thing to do. For ages an efficient way to do this by the use of a mantra, or magical formula, has been available in the East. Mantras were not available outside of their home in India, land of the “twice-born” (*dvija*), and its neighboring China and Tibet, because these magical formulae were too liable to be misused for selfish ends. As put in records quoted by H. P. Blavatsky:

Whenever made too public, the Good Law of Cheu [magical powers] fell invariably into sorcery or “black magic.” The Dvijas, the Hoshang [Chinese monks] and the Lamas could alone be entrusted safely with the formulae.²²

But since the 1970s such formulae have become available to the rest of the world, largely due to the displacement from Tibet of many lamas, or teachers. We are thus now in a position to use such a mantra as the Vajrasattva mantra, to efficiently invoke the Solar Angel as part of our preliminary meditation, as was foreseen by the Tibetan Master D.K.

Here, then, transliterated from the original Sanskrit, is the Vajrasattva mantra. Please note that transliteration does not represent correct pronunciation. It is a way to accurately depict the 49 devanagari letters used for Sanskrit with the 26 roman letters. Once the correct pronunciation of these 49 letters is learned, something now easily enough possible, the mantra can be pronounced correctly from the roman transliteration.²³

oṃ vajrasattva, samayam anupālaya, vajrasattvatvenopatiṣṭha,
dṛḍho me bhava, sutoṣyo me bhava, supoṣyo me bhava, anurakto
me bhava, sarva-siddhim me prayaccha, sarva-karmasu ca me
cittaṃ śreyaḥ kuru hūṃ, ha ha ha ha hoḥ, bhagavan sarva-
tathāgata-vajra, mā me muñca, vajrī-bhava mahā-samaya-sattva,
āḥ²⁴

An old and powerful mantra such as this seems to be effective even when pronounced incorrectly. But to be most effective it

should be pronounced as correctly as possible. The vowels are the most important. The short “a” is pronounced like English “u” in the word “but.” Thus, the first syllable of “vajra” rhymes with “judge.” The first syllable of “sattva” rhymes with “hut.” The long “ā” is pronounced like “a” in “father.” The Sanskrit word “me” is pronounced like the English word “may.” The short “u” is like in “put,” not like in “united.” The long “ū” is pronounced “oo.” The short “i” is like in “kit.” The long “ī” is pronounced “ee.” The vowel “ṛ” is pronounced “ri.” The “o” is like in “go.” The “ṣ” and “ś” are pronounced “sh.” The “ṭh” is pronounced “ta,” and aspirated. It is not like the English “th” sound. The “c” is pronounced “ch.” Of the untranslatable mantra syllables, “hūṃ” rhymes with “room.” Some modern books in English give this syllable as “hung” rather than “hūṃ,” since the final “ṃ” is to be nasalized, as it is in “oṃ.” But it is not pronounced like the English word “hung.” The “ha,” repeated four times, is like “hut” without the final “t.” In “hoḥ,” and also in “āḥ,” the “ḥ” is an “h” sound followed by an echo of the preceding vowel, or its short form, here “o” and “a,” respectively. So “hoḥ” is like “ho” followed by a faint “ho” sound. These five, “ha ha ha ha hoḥ,” are the seed-syllables of the five wisdom energies.

The effectiveness of mantras, of course, does not depend on correct pronunciation alone. D.K., concluding his letters on mantric forms, says:

The first step towards the attainment of these mantrams is the acquirement of the faculty of occult meditation, for it is not the sounding of the words alone that bring about the desired end but the mental concentration that visualises the results to be attained. This must be accompanied by the will that causes those results to be dominated by the one who chants the sounds. These mantric forms are dangerous and useless apart from the concentrated mental equilibrium of the man, and his power to control and vitalise.²⁵

To acquire the faculty of occult meditation is to acquire the faculty of visualization. The Vajrasattva meditation normally includes both recitation of the mantra and visualization. In this

visualization, the one hundred syllables of the mantra encircle and slowly revolve around the syllable “hūṃ” at the heart of Vajrasattva, who is sitting above one’s head. From all of them flows a purifying nectar, purging one of all negativities. While this meditation is regularly used as a preliminary meditation, it is also used on its own as a complete, independent meditation. Used in this way, the Vajrasattva meditation is the preeminent practice of purification found in the Tibetan tradition, as was noted earlier. Thus Vajrasattva, known in the Ageless Wisdom Tradition as the Solar Angel, or the Ego, can be invoked and meditated on to stabilize one’s vibration at a higher level, which results in the throwing off or purification of all that is lower. This process is described by D.K. as follows:

Let him then raise his vibration as high as may be, and aim next at lifting it clear of the mental body into the causal, and so bring in the direct action of the Ego upon the lower three vehicles. As long as he can keep his consciousness high and as long as he holds a vibration that is that of the Ego on its own plane, the mental body will be held in a state of equilibrium. It will hold no lower vibration analogous to the thoughtforms circulating in its environment. The force of the Ego will circulate throughout the mental ovoid, permitting no extraneous geometrical units to find entrance, and the dangers of inhibition will be offset. Even more will be done,—the mental matter will in process of time become so attuned to the higher vibration that in due course that vibration will become stable and will automatically throw off all that is lower and undesirable.²⁶

Therefore, for those wishing to embark on the practice of occult meditation, there is no better choice than the Vajrasattva meditation, the invoking of the Solar Angel. Just as it is the first meditation taught in the Tibetan tradition of occult or tantric meditation, so it should be the first meditation taught in the “future schools of meditation”²⁷ outlined by the Tibetan Master D.K. in his *Letters on Occult Meditation*. Unlike when those letters were written, this is now possible.

NOTES

1. See: *The Divine Plan: Written in the Form of a Commentary on H. P. Blavatsky's Secret Doctrine*, by Geoffrey A. Barboroka, Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 3rd ed., 1972, pp. 133-134: "These lofty Beings are therefore termed the Lords of the Flame, or Sons of Mind—Mānasa-putras—or again Solar Gods. In fact they are called by so many different names in *The Secret Doctrine* that a list will prove advantageous: Solar Fathers, Solar Ancestors, Solar Angels, Solar Devas, Solar Pitris, Mānasaputras, Mānasa, Mānasas, Mānasvin, Mānasa Dhyānis, Dhyānis, Spiritual Dhyānis, Fire Dhyānis, Sons of Mahat, Sons of Manas, Mind-born Sons, Sons of Mind, Sons of Fire, Sons of Wisdom, Lords of Wisdom, Lords of the Flame, Agnishvāttas, Agnishvātta Pitris, 3 Higher Classes of Pitris, Incorporeal Pitris, Vairājas, Kumāras, Holy Sons, Holy Yogīs, Holy Ascetics, Holy Virgin-born, Virgin Ascetics, Lhas (the equivalent Tibetan term), Solar Lhas."

See also: *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, by Alice A. Bailey, New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1925, p. 1125: "As we know, the Sons of Mind or the incarnating jivas are the returning nirvanis of a previous logic incarnation."

2. *Letters on Occult Meditation*, by Alice A. Bailey, New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1922, p. 37: "The Ego seeks to bring about the desired end . . . by frequent attempts to definitely control the lower self, a thing distasteful to the Ego, whose tendency is to rest content with consciousness and aspiration on its own plane. Forget not that the Ego itself has somewhat to wrestle with."

3. *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, pp. 679-680: "We start here upon the consideration of the Agnishvattas, or the Fire devas of the mental plane, and are thus launched upon the most stupendous subject in connection with our planetary evolution; it is the one having the most occult significance for man, for these solar Angels concern his own essential nature, and are also the creative power by which he works. . . . The question of these Fire Dhyānis and their relation to man is a most profound mystery, and the entire matter is so clothed in intricate legends that students are apt to despair of ever arriving at the desired, and necessary clarity of thought."

4. *Letters on Occult Meditation*, p. 162: “Mantric forms are collections of phrases, words, and sounds which by virtue of rhythmic effect achieve results that would not be possible apart from them.” See also the fuller definition found in *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, p. 926 fn.

The Secret Doctrine, by H. P. Blavatsky, 1888, vol. 1, p. 464: “The magic of the ancient priests consisted, in those days, in addressing *their gods in their own language*. ‘The speech of the men of the earth cannot reach the Lords. Each must be addressed in the language of his respective element’—is a sentence which will be shown pregnant with meaning. ‘*The Book of Rules*’ cited adds as an explanation of the nature of that Element-language: ‘It is composed of *sounds*, not words; of sounds, numbers and figures. He who knows how to blend the three, will call forth the response of the superintending Power’ (the regent-god of the specific element needed). Thus this ‘language’ is that of *incantations* or of MANTRAS, as they are called in India, sound being *the most potent and effectual magic agent, and the first of the keys which opens the door of communication between Mortals and the Immortals.*”

5. *Letters on Occult Meditation*, p. 162.

6. *Letters on Occult Meditation*, p. 162.

7. *Letters on Occult Meditation*, p. 162.

8. *Letters on Occult Meditation*, p. 166.

9. Tantric meditation is distinguished from the more standard meditation, taught in the sutras, by its use of “deity yoga.” Deity yoga is the visualization of oneself as a divine form, i.e., as a “deity,” and in a divine residence. Tsong-kha-pa considers this visualization, or deity yoga, to be the distinguishing feature of tantric or occult meditation. See on this: “Reason as the Prime Principle in Tsong kha pa’s Delineation of Deity Yoga as the Demarcation Between Sūtra and Tantra,” by Jeffrey Hopkins, in *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol. 7, no. 2, 1984, pp. 95-115.

10. *Discipleship in the New Age*, by Alice A. Bailey, vol. 1, New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1944, p. 89: “All the new processes in meditation techniques (for which the New Age may be responsible) must and will embody visualisation as a primary step.” *The Rays and the Initiations*, by Alice A. Bailey, New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1960, p. 252, listing some of the newer truths brought out to modern esotericists: “A presentation of the newer type of meditations, with its emphasis upon visualisation and the use of the creative imagination.”

11. The Vajrasattva meditation may be found in at least thirteen books published in English since 1970. These are listed in the article, “The Vajrasattva Mantra: Sanskrit Edition and English Translation,” by David Reigle, available at: www.easterntertradition.org. Three of these are listed here:

How to Meditate: A Practical Guide, by Kathleen McDonald, London: Wisdom Publications, 1984, pp. 178-186: “Vajrasattva Purification” (a readily available introduction giving the practice in short form).

The Confession of Downfalls: The Confession Sutra and Vajrasattva Practice, ed. Brian C. Beresford, Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1993, 2003; first ed., 1980, published as *Mahayana Purification* (gives shorter and longer forms of the practice).

Becoming Vajrasattva: The Tantric Path of Purification, Lama Thubten Yeshe, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2nd ed., 2004; first ed., 1995, as *The Tantric Path of Purification: The Yoga Method of Heruka Vajrasattva* (a whole book on the practice, including more advanced materials).

12. *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, compiled by A. T. Barker, (1st ed., 1923); 2nd ed., 1926; 3rd ed., 1962; chronological ed., 1993; letter no. 127: 2nd ed. p. 455; 3rd ed. pp. 447-448; chron. ed. p. 217; For the original statement that gave rise to this query, see letter no. 16: 2nd ed. p. 111; 3rd ed. p. 108; chron. ed. p. 199.

13. See: *The Tantric Path of Purification: The Yoga Method of Heruka Vajrasattva*, Lama Thubten Yeshe, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995, pp. 141-42 (2nd ed., 2004, with new title: *Becoming Vajrasattva: The Tantric Path of Purification*): “Who is Heruka Vajrasattva? We consider him to be a manifestation of the unity of fully developed male and female energy, the complete purity of the state of enlightenment. Out of their great compassion and limitless love, the buddhas and bodhisattvas have manifested their collected purity in the archetypal image of Vajrasattva so that we can identify ourselves with him. We have to understand that the qualities of Vajrasattva are already within us. But our realizations, method, and wisdom are limited. They have to be developed through identification with the limitless, pure energy of the archetype.”

14. *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, p. 680; fuller quotation given in note 3 above.

15. *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, p. 964.

16. *Letters on Occult Meditation*, p. 186.

17. Translation by myself. The existing translations known to me are, I believe, not entirely accurate, due to faulty source materials. See the full word-by-word analysis in my article listed in note 11 above.

18. Thus, in a another mantra, the human meditator says: “*Om*. Vajrasattva, O pledge, behold! *Hoh*. You are the pledge; I am the pledge. You and I are the pledge”; showing that it goes both ways. See: *Sādhnamālā*, ed. Benoytosh Bhattacharyya, vol. 1, Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1925, p. 101: *om vajrasattva samaya dṛṣya hoḥ samayas tvam samayo ’haṃ samayas tvam ahaṃ jaḥ hūṃ vaṃ hoḥ*.

19. *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, p. 998.

20. *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, p. 997, and also found in *A Treatise on White Magic*, by Alice A. Bailey, New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1934, pp. xii, 51. Compare also, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, pp. 771-772: “As the solar Angels continue sounding out the mantram which is the basis of their work, the lunar Pitris respond to certain sounds in that mantram (not all by any means at first) and gather out of those sounds the formula under which their work must proceed.”

21. *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, p. 998: “This solar meditation is cyclic in nature, the Pitri involved sending out to his ‘reflection’ rhythmic streams of energy, which streams are recognised by the man concerned as his ‘higher impulses,’ his dreams and aspirations.”

22. Quoted in “Tsong-kha-pa.—Lohans in China,” *H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, vol. 14, Wheaton, Illinois: Theosophical Publishing House, 1985, p. 427; first published in *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 3, 1897, p. 409. The bracketed material is Blavatsky’s.

23. See: *Sanskrit Pronunciation: Booklet and Audio*, by Bruce Cameron Hall, at: <http://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/ts/hallskt.htm>

24. Sanskrit edition by myself. The existing editions known to me are, I believe, not entirely accurate, due to faulty source materials. See my article listed in note 11 above. Note that I have separated the words according to meaning. When visualized as one hundred syllables, they must be separated slightly differently, as follows:

om va jra sa ttva sa ma ya ma nu pā la ya va jra sa ttva tve no pa ti
 ṣṭha dṛ ḍho me bha va su to ṣyo me bha va su po ṣyo me bha va a
 nu ra kto me bha va sa rva si ddhi mme pra ya ccha sa rva ka rma
 su ca me ci ttaṃ śre yaḥ ku ru hūṃ ha ha ha hoḥ bha ga van sa
 rva ta thā ga ta va jra mā me mu ṅca va jri bha va ma hā sa ma ya
 sa ttva āḥ

25. *Letters on Occult Meditation*, p. 189.

26. *Letters on Occult Meditation*, p. 96.

27. See: "On the Future Schools of Meditation," by David Reigle, *The Esoteric Quarterly*, vol. 2, no. 1, Winter 2006, pp. 17-28.

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