

LIBERATION

by Roberto Assagioli [Written In 1965]

Let us enter the Temple of Silence with joy; we are free to do so.

Freedom is a great cosmic Law. It is called the Sirian Law of Freedom, and the process of liberation is implemented by this great Principle.

To begin, as always, with the universal aspect, this is the great Law of which the Laws of Economy, Attraction, and Synthesis are the expression. In a sense, it constitutes a still higher synthesis, but I only mention this as a cosmic "perspective" because we cannot know anything about it at our present stage.

We have been told that certain great cosmic Entities have been active in connection with our little Planet and have produced important results. They are called "the Lords of Liberation." At the beginning of the Second World War, in 1940, the Second Stanza of the Great Invocation was given, which begins with an invocation to the Lords of Liberation.

Let the Lords of Liberation issue forth. Let Them bring succour to the sons of men. As you know, the Great Invocation comprises three Stanzas. The first was given in 1936, and the second in 1940. The present situation bears analogies with the situation then, and it is possible that the Lords of Liberation might be Instruments of Divine Intervention. Therefore, it is of immediate interest to know something of the teaching we have been given about Them.

Who are the Lords of Liberation, and from whence do They come? All the ideas and concepts which control human life and have given rise to our civilisation have started as emanations from certain great Lives, Who are Themselves an expression of a divine Idea. The note They strike and the quality They emanate reaches out and makes an impact upon the most developed of the sons of men found at any particular time upon the Earth. These then proceed to make the sensed idea their own and to familiarise the thinkers of their time with the formulated concept. In this way great motivating, divine purposes become controlling factors in human progress. It is in this way that the basic urge to liberation and to freedom has slowly and consistently dominated human endeavour, leading first of all to the struggle for individual freedom and liberation (with the incidental ideal of heaven, of initiation and of spiritual attainment), and gradually moulding human thought to such an extent that the greater ideal takes shape. The freedom of humanity and the liberation of its power to be self-determining (which is an aspect of freedom) has become the dearest ideal and the best thought of the thinkers in all nations.

— *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, p. 266

All principles, laws, and qualities manifest in different ways at different levels; thus the liberation of humanity occurs at various levels. There is the collective urge towards liberation, the group urge, which has been voiced through the "Four Freedoms" which you all know. But there is a very difficult problem concerning freedom. It involves responsibility and the ability to use it wisely, and these two things are not at all easy. The realization of the responsibility which freedom entails has

produced, and is producing, a curious, paradoxical phenomenon which has been expressed in a thought-provoking book by Erik Fromm entitled, *Escape From Freedom*. Others have also called attention to this fact.

When men are free they do not know what to do with their freedom! What to do with one's freedom is one of the sources of anxiety, because freedom is not only freedom from—which is the obvious meaning of the yearning when one is limited—but freedom for, and here is the point: freedom for what? It means having a goal, a purpose, and this implies that life has meaning. In other words, it necessitates some understanding, some acceptance and understanding of the evolutionary Plan, of the fact that the evolutionary wave of life is directed towards a goal. Therefore, freedom is not license. It is not absence of all ties; it is freedom from ordinary human limitations, but also freedom for cooperation with the evolutionary Plan.

This explains much that is going on now. But, as usual, humanity has to learn through experience, which means through trial and error. Millions, and especially the young people, are making the experiment and experience of license and they will find that it does not give them the happiness they had the illusion it would. Through this experience and through their disillusionment they can reach understanding and realization of true freedom, but freedom can only be acquired by degrees.

Individual Freedom

The process of liberation has various stages. First, liberation from the attachment produced by desire, liberation from the enslavement to the emotional body. Here lies the major emphasis of the Buddha's Doctrine, liberation from desire. The Buddha taught that all suffering is due to desire and that the way to liberation is freedom from desire, from personal, selfish desire. He also said:

As the water of the ocean everywhere has the taste of salt so my whole Doctrine has the taste of liberation.

This entails the elimination of glamor. Desire and glamor are connected; and the elimination of glamor is one of the most important and necessary steps in the process of liberation. It can be expressed in simple exoteric terms as the control of the emotions by the mind, and this is the elementary stage which humanity in general needs to understand and to which all education and enlightenment should lead. Even an enlightened self interest requires a control of the emotional drives and urges. The second major stage is liberation from the "Wheel of Rebirth," in other words, liberation from re-incarnation. We can begin this process now, in daily life, but the complete process takes place on the Path of Initiation. This is described by the Tibetan Master in this way:

I would like to have you study initiation from the angle of liberation, looking upon it as a process of strenuously attained freedoms. This basic aspect of initiation—when realised by the initiate—ties his experience into a firm relation with that of the whole of humanity, whose fundamental struggle is the attainment of that freedom "whereby the soul and its powers can unfold and all men be free because of an individually attained freedom".

If you will study the nine initiations and look upon them from this angle, you will see how each does most definitely mark a point of attainment, and therefore the entire subject of initiation takes on a new beauty and appears more worthy of the pain and struggle of attainment. Let me give you an indication (no more than that) of what I mean.

- Initiation I.* *Birth.* Freedom from the control of the physical body and its appetites.
- Initiation II.* *Baptism.* Freedom from the control of the emotional nature and the selfish sensitivity of the lower self.
- Initiation III.* *Initiation III.* Transfiguration. Freedom from the ancient authority of the threefold personality, marking a climaxing moment in the history of all initiates.
- Initiation IV.* *Renunciation.* Freedom from all self interest, and the renouncing of the personal life in the interest of a larger whole. Even soul-consciousness ceases to be of importance and a more universal awareness, and one closer to the divine Mind, takes its place.
- Initiation V.* *Revelation.* Freedom from blindness—a liberation which enables the initiate to see a new vision. This vision concerns the Reality lying beyond any hitherto sensed or known.

This goal of freedom is in reality the main incentive to tread the Path of Return. One of the most spiritually exciting things taking place in the world today is the use, in every country, of the word FREEDOM; it was that great disciple, F. D. Roosevelt, who "anchored" the word in a new and more universal sense. It now has a fuller and deeper meaning to humanity.

The Rays and the Initiations, pp. 685-687

This gives the opportunity to emphasize an important point; that now, in our personal lives—and not only as disciples but even as aspirants—we are laying the foundations of and taking the elementary steps towards these Initiations. Einstein, who can be considered as a great mathematical Initiate, had to begin as a boy with sums, subtraction, multiplication, and division; later he took ever greater steps into higher mathematics. In the same way, here and now, in our personal lives we make the small beginnings for all the Initiations. Again here is the great law—"as above so below." The microcosm reflects the macrocosm.

So there is a correspondence between the gradual control of the physical urges and the First Initiation; the gradual control of the desire or astral body and the Second Initiation; and so on.

Let us take, for example, the Fourth Initiation: Every act of sacrifice or "giving up" of something lower for something higher is an elementary preparation for the Fourth Initiation. This is very encouraging; we are not asked to achieve immediately the complete freedom which is only achieved at the Fourth Initiation, but we can, humbly and hopefully, begin to work towards it right here and now. It is good to have that perspective and it is encouraging to know that we are preparing for future initiation. A point about renunciation, on which we should be clear, is that its real meaning is substitution. In renouncing we have to substitute for one thing something better. This is what really happens and it has a positive connotation instead of the negative one of renunciation. Whenever we take a decision to employ a day or an hour in some

particular way we are "renouncing"-automatically-all the other alternatives. We are doing this continually; therefore, to renounce is not so terrible! It is for us to choose; and here, as with other "psychological techniques," simple, practical people often do it better than others. They know for example, that in order to make money they must renounce other alternatives and eliminate all that counteracts that achievement. And vice versa, those who aim at more spiritual attainment have to give up material ambitions, and renounce their "lower" actions. This is the framework of the process of liberation.

The dispelling of world glamor, which is the sum total of individual glamor, is a necessary condition for liberation. It is therefore a central task. Wisdom is the great dispeller of glamor, and in a sense the most effective means of gaining liberation is the cultivation of the wisdom to "see through," because, until we see through a glamor we cannot possibly get rid of it-be freed from it. But "seeing through" is not the whole story, because, while it is possible to see through a glamor, nevertheless, it often recurs again and again from the unconscious, through habit and through the force of energy acquired in previous lives and in this life. Therefore, recognizing a glamor-seeing in previous lives and in this life. Therefore, recognizing a glamor-seeing through it-is half the work. The other half is to disintegrate it, to eliminate all the energy accumulated in it. The second part cannot be done if we have not done the first, so we have to begin with that.

We should remember that all freedom is freedom within the Plan. Of course, we are free to go against the Plan and many of us do; but that brings punishment, and punishment is only a human word for the inevitable working of the Law of Cause and Effect.

We are often faced with the problem of how to free ourselves for inner spiritual work when overwhelmed by outer work and responsibilities. The answer is, we can fulfill our personal duties and accept karmic limitations and responsibilities while remaining inwardly free, without resentment and without attachment. If we realize that paying off karmic debts is a step towards liberation, we do it willingly, and can even assume the attitude of blessing our obstacles! The point is that outer bondage does not prevent inner freedom if we take the right attitude towards it.

It has been said that freedom of choice is the most terrible thing we have to face-the choice between a lesser and a greater good. But we cannot escape from this freedom of choice, and should not try to. It is one of the highest gifts given to humanity and we should be grateful for it and certainly not try to escape from it.

When there is a choice to be made between good and good, it is a question of skill in action. Sometimes the choice is between a greater and lesser evil and here lies an important lesson for rigid idealists who fail to accept that sometimes the part of wisdom is to accept a necessary evil to prevent a greater evil.

When on the other hand it is a choice between a greater and a lesser good it is more difficult. But after all, as they are both "good" it is not so terrible if we make a mistake-we make them all the time and still survive, and we shall certainly go on making them, although ever "nobler" ones. Even very High Beings have made mistakes through excessive or premature compassion, but one could call them "super-human" mistakes, and those great Beings have recognized them and then proceeded onwards. So let us proceed in a true sense of humility, not the "miserable sinner" type of humility, but honestly realizing that all of us make mistakes.

We are in a sea of glamor and all glamor is a mistake. So let us reconcile ourselves to this human condition and while not exactly "blessing" our mistakes, let us extract and distill the teaching and wisdom they give us. It is all part of the great Process of Liberation.

EXCERPTS ON LIBERATION

Liberation cannot be achieved except by the perception of the identity of the individual spirit with the universal Spirit. It cannot be achieved- neither by Yoga (physical training), nor by Sankhya (speculative philosophy), nor by the practice of religious ceremonies, nor by mere learning...

Liberation never comes, even at the end of a hundred aeons, without the realisation of the Oneness of Self—Shankara.

Liberation of Energy

Christ is the embodiment of freedom,
and the Messenger of Liberation.

I would call your attention to the words, "the liberation of energy." It is liberation which is the keynote of the new era, just as it has ever been the keynote of the spiritually oriented aspirant.

The term "liberation" really means the ability of any conscious atom to pass out of one sphere of energised influence into another of a higher vibration, of larger and wider expanse of conscious realisation.

The liberation from karma about which would-be occult students so glibly talk is after all but the freeing of the atom from its own personal problem (the problem of response to unitary sensation), and its conscious acquiescence in group response and work. It marks the disassociation of the human atom from the rhythm imposed upon him by the lower "influences" which find their channel of approach through his vehicles, or lunar bodies, and his consequent willing recognition of the will-impulse of his greater whole, or the life of the egoic group-a centre in the planetary body. It involves atomic control, but involves also conscious subjection to the karma of the Heavenly Man. Man is no longer the slave of the rhythm of matter per se, but controls it in the three worlds of his endeavour; he is still nevertheless controlled by the group karma of the planetary centre, by its influence, life and vibratory impulse. The same can be predicted of a Heavenly Man, and of a solar Logos.

The Concept of Liberation

There has been much talk among esotericists (particularly in the Eastern presentation of the Path of Reality) about liberation. The goal held before the neophyte is liberation, freedom, emancipation: this, by and large, is the keynote of life itself. The concept is a transiting out of the realm of the purely selfish and of personal liberation into something much wider and more important. This concept of liberation lies behind the modern use of the word "liberty" but is far wiser, better and deeper in its connotation. Liberty, in the minds of many, is freedom from the imposition of any man's rule, freedom to do as one wishes, to think as one determines and to live as one chooses. This is as it should be provided that one's wishes, choices, thoughts and desires are free from selfishness and are dedicated to the good of the whole.

This is, as yet, very seldom so.

Liberation is much more than all this; it is freedom from the past, freedom to move forward along certain predetermined lines (predetermined by the soul), freedom to express all the divinity of which one is capable as an individual, or which a nation can present to the world.

Liberation of the Soul

I would like here to call your attention to the phrase... "the Hierarchy of souls who

have achieved freedom." I am not using that phrase in the ordinary sense. The aspirants and the disciples of the world employ it to signify the achieving of that liberty and that freedom which will release them from the three worlds of human endeavor and make them free citizens of the Kingdom of God. With that point of view you are quite familiar, and you will recognize that in it there lies a large measure of selfish purpose-inevitable and some day to be eliminated, but at this stage definitely present and perhaps desirable because it provides the adequate incentive towards the needed effort. The freedom, however, to which I refer, is the achieved success of the soul to move and act and manifest with freedom in the three worlds, as well as on its own high plane. This is a point seldom if ever emphasized. The soul itself, the Ego, has its own task to do, which might be expressed as being the reverse of that with which the personality is familiar. It has to learn to be at home and to function effectively in the world of human living and there to carry forward the plan.

Esoteric Psychology, Vol. II, pp. 702-703

MEDITATION

Silence: Unifying as souls.

Receptivity: As "lighted, loving, willing souls."

Unification: Let the Lords of Liberation issue forth.
Let Them bring succour to the sons of men.
Let the souls of men awaken to the Light,
And may they stand with massed intent.
The WILL to save is here.
The LOVE to carry forth the work is widely spread abroad.
The ACTIVE AID of all who know the truth is also here.
Come forth, O Mighty One and blend these three.

Radiation: Freedom of the SOUL to express divinity through humanity.

GREAT INVOCATION

From the point of Light within the mind of God
Let light stream forth into the minds of men.
Let Light descend on Earth.
(pause)
From the Point of Love within the Heart of God
Let love stream forth into the hearts of men.
May Christ return to Earth.
(pause)
From the center where the Will of God is known
Let purpose guide the little wills of men—
The purpose which the Masters know and serve.
(pause)
From the center which we call the race of men
Let the Plan of Love and Light work out.
And may it seal the door where evil dwells.
(pause)
Let Light and Love and Power restore the Plan