

Medicine Shop for the Soul

Joann S. Bakula

Summary

As we struggle to emerge from the glimmers and illusions of the Piscean Age, the healing waters of truth and beauty provide us with the potions we need to usher in a new Age.

A Spiritual Renaissance

The water of new life leaves evidence, like flowers in the desert, of a renaissance of spirit and of life energy set free to create anew. The Tibetan and Alice Bailey predicted that just such a time would be drawing near—despite much evidence to the contrary—and that we “must prepare for a renaissance of all the arts and for a new and free flow of the creative spirit.”¹ The incoming new age will bring with it a “spiritual renaissance” whose quality will affect all avenues of human endeavor, not just the arts.² New life will come to government, education, economics, science, and religion, as well as the arts; upon this world servers meditate. In the meantime, we are living through the end of a failing age, the Piscean, and need all the therapies that that era requires! For civilizations, that means we face the inadequacy of old institutions and an increase in corruption—corruption that is all too evident.

Art, which reveals the highest human potential, heals and purifies, washing away the corruption of society as well as healing the individual. It reveals a truer picture of who we are in the deepest sense, in the more evolved stage of the evolution of consciousness, whether it is in the line and color of the artist or in the words of the poet. Beauty in all forms elevates.

“The Mysteries will restore color and music as they essentially are to the world and do it in such a manner that the creative art of today will be to this new creative art what a child’s

building of wooden blocks is to a great cathedral such as Durham or Milan.”³ In the yearly meditation cycle of 12 festivals, we ponder on the mysteries of human existence in combination with a practical application of values, principles, and energies working out in the world. As these mysteries find appropriate response in planetary ritual, the Mysteries themselves will be restored, the Tibetan predicts. “The Mysteries, when restored, will make real...the nature of religion, the purpose of science and the goal of education. These are not what you think today.”⁴ The ageless wisdom, the perennial philosophy, and the esoteric traditions of all the religions form the foundation of truth from which new revelation emerges, bringing a new spring to the winter of the old Piscean Age. We can expect new life to come with a new era.

The Tibetan describes the ineffable beauty of the greater divine purpose with these incredible words: “Does it mean anything to you when I say that the ceremonial ritual of the daily life of Sanat Kumara, implemented by music and sound and carried on waves of color that break upon the shores of the three worlds of human evolution, reveal—in the clearest notes and tones and shades—the deepest secret behind His purpose?”⁵ Vincent Van Gogh, a colorist himself and very aware of the group nature of a movement in art, stated that

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“the painter of the future [would] be a colorist such as has never yet existed.”⁶ Perhaps he had a glimpse of this greater truth. It is by the Spirit-aligned-Soul expressing itself through each avenue of beauty that the reign of love washes the Earth.

Truth and Beauty Heal

As writers from Aristotle to Keats have always known, truth and beauty heal. The effect of great art, Aristotle observed, is catharsis or purification of desires, thoughts, and emotions through “fear and pity,” or insight and understanding.⁷ Truth and insight can also begin to wash civilization and the planet clean from corruption—a condition prevalent today, much needing the water of life for purification.

Today we face the exposure of widespread corruption in society from the highest political, financial, and social institutions. The power structure has even come to believe in the ideology of corruption, now seen in a financial meltdown. “Greed is good” is a famous line from Oliver Stone’s film *Wall Street* in which corporate raiders rob people of their jobs. “Corruption is our protection. Corruption keeps us safe and warm...Corruption is why we win,” said one character in the film *Syriana*, about oil and greed-driven politics in the Middle East (for which George Clooney won an Oscar). But the sickness of society is not purged in *Syriana*, as it was in *Wall Street*. Indeed, the financial meltdown of 2008-2009 has been called corruption at the deepest level of deception, causing suspicion that bred widespread fear. Some called it the “poisoning of the well” through “reckless selfishness,” a broken ideology, and the “social contagion” of both trusting and imitating the most corrupt, putting the world economy itself in intensive care.

Nobel Prize winner Albert Camus wrote of the artist as rebel against a society sick with lies, fake morality, and corruption. “To think,” he said, “is to learn how to see anew”⁸ by refusing to lie to oneself or to others, by clearing the distortions of spin and filter. Artists help us to lift what the Tibetan calls the “Veil of Distortion, related to the world of glamour.”⁹ In the

art form of film, James Dean became immortal by embodying the same truth. He was the model of the artist as rebel, using authenticity to fight hypocrisy. Another artist who heals with truth and freedom is Vaclav Havel, who exposed the culture of ideological lies in his book *Living in Truth*. Prophetically, he also saw the “regrettable lapse of a technology that failed to include ‘the ecological factor’ in its calculation,” and saw this as a symbol of the far deeper miscalculation of denying the “experience of mystery.”¹⁰

“Beauty will save the world,” Dostoevsky wrote; and Solzhenitsyn repeated it in his Nobel acceptance speech. World literature, Solzhenitsyn said, has the destiny of uniting the individual to the world through expressing common values and experiences. “World literature builds upon ‘well-established traditions of national literatures’ and allows the ‘peaks’ of that literature to speak to the whole of humanity.”¹¹ The universality of the human experience, embedded in and yet transcending the national and cultural color, gives a common language to the lived experience clothed in fiction but speaking universal truth.

The art and literature of Nicholas and Helena Roerich are famous for their heralding of beauty as the saving grace of humanity. Nicholas Roerich, the artist most famous in esoteric circles, crowned Beauty as the principle that would save humanity from its own destruction—beauty of nation as well as nature, of culture, and of all life. He saw the immense past of humanity and Earth as the beauty that would “stir him to visions of the future, of a New Era, when the aspiration toward art and the effort to beautify [all] life will again be universal.”¹² The principle of beauty runs through the Agni Yoga books of Helena Roerich with crystalline light. “Amidst various labors, thought about the Beautiful is the bridge and power and stream of benevolence.”¹³

Beauty touches our one Soul, yours and mine, revealing us to ourselves. This is the gift of art, whether poetry or painting, music or monument, film or theater. It acts as a mirror reflecting the best and worst in human nature. Sometimes a bad film with violence, torture, hate-

filled lust, or mockery can leave us quite sick and in need of healing from the art we have made most popular! Great art is, however, a creative force, finding a pathway of change to bridge the gap between Being and becoming. No one bridges better, pouring forth the words that heal, than timeless Rumi, the Persian, the thirteenth century Sufi poet. In “A Presence Like Rain” and excerpts from other poems,¹⁴ rivers of rain, Ocean born, wash us free from pain:

There is a kind of spirit that comes like fresh rain,
a water that carries away to the Ocean whatever’s foul and rotten.
There, water itself gets washed, and the next year it comes again.
This is the magnificent work of those watery souls who wash us.

How could they shine, if we were not so impure!

We exhaust their clarity with our silt, and then the clouds lift them,
and the sun takes them as vapor.
In various molecular ways they go back to the Ocean.

What is meant by this Water is the Spirit of the Enlightened Ones.
Think of these rivers and streams as medicine shops.
Let them take you to be healed in that wide Water
Where even they are cleaned.

Where, look, you can see their cloudy robes raining down.

* * * * *

And

There are such helpers in the world, who rush to save anyone who cries out.
Like Mercy itself, they run toward the screaming.
Where the lowland is, that’s where water goes.
All medicine wants is pain to cure.
And don’t just ask for one mercy.
Let them flood in.
Let the sky open under your feet....
The hard rain and wind are ways

The cloud has to take care of us.

* * *

And

Many mysteries are hinted at.
What if you come to understand one of them?
Words let water from an unseen, infinite ocean
Come into this place as energy...

Art, Like Water, Purifies

The Tibetan defines water as “the symbol of purity, sanitation and universality,”¹⁵ the very antidote for corruption, separatism, and the washing of wounds. But water, like poetry and spirit, can have many meanings, as we know. Water can refer to many planes and perspectives in the esoteric wisdom, from matter to spirit: “the ‘waters of substance,’ the ocean of life, the world of astral glamour and reaction, the astral plane as a whole, the desire and the emotional nature,... and mass existence”¹⁶ are just a few examples the Tibetan cites. Above all is Neptune, “the God of the waters,”¹⁷ a sacred planet closely connected with the Sixth Ray of devotion and idealism.¹⁸ Through devotion, we learn love. This is the most common way that people, and most other mammals, find their way back to the sacred source. Through idealism we stay true to what we can become and find the creative intelligence needed to take the next evolutionary step ahead.

When we associate water with the emotional or desire nature and the astral plane, which is the source of most of the world’s pain and distorted perception, it symbolizes the ocean of misery, the very opposite of the ocean of wisdom. In the words of the *Old Commentary*: “Use pain. Call for the fire, oh Pilgrim in a strange and foreign land. The waters wash away the mud and slime of nature’s growth.”¹⁹ So if what is falling on your face is most definitely not rain, take heart! Use the occasion to call for the fire that “burn[s] the hindering forms that seek to hold the pilgrim back,”²⁰ and rest assured that water will wash away the dirt and reveal the qualities of divinity that are eventually evoked in the mire of maya, glam-

our, and illusion.

“It is the Soul itself that dispels illusion, through the use of the faculty of the intuition. It is the illumined mind that dissipates glamour.”²¹ This is what truth in art does so well and why we love great writers and poets for their healing perception. Glamour can always be found where there is criticism and pride.

Illusion can always be found in the lie. Enlightened poets like Rumi heal with energy from the Ocean of wisdom; they hold a mirror up to the Soul so that you can see its beauty. Rumi has that refreshing ability to startle, through embracing the shunned opposites and cutting through social materialism, false perception, and slander to set the reader free from fear with a laugh:

Forget safety.
Live where you fear to live.
Destroy your reputation.
Be notorious!²²

Few of us are that fearless, but it puts enlightenment in sharp contrast to the social world, which many, including Buddha, have found becomes an obstacle to enlightenment. The means to freedom is through intuition, illumination, and inspiration, the Tibetan tells us.²³ These are the tools with which to purify corrupted values. They dissipate deception from the angle of the Soul.²⁴ They become like chicken soup for the Soul; they are the “Medicine Shop for the Soul.”

Meditation Inspires Creativity

We all know the pain and agony “of every true disciple who...is now giving birth to the Christ, within the animal stable and in the manger of the world,”²⁵ using the same basic DNA as the creatures, eating, breathing, sleeping, and managing hormones that lead to breeding or fighting. Eventually we encounter the Herculean task of cleaning out the Augean

stables, representative of all the dirt accumulated by humanity through the ages, highlighted in the labors of Aquarius.²⁶

Out of that, the Soul evokes the qualities of heart, of compassion and courage; out of that, the Soul creates. This is the main purpose of daily meditation and of our monthly united meditation on behalf of humanity as a whole.

This, the Tibetan tells us, is the main purpose of humanity itself: to discover the divine attributes within itself. “The thread of purpose will be noted and followed through, century after century, integrating not only history into one complete story of the revelation of divine qualities through the medium of humanity, but integrating with it and into it all world philosophies, the central theme of all creative art, the symbolism of architecture and the conclusions of science.”²⁷

In the words of the seventeenth Karmapa, who wrote this poem at age 14 when he fled Tibet in 2000:

Descending from the canopy of white clouds...
May these true words, like pearly drops of light or pouring rain...
Open flowers of friendship and let well-being and joy blossom forth.²⁸

Sky-bound on gift waves of light and beauty, we make our ascent to spiritual worlds as one group of disciples the world around, rushing to meet those Wise Ones who are coming down the mountain. All are renewed in the water of life. As that water rains down, the world is washed clean of war and poverty; and the singular beauty of the world and the Soul shines forth in culture.

Whether we are drawing from the deep well of the interior in meditation to heal others, or to write a poem, paint a picture, or create music, meditation is the engine that drives the production, from the level of the Spiritual Hierarchy

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down to the human race. We have a united meditative endeavor in process, through the 12 monthly full moon meditations, to create the thoughtforms of the Aquarian age, the new age, based upon the deepest and most practical spiritual truths gleaned from our approach to the Spiritual Hierarchy of enlightened beings. Through these efforts, the Tibetan predicts, the Mysteries themselves will be restored. In the process, the world is healed of its wounds, the medicine shop of illumined ones is open for business, and society is cleansed of its corruption. The dream lives of a new era in which all life becomes art and all is made beautiful.

¹ Alice A. Bailey, *Education in the New Age* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1954), 47.

² Alice A. Bailey, *The Problems of Humanity* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1964), 45-46.

³ Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1960), 332.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 332.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 246. *Sanat Kumara* refers to the Earth's Planetary Logos.

⁶ *The Complete Letters of Vincent Van Gogh*, Vol. III, # 482. Bernard/Smithsonian.

⁷ Aristotle, *Poetics* (Mineola, NY: Dover, 1997), 24.

⁸ Germaine Bree, *Camus* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1964), 97.

⁹ Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 196.

¹⁰ Vaclav Havel, *Living in Truth* (London: Faber, 1986), 138.

¹¹ Edward E. Ericson, Jr. and Daniel J. Mahoney (eds.), *The Solzhenitsyn Reader, New and Essential Writings 1947-2005* (Wilmington: ISI, 2006), xxxvi.

¹² Sina Fosdick, *Nicholas Roerich* (New York: Nicholas Roerich Museum, 1964), 7.

¹³ Helena I. Roerich, *Fiery World* (New York: Agni Yoga Society, 1969), 99.

¹⁴ Coleman Barks (ed.), *Delicious Laughter... Teaching Stories of... Rumi* (Athens, GA: Maypop, 1990), 140-141, 108-109; *Open Secret* (Putney, VT: Threshold Books, 1984), v.

¹⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1953), 235.

¹⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *Alice A. Esoteric Astrology* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1951), 275.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 275.

¹⁸ Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1925), 898-899.

¹⁹ Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1934), 359.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 359.

²¹ Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1950), 83.

²² Barks, *Rumi*, 110.

²³ Bailey, *Glamour*, 85.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 85.

²⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, Vol. I (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1936), 314.

²⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *The Labours of Hercules* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1974), 180.

²⁷ Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1957), 589.

²⁸ Michelle Martin, *Music in the Sky: The Life, Art & Teachings of the 17th Karmapa* (New Delhi: New Age, 2003), 227.

