

Eternal Way of Truth
Part Two

25-49

Cycle of Life
Exoteric and Esoteric Text



25 Shiva is the purifier. The trident, the crescent moon in his hair, the cobra around his neck, the earrings, conch in his left hand, the marked bands of collected prana or life energy on his arms all signify different modes of purification. His power of purification is the divine Uma. The purifier dissolves impurity.

The next neter of the cycle of life is Siva or Rudra. While the dissolver is often confused with destruction, he is that which makes possible the removal of impurity by purging and making the opportunity for entering the golden door possible; thus, he is called the Auspicious.



26 The female equivalent of Shiva is Amba. She is loaded with weapons meant for the destruction of impurities. Her tiger mount symbolises her mastery over the animal quality of life. Amba is fierce, but benevolent; however, she has a more impatient form, Kali.

Every 12,000 years or maha yuga, the goddesses and gods reverse roles;

however, at all times every god has a female equivalent. Here, Shiva is Amba. It is viewpoint or attitude that makes either one or the other dominate at any particular time.



27 Kali is the personification of time. Her bloody sword attests to the death of many impurities shown as heads and skulls. Her lolling tongue and blazing eyes depict the intensity of her energy in destroying impurity. The final destruction leads to death for the impure.

Kali leads to death only for the impure. The pure are brought instead to immortality when the ego has been vanquished.



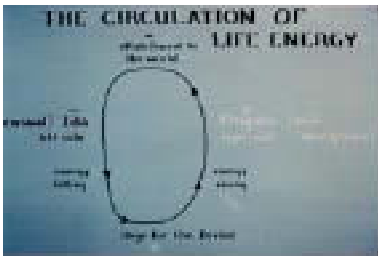
28 The goddess of death is Yamari, or Durga, the killer of the buffalo demon, animal power. She is also crushing a man who from his ignorance has generated impurity by his ego-centred activities.

These two aspects are symbolised here by two-faced Durga.



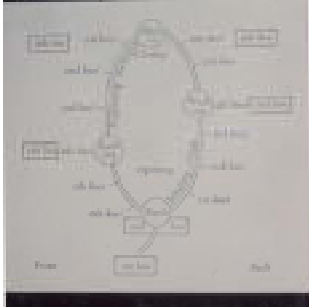
29 This graphic representation of the cycle of life has in the upper left examples of the different lifetimes one might live through. The life energy circulates over and over through the cycle of life.

At the juncture between death and rebirth is a moment in which the individual is without body, feelings, or mind. It is at that moment that the knowledge of yoga's true nature enables one to enter the golden door.



30 If one looks at the human body from the back, the circulation of the life energy moves counter-clockwise. When energy rises up the pingala energy channel, through wilful actions, one succeeds and gets attached to their life and possessions. When one tries to enjoy them, the energy starts moving down the ida energy channel on the left side of the body. Through sensual enjoyment, one's success and possessions are consumed until one has nothing. The latent urge for the divine in each of us is all that is left. Lacking wisdom one begins using one's will to achieve divinity and the cycle starts over.

At that moment, the urge for the Divine is all that is left; however, attempting to achieve the Divine by the will starts the life energy, prana circulating again.



31 In the Chinese text, the Secret of the Golden Flower, the circulation of life energy is described. The rising and falling of the energy are counted by kwei or rhythms and measured by hou or intervals. Washing is the purification associated with energy rising and the deluge of bathing is the energy descending. What causes the circulation?

The rising energy is prana, the descending is called apana. The golden door is at the point between the end of the 5th hou and the beginning of the 1st hou.



32 This remarkable view of Vishnu in the Lakshmi Narayana Temple in Bombay, India, shows the image as it is worshipped. The image is dressed and the principle face of Vishnu is painted. The ornaments completely obscure the figure underneath.

In human life, the truth is dressed in illusion.



33 With ornaments taken off the beatific form of Vishnu is revealed. This life sustaining or positive aspect is balanced by his other aspect on the opposite side.

Stripped bare, the truth is at once beauty and



34 This is the death aspect. For every positive, wilful, constructive action the nature of life is such that it is balanced by a negative, sensual, destructive action.

its opposite side, ugly. Life is the opposite of death. A pravrtti (with desires) seeks life, a nivrtti (without desires) accepts death as an opportunity.



35 The Mayan equivalent of Vishnu is the Lord of Life, Quetzalcoatl, the positive uplifter of his people. When Quetzalcoatl accomplished his life-season and the time for his predestined fall drew nigh, he made no move to delay or evade it; and though he must have known his destiny as written in the stars, he was strangely taken by surprise. There came to his palace a young god, Tez Catlipoca, bearing a mirror wrapped in the skin of a rabbit. He said to the palace servant, "Go tell your master I have come to show him his own flesh." Informed of this, Quetzalcoatl answered, "What does he call my own flesh? Go and ask." But when the vigorous young god came in: "Welcome youth, whence do you come?", the elder said in greeting. "You've put yourself to much trouble. What is this my flesh that you will show me?" "My Lord and my priest," the youth replied, uncovering his mirror, "Look now upon your flesh. See yourself as you are seen.

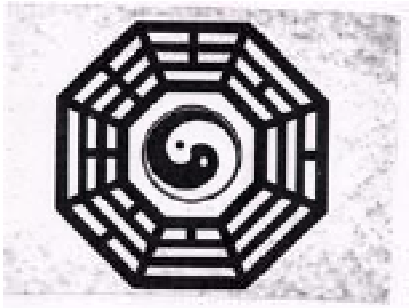
If we identify, even a little, with our body, we want to live and tend to want the beautiful and the light.



36 And when Quetzalcoatl beheld his face, wrinkled, aged and full of sores, he was appalled. This rear view is Quetzalcoatl, the Lord of Death. It is the positive and negative aspects of life that keep the cycle of life turning.

We resist death and the dark side of the soul unless we abandon wealth and

fame, and welcome death. Otherwise, the cycle of life will keep turning.



37 How can we overcome this potentially endless cycle?

How can you overcome this potentially endless cycle? When you truly want the answer to this question, the grace of God or guru will become apparent.



38 The Tibetan wheel of becoming. In the centre revolve the motivating three poisons.

Divine Order is square, the cycle of life is round and describes life on Earth. Near the centre spring the three causes of the cycling.



39 Ignorance the pig, desire the cock, hostility the serpent.

Ignorance, desire and anger vanish at the centre, at the moment of death.



40 In the next arch souls ascending and descending in rounds of rebirth.

However, unless one evolves beyond these three by the practice of yoga (or its equivalent under other names), one will cycle in an endless round of lives.



41 Next the six realms of rebirth, a teaching bodhisatva in each. From the top, circling clock-wise, this is the realm of the gods.

Even though we obtain heaven between lives due to our good deeds while living in a body, we will



42 Then, on clockwise, are the Titans.

move on to being titans or gandharvas and



43 The next realm is the hungry ghosts, followed by hell-beings.

then to torture in hell



44 The beasts and finally the realm of mankind. In the rim, holding all enclosed, are the twelve interdependent causes.

then to rebirth in a body.



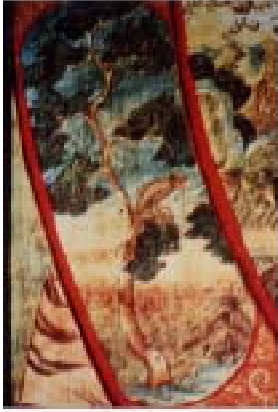
45 Clockwise from the lower left are ignorance, the blind woman being led.

Ignorance causes us to err and



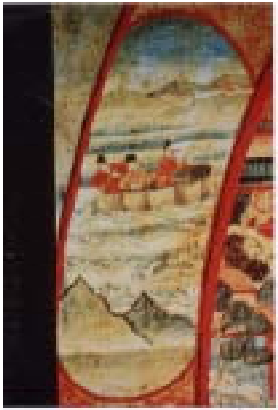
46 Karmic formations, the potter.

to create karma, which makes us want to know how to avoid karma, so we seek



47 Consciousness, the monkeys.

consciousness and thus



48 Mind and body, a man ferrying others.

a human form and a mind and



49 The senses, a house with windows.

the senses through which to gather knowledge; but our senses lead us into