

PURUCKER,GDE Death and the Circulations of the Cosmos - 1**ON MOMENT OF DYING:**

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As death approaches, which implies a usually slow but sometimes rapid withdrawal of the vital essence from the incarnated human being, this ākāśic aura is co-ordinately indrawn or withdrawn inwards, and thus becomes steadily less strong and less potent in action; and at the moment of death, i. e., complete death, which means the severing of the vital aura from the physical body, this ākāśic aura is reduced to a single cord or thread or filament — which finally snaps or breaks, and then complete death has occurred.

(...)

Thus it is seen that this cord is the diminishing remnant of the ākāśic or vital aura luminously surrounding the living man during incarnation on earth; and as stated above, as death approaches, this vital ākāśic aura is progressively indrawn and therefore apparently disappears from out the body, leaving the cord as the final filament to be severed at the instant of real and complete death. Indeed, the 'substance or matter of this cord or thread is prāṇic, i. e., composed of the substance of one or more and usually of several of the vital prāṇas, which progressively leave the tissues and finally the vital organs of the body. When the body is thus deprived of its psycho-vital-magnetic prāṇic life, it thereupon is what we men call 'dead,' very much, to use a familiar illustration, as, when the electric current is switched off from the brightly shining bulb, the bulb glows for a short instant and then is dark, i. e., 'dead.'

It may be asked as to the exact time of the snapping of the cord-filament: whether this takes place at the last breath, or with the last heart-beat. The question is a pertinent and a proper one, and I will endeavor to answer it briefly as follows: it is not the last breath, nor again even the last beat of the heart, which marks the snapping of the vital cord, but both the last breath and the last heart-beat do mark the moment of apparent death, which is equivalent to saying the moment likewise of the vanishing of the larger part of the vital cord. Nevertheless as long as the panorama of the past life's experiences is passing through the brain, which occurs in all cases of death, there is still a slender strand of the filament visible to the Seer's eye, and the panorama itself becomes blank unconsciousness when this last feebly glowing strand in its turn vanishes; this is full and complete death of the body. What doctors call *rigor mortis*, or the stiffening of the body after death, begins instantly then, but becomes fully apparent only with the progressive loss of the heat of the body. The *rigor mortis* itself finally vanishes, leaving the body a cold and inert corpse.

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There are no perfectly defined and trustworthy signs which the body gives to the ordinary physician as marking the moment of complete or full death, otherwise of the snapping of the last strand of the cord of life. The Seer knows, of course; but unfortunately I know of no absolutely and infallibly reliable sign which the ordinary medical practitioner could understand as showing him the exact instant when death is full and complete. It is known even to medical science that the mere cessation of the breath, and the stopping of the beating of the heart, are no conclusive signs of complete death, outside of other things; cases of resuscitation are on record which have occurred even when the heart has stopped beating and breathing has ceased. In consequence of this, it is not only wise but a following of the dictates of humanity always to avoid too precipitate or too hurried a disposal of the human body which is supposed to be 'dead.' Perhaps the best signs of all that dissolution has really begun are the marks of decay which all physicians recognise, such, for instance, as the flowing of matter from the nose, etc.

Unconsciousness for the dying man, and I mean here the complete unconsciousness marking real death which succeeds the psycho-mental panorama above spoken of, takes place at the instant when this panorama ceases. As said before, the brain is the last organ of the body really to die; hence, when the last act in the mental drama, or panoramic picture, of the last life has taken place, then the dying man glides into complete unconsciousness, utter peace, which is the utter closing of all avenues of thought and feeling: unconsciousness, perfect, complete, utter. This unconsciousness lasts until the hazy and vague resuscitation of partial consciousness in the *Kiima-loka*, which becomes vivid for the wicked and evil man, very slight for the average man, and virtually occurs not at all for the exceptionally good and spiritual man.

ON PANORAMIC VISION:

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The panoramic review of the life last past usually begins when all the bodily activities and functions have ceased, sometimes indeed before the last heart-beat, sometimes when the last heart-beat has taken place; but this panorama, as a rule, continues even after the heart has stopped beating and the last breath has been expired. It is impossible to state for all cases how long this panorama takes in human time, because the length of the panoramic vision varies so tremendously with the individual. One could only make guesses at the average length of time taken by the panoramic vision. In some cases, as with individuals of high spirituality, the whole process is begun and completed within a few hours, two or three perhaps; in other cases it may be seven or eight or even ten or twelve hours, possibly longer. Probably six hours in the average case is required for this last visioning of the *mâyâ* of the life just lived. But in all cases this panoramic vision occurs because the brain is suffused with the fleeting coruscations and flashing scintillations still reaching it from the feathery tendrils of the cord of life, which cord, as above stated, grows progressively thinner and thinner as the hours pass.

I have been asked how it is possible for such a panorama to take place in those cases where a man dies suddenly as the result of some terrible accident to the brain, as for instance when the brain is blown to pieces or when the body is burned alive. In such cases as these last, the panorama nevertheless takes place and continues in normal course, and does so in and through the higher parts of the astral brain of the *Linga-sarira*, which, although it is seriously affected, especially in its more material parts, by the accident which destroys the physical brain, nevertheless in all cases endures somewhat longer as a cohering organ than does the physical brain. In cases of extreme old age the panorama begins in a vague and, as it were, tentative manner for some days or even possibly weeks before physical death occurs, and this is really the cause of the stupor that very old people frequently fall into shortly before they die. The Esotericist should always remember that every incident, fact, event, thought, and emotion of a man's life are recorded in the different parts of his constitution, the mental incidents in the mental parts of his constitution; the emotional events of his life in the *kâma-mânasic* part of his inner being; and the spiritual parts in the *buddhi-mfinasic*, etc., etc.; while the *linga-sarira* and the physical body are themselves permanently marked and often noticeably changed, even during life, by the experiences undergone throughout the incarnation.

The panorama spoken of occurs in all its wondrous and wonderful detail – no thought or point of action being omitted therefrom – because it is the result of instinctive or automatic action on the part of the human monad, which, almost unconsciously to itself, as it were, dislodges from every secret recess of its inner records, imprinted as these are on its own vital substance, all the details of the life just past; and due to the spiritual forces at work, which are strictly harmonic and rigidly karmic, consciousness functions, again automatically, in opening up the panorama by beginning with the first incident that memory has recorded in the life last past, and thereafter proceeds in stately pageantry of imagery until the last thought is reached, the

last emotion felt, the last intuition had — and then comes unconsciousness, complete, sudden, and infinitely merciful. This is true death.

Now such a panorama cannot possibly take place in its fulness during the normal lifetime of the man, because the man's consciousness, or self-consciousness, during life is so distracted and caught hither and yon by his attention being drawn to the manifold events in which he is living, that there is no opportunity for the sequence in regular series of the previous events since birth; and what we call memory during lifetime is merely the ability to read more or less accurately the impressions stamped upon our Auric Egg, which impressions carried by the auric flow to the physical body, as above described, enter the texture of the physical brain and nervous system, and by reaction often make themselves felt as mental or physiological impressions which are thus truly recognised as 'memories of the past.'

It is a most marvelous thing to ponder over, that the human consciousness through its body and its various organs registers with amazing accuracy, indeed infallibly, not only every mental and emotional event that occurs from day to day during imbodyed life, but even photographs on the registers of the inner being, so to speak, a perfectly incomprehensibly immense number of sense-impressions and brain-impressions and nervous impressions which the day-today consciousness of the living man is scarcely conscious of, or perhaps not conscious of at all. It is extremely wonderful, indeed and yet during the Vision or Panorama of the dying man every single one of these events, every incident, whether previously recognised and registered in memory or not, passes swiftly and with infallible accuracy before the watching eye of the inner man, just preceding his passing from this plane.

Thus it is that those around the dying so often hear them whispering or muttering faintly of the events of early childhood. Those who have not understood this, have supposed that it is a vision of so-called 'heaven,' or something of the kind. It is merely the mouth repeating what the brain sees — memories passing in review; and back, behind, stands the seeing Self and judges the past life for what it truly was. It is the judge, and its judgment is infallibly true. It sees the record of things done or undone, the thoughts had, the emotions followed, the temptations conquered or succumbed to; and when the end of the panorama is reached, it sees the justice of it all. In view of its vision of past karma it knows what is coming in the next life, and it says: "It is just."

There is a similar panoramic visioning of the past life, but in less vivid and in less complete degree, at what is called the Second Death in the Kiima-loka; but this is not all; for there is a third recurrence of such a panorama, i. e., just before the human monad or ego leaves its devachanic dreaming and becomes again unconscious — i.e., un-self-conscious — preceding re-embodiment or reincarnation in the human womb. The completeness or fulness and accuracy in detail in each case depend upon the type of the respective egos. The student must remember that in all these things there is no hard and fast or iron-clad rule which never varies for anybody; for the converse is the fact. There are variations or differences of quality and intensity in all these panoramic visions, these differences depending in all cases upon the degree of evolution attained by the human ego.

ON TRAINING FOR PANORAMIC VISION:

FOOTNOTE 7:

I was once asked the question as to the influence that the habit of reviewing before one falls asleep at night the events of the day just closed, has, or might have, upon the death-panorama and the after-death states in general. Such habit of reviewing the incidents of the day just closed, when one is preparing oneself for the night's sleep, is an exceedingly important and very, very useful thing to do, and I recommend it most earnestly to every Esotericist. Its influence or rather effect is that of accustoming the mind to consider one's life as a field of action

involving responsibility in conduct, giving us the opportunity to draw lessons therefrom to do better in the future. It likewise has the very important effect on the mind of inducing a habit of panoramic visioning, thus making the panorama or vision at the moment of death far easier, more quick, and more complete as regards self-conscious realization of the events passing before the mind's eye. For the reasons here mentioned, and especially because of the reason last mentioned, this habit of reviewing the events of the day just ended has likewise the highly beneficial result of shortening the second panoramic vision preceding the Second Death, which is a matter of no small importance indeed! Such habit of reviewing the day's events is one of the best possible aids in the building up in one's character of the habit of ethical or moral examination, as above stated, thus inducing wisdom in meeting life's problems, and bringing about through reflexion and meditation, even if more or less unconsciously performed, a spirit of kindness or love and unceasing sympathy for others. A great deal of unnecessary friction and trouble in the world arises out of the mechanical way in which we live in our minds, without adequate reflexion, without adequate self-examination, and with little or no analysis of our daily actions and of the thoughts and emotions bringing these actions to be. Of course I am not here referring to any unwholesome or morbid introspection; to this I do not refer at all, for such morbidity should always be avoided. I refer to the careful, honest, and regular habit of examining one's thoughts and deeds impartially and critically as an observer, before one falls asleep. It is a great help in strengthening our moral intuitions.