

Army of the Voice

Definitional Essay

Theosophy Trust

A single purpose can take many forms without losing its unity. Theosophical cosmology gives this possibility a far greater scope through the phrase Army of the Voice. It names a differentiated host of conscious intelligences through which divine thought becomes manifest as an ordered universe. The governing image is the One becoming articulate through the many. Sound, number, form, and consciousness belong together in this account, each expressing a different aspect of the passage from hidden unity into a living world.

The phrase appears in the fourth Stanza of *Dzyan* as presented in *The Secret Doctrine*. The Army of the Voice is identified with the Divine Septenary, and its sparks are described through spheres, triangles, cubes, lines, and modellers. These figures suggest order and proportion rather than a collection of unrelated powers. Their meaning belongs to a symbolic account of manifestation. They should be studied in that setting, with attention to the relations they express, rather than treated as diagrams of ordinary physical objects.

H.P. Blavatsky's commentary identifies the host with the hierarchies of the *Dhyān Chohans*, the conscious intelligent powers in Nature. She connects sound and speech with Divine Thought as their cause. This gives the word Voice a depth beyond audible utterance. The universe is contemplated as inwardly intelligible, with manifestation expressing an order that precedes particular sounds and forms. Speech becomes a suggestive analogy because an inward conception can acquire an articulated expression without being identical with the movements that convey it.

The word Army also requires discrimination. Its useful meaning here is a coordinated hierarchy whose members fulfill different functions within a greater whole. It need not carry the human associations of conquest, hostility, or coercion. Nor does the image justify making spiritual life a contest for rank. The passage directs attention to ordered participation. A particular intelligence has its place and work through its relation to other intelligences, and through the more comprehensive purposes and laws within which they act.

The Secret Doctrine further relates the Army of the Voice to the Host of the *Logos* and to the One Number arising from No-Number. The language moves from the unmanifest source toward the first intelligible expression of unity. Number is therefore more than quantity in this context. It can indicate relationship, differentiation, and the emergence of an ordered whole. The symbols do not exhaust the mystery they approach. They invite a disciplined effort to think about unity without reducing its expressions to sameness.

Oeahoo belongs to the same field of meaning. Blavatsky describes it as the Father-Mother of the gods and the septenary root from which all proceeds. The discussion includes distinctions of pronunciation, but the printed name alone is not presented as conferring mastery. The passage itself emphasizes the knowledge required. For a student, the immediate task is to understand its place within the doctrine of the *Logos*, sacred sound, and differentiation, rather than to mistake familiarity with a formula for spiritual competence.

Professor Iyer brings these themes together in “Spectator and Participant.” *Nada Brahman*, the Soundless Sound, is contemplated in its unmanifest essence and in its differentiations as the Army of the Voice. *Om* can thus be approached both as ceaseless universal resonance and as an affirmation of the manifold host. The contemplative movement holds unity and multiplicity together. One tries to recognize the whole within a particular expression while allowing that expression its distinct place, character, and responsibility.

In the same essay, *Vak* is associated with the host’s activity and with the Fohatic force through which divine thought is reflected in manifestation. Professor Iyer also connects sound and number through the symbolic language of *Gupta Vidya*. Such passages call for patience. A sequence of sacred numbers should not be detached from its philosophical setting and made to authorize arbitrary predictions. The value of study lies in perceiving relationships more clearly and in becoming less satisfied with explanations that merely flatter an initial impression.

The Great Breath provides the wider rhythm. *The Secret Doctrine* pictures the appearance and disappearance of universes through outbreathing and inbreathing. Manifestation is therefore not imagined as an isolated event without relation to withdrawal and renewal. Within this immense rhythm, the Army of the Voice represents articulation and ordered activity. The analogy of breathing allows thought to approach a process of expression and return, while remaining an analogy whose cosmic meaning exceeds the familiar movement of the human chest.

The ethical bridge begins with our own use of speech. Words arise from motives and conceptions, even when their speaker has not examined either. They can clarify a situation, establish a promise, awaken confidence, or deepen confusion. This ordinary fact does not prove a cosmological doctrine. It gives us a field in which to practice the responsibility suggested by that doctrine. If expression carries thought into a shared world, then greater care with thought should issue in greater care with what we say.

Consider a disagreement among people trying to complete a common task. A careless accusation may turn a practical difficulty into a struggle over personal worth. A more accurate sentence can identify what failed, acknowledge uncertainty, and make room for correction. The difference is neither silence at any cost nor speech emptied of force. It is the effort to make an utterance

serve understanding. Tone, timing, evidence, and motive all help determine whether the words support the work that the participants actually share.

Drawing a Larger Circle of Conception extends this discipline. Before speaking, we can include people absent from the conversation, consequences likely to unfold later, and interpretations different from our own. The circle becomes larger without making every position equally sound. An inclusive view can still distinguish truth from error and responsibility from evasion. It asks that a judgment become more comprehensive before it becomes more emphatic. The resulting speech may be simpler because it carries less unnecessary self-defense.

Human Solidarity gives that widening a sustained purpose. If human beings participate in a common life, speech should not casually degrade the persons whose conduct we need to question. We can oppose an action while remembering the possibilities of growth in its author and in ourselves. This is demanding work, particularly when injury has occurred. It begins with honest distinctions: what we know, what we infer, what repair requires, and what our own anger may be adding to the account.

Professor Iyer's treatment of sacred sound links contemplation with release from compulsive separateness. The point is not to decorate ordinary self-importance with impressive terminology. It is to make the sense of participation more real. A person who listens carefully, keeps a promise, corrects a false statement, or gives credit fairly brings thought and expression into a more coherent relation. These actions are small in scale, yet they can train the fidelity that a larger spiritual purpose requires.

The Army of the Voice thus offers both a cosmological image and an invitation to study our participation in a shared world. Its host expresses unity through differentiated service; its voice points from sound toward thought and from thought toward a universal source. We need not claim to have penetrated that mystery in order to learn from its direction. We can begin by allowing a clearer conception to guide a truer sentence, and by making that sentence answerable to the life it enters.

Glossary

Arcane — Hidden or esoteric; requiring more than an outward reading.

Archetypal — Pertaining to a formative pattern or principle underlying particular expressions.

Army of the Voice — The differentiated host of conscious intelligences expressing divine thought in manifestation.

Aum or Om — The sacred syllable contemplated as universal resonance and an expression of the *Logos*.

Brahma — The creative deity or *Logos* in the relevant Hindu cosmological symbolism.

Corollary — A consequence or proposition that follows from another.

Devas — Divine or luminous beings; in the cited commentary, intelligent powers in Nature.

Dhyan Chohans — Spiritual intelligences or Lords of Meditation associated with cosmic order.

Divine Septenary — The sevenfold order or host named in the cited Stanza of *Dzyan*.

Dzyan — Wisdom or spiritual knowledge; the name associated with the Stanzas in *The Secret Doctrine*.

Fohat — The dynamic connecting power through which cosmic ideation acts in manifestation.

Fohatic — Pertaining to *Fohat* or its activity.

Gayatri — A sacred Vedic invocation of spiritual illumination.

Great Breath — A symbol of the cyclic manifestation and withdrawal of universes.

Gupta Vidya — Secret or esoteric wisdom; also the title of the collection of Professor Iyer's writings.

Hierophant — An initiate or teacher who interprets sacred mysteries.

Hiranyagarbha — The golden germ or egg, a symbol of the formative source of a manifested cosmos.

Ineffable — Beyond adequate expression in words.

Ishvara — The Lord or governing spiritual principle, according to context.

Isis — An Egyptian divine figure associated here with universal Nature and sacred wisdom.

Kosmos — The universe considered as an ordered whole.

Logos — The Word or formative expression of a universal spiritual principle.

Nada Brahman — Divine resonance or Soundless Sound, considered in its spiritual essence.

Nidana — A cause or causal connection; in the Stanza, the enduring order of causation.

Occult — Hidden from ordinary perception; pertaining here to esoteric principles and powers.

Oeaoohoo — A sacred name associated with the Father-Mother and the septenary root of manifestation.

Oi-Ha-Hou — A permutation of *Oeaoohoo* used in the cited Stanza of *Dzyan*.

Sarasvati — A divine figure associated with wisdom, speech, and the creative expression of knowledge.

Sepher Jezirah — A Kabbalistic text concerned with creation, letters, and numbers; often spelled Sefer Yetzirah.

Septenary — Sevenfold, or an organized group of seven.

Shabdabrahman — Divine sound or spiritual resonance regarded as an inward formative power.

Sloka — A verse or stanza.

Supernal — Belonging to a higher or heavenly order.

Vak or Vach — Sacred speech or Voice, related to the *Logos* and divine ideation.

Vestures — Vehicles or coverings through which consciousness is expressed.

Quotes for Meditation and Self Study

1. H.P. Blavatsky — *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 93.

“This was the Army of the Voice — the Divine Septenary. The sparks of the seven are subject to, and the servants of, the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and the seventh of the seven. These (‘sparks’) are called spheres, triangles, cubes, lines, and modellers; for thus stands the Eternal *Nidana* — the *Oi-Ha-Hou* (the permutation of *Oeaohoo*).”

Meditation thought: The geometric language places the host within a sevenfold order. Consider differentiation as an expression of relationship, rather than as the loss of unity.

2. H.P. Blavatsky — *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 93.

“This *Sloka* gives again a brief analysis of the Hierarchies of the *Dhyan Chohans*, called *Devas* (gods) in India, or the conscious intelligent powers in Nature. To this Hierarchy correspond the actual types into which humanity may be divided; for humanity, as a whole, is in reality a materialized though as yet imperfect expression thereof. The ‘army of the Voice’ is a term closely connected with the mystery of Sound and Speech, as an effect and corollary of the cause — Divine Thought.”

Meditation thought: Sound and speech are referred back to Divine Thought. In ordinary life, let this direct attention to the conception and motive carried by an utterance.

3. H.P. Blavatsky — *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 94.

“The ‘Army of the Voice,’ is the prototype of the ‘Host of the *Logos*,’ or the ‘word’ of the *Sepher Jezirah*, called in *the Secret Doctrine* ‘the One Number issued from No-Number’ — the One Eternal Principle.”

Meditation thought: The passage moves from an unmanifest principle toward intelligible unity. Sacred number belongs to that philosophical setting and should be studied within it.

4. H.P. Blavatsky — *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 68.

“*Oeaohoo* is rendered ‘Father-Mother of the Gods’ in the Commentaries, or the six in one, or the septenary root from which all proceeds. All depends upon the accent given to these seven vowels, which may be pronounced as one, three, or even seven syllables by adding an e after the letter ‘o.’ This mystic name is given out, because without a thorough mastery of the triple pronunciation it remains for ever ineffectual.”

Meditation thought: The printed name is distinguished from mastery of its use. Reverence for a teaching includes recognition of how much understanding remains to be gained.

5. H.P. Blavatsky — *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 43.

“The appearance and disappearance of the Universe are pictured as an outbreathing and inbreathing of ‘the Great Breath,’ which is eternal, and which, being Motion, is one of the three aspects of the Absolute — Abstract Space and Duration being the other two. When the ‘Great Breath’ is projected, it is called the Divine Breath, and is regarded as the breathing of the Unknowable Deity — the One Existence — which breathes out a thought, as it were, which becomes the Kosmos. (See ‘*Isis Unveiled*.’) So also is it when the Divine Breath is inspired again the Universe disappears into the bosom of ‘the Great Mother,’ who then sleeps ‘wrapped in her invisible robes.’”

Meditation thought: Outbreathing and inbreathing give an image of manifestation and withdrawal. Hold the rhythm as a cosmic analogy whose meaning exceeds bodily respiration.

6. R.N. Iyer — “Spectator and Participant”, *The Gupta Vidya*, Vol. III, p. 317.

“To reaffirm the One in the many and to benefit, as a participant, from the standpoint of the spectator, one may, therefore, meditate upon the Soundless Sound of *Nada Brahman* in its unmanifest essence and in its multiple differentiations as the Army of the Voice. One may meditate upon the OM as the ceaseless eternal sound and also as the great affirmation of the Army of the Voice symbolized by *Oeaohoo*.”

Meditation thought: The One and the many are contemplated together. Participation becomes more thoughtful when a particular responsibility is held within a larger view.

7. R.N. Iyer — “Spectator and Participant”, *The Gupta Vidya*, Vol. III, p. 317.

“Guided by *Vak*, *Sarasvati*, *Isis*, the Army of the Voice is ceaselessly at work as the conscious intelligent host in invisible mystic Nature. Acting with mathematical precision through the fiery force of the Fohatic whirlwind, *Vak* establishes the Army of the Voice in abstract space reflecting divine Thought.”

Meditation thought: The host is described as intelligent and lawfully active. The emphasis invites patient study of order, relationship, and the connections among principles.

8. R.N. Iyer — “Spectator and Participant”, *The Gupta Vidya*, Vol. III, p. 317.

“Here, in the arcane code language of *Gupta Vidya*, fully accessible only to hierophants but amenable to contemplation by any earnest seeker at any level, is a clue to the relationship of sound and number. From zero comes one; that one, when taken together with the zero, makes ten. These are the one from the egg, which are followed by the six and the five, yielding 1065, the value of the first-born who answers to the numbers 7, 14 and 21. This particular sequence of numbers, connected with *Hiranyagarbha*, *Brahmā* and *Vak*, intimates the archetypal logic of the pre-cosmic and the logic of the cosmic.”

Meditation thought: The numerical sequence belongs to a specific symbolic language. Its purpose here is to intimate formative relationships, rather than to authorize arbitrary predictions.

9. R.N. Iyer — “Manasadharma”, *The Gupta Vidya*, Vol. I, p. 361.

“The *Logos* is itself the seven-vowelled sign, the Great Breath crystallized into the WORD. It is *OEAOHOO*, the Father-Mother of the gods, the single, triple and septenary root from which all proceeds. To credit man as the living septenary symbol of the *Logos* is to become ready to use the reverberation of *OEAOHOO*, meditating upon it, becoming one with it and understanding its threefold pronunciations. Those who use so powerful an energy, force, sound and idea in their daily lives can translate metaphysics into magic. By divinizing their breath, they can surrender all compulsive expressions of separateness and selfishness and retreat into the inmost sanctuary where they become the *AUM*. They become inseparable in consciousness from the universal *Logos*.”

Meditation thought: The passage joins sacred resonance to a surrender of compulsive separateness. Its ethical direction is inseparable from its contemplative meaning.

10. R.N. Iyer — “Gestation and Growth”, *The Gupta Vidya*, Vol. I, p. 238.

“Integration and disintegration of form proceed hand-in-hand with the differentiation and synthesis of consciousness throughout all the octaves of manifestation from the formless worlds built up out of the divine elements to the shadowy realm of physical existence. All alike are impelled from within by the *Shabdabrahman*, the Divine Sound surrounded by the supernal light of the *Gayatri*, the immortal pulse in the secret heart – the Sound in the Light and the Light in the Sound.”

Meditation thought: Formation and dissolution are related to changes in consciousness. The image asks us to look for inward relationships beneath the visible coming and going of forms.

11. R.N. Iyer — “Dateless and Deathless”, *The Gupta Vidya*, Vol. I, p. 104.

“At its highest level, *AUM* is the Soundless Sound which becomes the medium of transmission for the Ineffable Light. The *AUM* is also the origin of sound in the world of manifestation, the most sacred syllable, the hierophantic leader of all prayers and chants, and the most important subject of all meditation. Thus, it may be seen in two ways. As a single letter uttered with one articulation, it is the *OM*, the symbol of the Supreme Spirit. One should imagine this as a constant, omnipresent sounding, capable of being consciously sounded within the consecrated temple of the human form. One should imagine it superimposed on all other sounds, all other vibrations, all other thoughts and feelings. To do so is to cooperate consciously with the great cosmic sounding of the One Resonance, but within the sphere and temple of one's own invisible vestures. *OM* is the Supreme Spirit, *Ishvara*, the Most High.”

Meditation thought: Universal resonance is contemplated within the human being as a sacred responsibility. The image can deepen the motive with which one approaches silence and speech.

12. H.P. Blavatsky — *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 555.

“We say and maintain that Sound, for one thing, is a tremendous Occult power; that it is a stupendous force, of which the electricity generated by a million of Niagaras could never counteract the smallest potentiality when directed with occult knowledge.”

Meditation thought: Blavatsky speaks here of sound understood through occult knowledge. Read the claim within that esoteric framework, and let its practical emphasis deepen responsibility for expression.