

AN INTRODUCTION TO  
ESOTERIC PRINCIPLES

FOURTH EDITION

A Study Course  
by  
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Dedication:

To the treasured memory of  
John Posey, Theosophist and Unknown Philosopher

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## Abide With Me

Abide with me, Thou Atmic Ray Divine,  
And shed Thy Light upon this soul of mine;  
I have no hope, no source of light but Thee;  
O Thou, possessing all, abide with me.

When sickness rages, clouds around me throng,  
Be this my consolation and my song:  
"The Lord of Light, can ne'er unfaithful be,  
And this great King of Kings abides with me."

I fear not what this world may do or say;  
I only fear the foe that doth betray—  
My lower self, that shrinks away from Thee—  
But thou art patient, Lord; abide with me.

I ask not ease, immunity from pain;  
For discipline, I know, is always gain;  
But sometimes, Lord, unveil and smile on me,  
Unworthy though I am; Abide with me.

Thus through all ills, all sorrows, sickness, pain,  
Thy hand shall guide, my lower self restrain;  
And daily shall this prayer arise to Thee:  
"Oh King of Peace, my God, abide with me."

—Wilton Hack  
*The Theosophist*  
June 1899



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## PREFACE

One of the most difficult tasks before the student of Theosophy is to bridge the gap between the elementary and the more advanced studies. Our literature contains many examples of both extremes, but there are relatively few presentations which attempt to lead the student across the abyss which separates the two. An attempt has been made in this work to aid in bridging this abyss to some extent. It is assumed that the reader has read or studied some of the available Theosophical literature and has tried—perhaps he or she may think unsuccessfully—to read some of the more difficult works. It is hoped that this guide for study will provide at least the fundamentals which will prepare the student to tackle the more advanced materials, to wrestle with the perplexing questions contained therein, and to form his or her own opinions intelligently. Knotty philosophical problems and difficult points in the teaching have been dealt with as well as some of the less technical aspects.

It seems necessary to point out with complete honesty and candor those points where later writers seem to be at variance with or diverge from the teaching given by H. P. Blavatsky and the Masters of Wisdom in the early days of the Theosophical Society. To do so is to lay oneself open to the charge of setting up HPB as an authority. On that point, the writer can only plead guilty and beg for mercy.

The writer also begs forgiveness for diverging from the teaching in those places where his own understanding is imperfect. Such is the curse which falls upon the heads of those of us who presume to write about Theosophy without ourselves being, as HPB was, the direct amanuensis of the Mahatmas.

Each time this study manual has been reprinted, I have been tempted to make all sorts of changes to reflect my changing understanding over the years. Such an extensive revision would involve altering and expanding the text so greatly that it would no longer serve the purpose for which it was written. I have therefore contented myself with a minimum number of changes in hopes that the guide will continue to be useful to a certain class of students. This time around I am particularly grateful to David Bruce and Nicholas Weeks for reviewing the manuscript and making suggestions for its improvement.

William Doss McDavid  
San Antonio, TX 2008





## Chapter 1

# Schools of Esoteric Teaching

Theosophy has been called the Wisdom Religion. The word stems from the Greek words “theos” (God) and “sophia” (Wisdom) and refers to the “Wisdom of the Gods.” This Divine Wisdom, tradition relates, was brought to earth in the infancy of humanity by a superhuman race, the leaders of which have been remembered as the gods and legendary heroes of mythology. It was these great beings who taught humanity its first lessons in science, art, and philosophy and who laid the foundations for world culture.

It is said that the Divine Wisdom was taught openly to the first human races. It was only during the time of the fourth, or Atlantean, race that it became hidden from the sight of the majority. The reason for this secrecy was explained by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky in the following words:

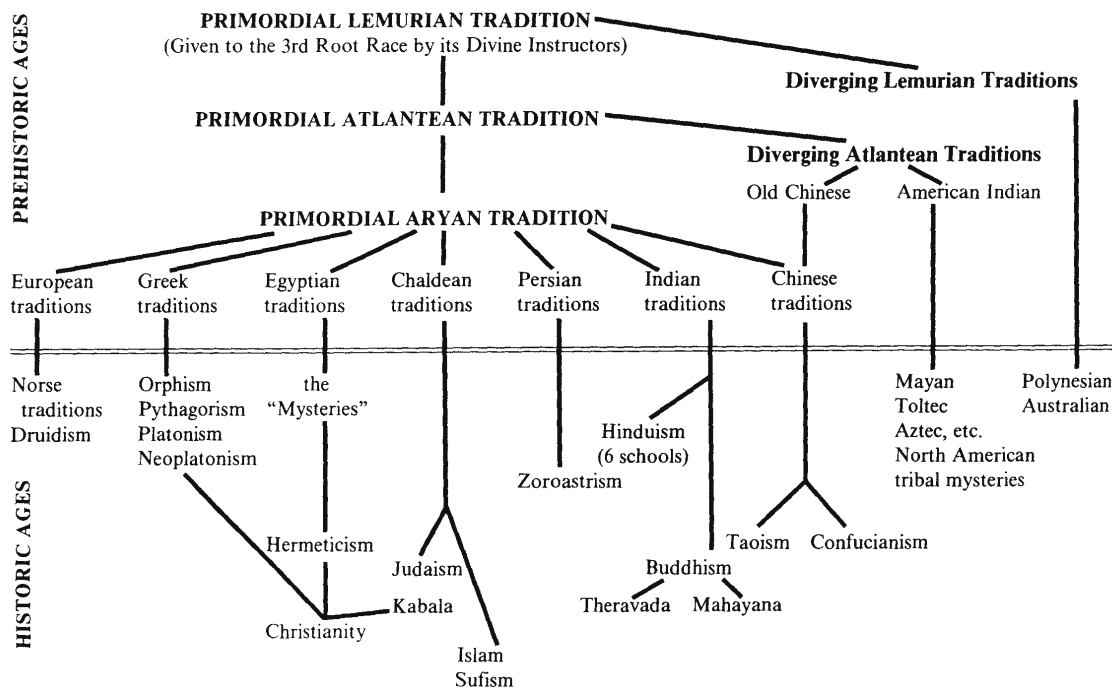
The first, semi-divine, pure and spiritual Races of Humanity . . . had the “truths of God,” and lived up to them, and their ideals. They preserved them, as long as there was hardly any evil, and hence scarcely a possible abuse of that knowledge and those truths. But evolution and the gradual fall into materiality is also one of the “truths” and also one of the laws of “God.” And as mankind progressed, and became with every generation more of the earth, earthly, the individuality of each temporary Ego began to assert itself. It is personal selfishness that develops and urges man on to the abuse of his knowledge and power. And selfishness is a human building, whose windows and doors are forever wide open for every kind of iniquity to enter man’s soul . . . Hence the necessity of gradually taking away from man the divine knowledge and power, which became with every new human cycle more dangerous as a double-edged weapon, whose evil side was ever threatening one’s neighbor, and whose power for good was lavished freely only upon self. Those few “elect” whose inner natures had remained unaffected by their outward physical growth, thus became in time the sole guardians of the mysteries revealed, passing the knowledge to those most fit to receive it. (*Collected Writings*, 14:40-41)

Thus from those days were established the Mystery Schools in which the Wisdom Teachings were preserved for the worthy.

In the early days of this present fifth or Aryan race, the predominant seat of civilization was in Central Asia. It was there that the parent school, the chief and oldest of the Mystery Schools, was maintained. As the Aryans spread throughout the ancient world, the Initiates among them established esoteric schools in all the greatest centers of civilization. It was under the direction of these Initiates that many of the temples and monuments of antiquity were built. Often, the Aryans spread into regions where races

of Atlantean descent were practicing their own forms of esotericism. Mingling with the older races, the Aryan Initiates established schools of the mysteries adapted to the cultural and social conditions in which they found themselves. Thus the Wisdom Religion, which was one in its foundations, became differentiated into innumerable traditions. The ancient Brahmanical religion of India was the form which it assumed as the Aryans swept southward across the Himalayas. In Persia, it became the religion of the Magi, which was later to become the Parsi faith under the reforming influence of Zoroasters. In Egypt, building upon foundations laid by the Atlanteans, the King-Initiates taught the Wisdom Religion in the seclusion of pyramids and imposing temples that remain to this day architectural wonders. Figure 1 suggests the diffusion of the primordial Wisdom-Tradition resulting in the proliferation of schools of esoteric thought.

Figure 1



Throughout the ancient world, therefore, the Initiates established Mystery Schools for the worthy while, around these, popular religions full of myth and superstition developed among the multitudes. As civilization declined and mankind entered the Dark Age or Kali Yuga, as it is sometimes called, the esoteric schools became more secret and hidden from sight until their very existence passed from the public eye. This was especially true in Western lands where the intolerance of the Roman Catholic Church made it necessary for the Initiates to hide altogether from public scrutiny. Secret societies, such as the Rosicrucian Order and the Masonic fraternities, preserved the

teachings of the Wisdom Religion throughout the Middle Ages and down to the present time.

A reform movement, encompassing all traditional esoteric orders the world over, was initiated around the time of the Lord Gautama Buddha and was brought to fruition during the life of the Tibetan teacher Tsong-kha-pa in the fourteenth century. A. P. Sinnett described this effort in the following words:

Adeptship, when Buddha incarnated, was not the condensed, compact hierarchy that it has since become under his influence. There has never been an age of the world without its adepts; but they have sometimes been scattered throughout the world; they have sometimes been isolated in separate seclusions; they have gravitated now to this country, now to that; and finally, be it remembered, their knowledge and power has not always been inspired with that elevated and sincere morality which Buddha infused into its latest and highest organization. The reform of the occult world by his instrumentality was, in fact, the result of his great sacrifice, of the self-denial which induced him to reject the blessed condition of Nirvana to which, after his earth-life as Buddha, he was fully entitled, and undertake the burden of renewed incarnations<sup>1</sup> in order to carry out more thoroughly the task he had taken in hand, and confer a correspondingly increased benefit on mankind. (*Esoteric Buddhism*, pp. 132-133)

His third appearance was in the person of Tsong-kha-pa,<sup>2</sup> the great Tibetan adept reformer of the fourteenth century. In this personality he was exclusively concerned with the affairs of the adept fraternity, by that time collecting chiefly in Tibet. From time immemorial there had been a certain secret region in Tibet, which to this day is quite unknown to and unapproachable by any but initiated persons, and inaccessible to the ordinary people of the country as to any others. But the country generally was not in Buddha's time, as it has since become,<sup>3</sup> the chosen habitation of the great brotherhood. Much more than they are at present, were the Mahatmas in former times distributed about the world. The progress of civilization, engendering the magnetism they find so trying, had, however, by the date with which we are now dealing—the fourteenth century—already given rise to a very general movement toward Tibet on the part of the previously dissociated occultists. Far more widely than was held consistent with the safety of mankind was occult knowledge and power then found to be disseminated. To

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<sup>1</sup> We are treading here upon very sacred territory. A few hints on Buddha's subsequent "incarnations" are given in "The Mystery of Buddha" and "'Reincarnations' of Buddha" in the so-called third volume of *The Secret Doctrine* (See *Collected Writings*, 14: 388-407).

<sup>2</sup> This is not quite correct as there were other manifestations of the Buddha unknown to Mr. Sinnett when he wrote *Esoteric Buddhism* (see "'Reincarnations' of Buddha").

<sup>3</sup> This was written in 1883. HPB reportedly told James Morgan Pryse in 1890 that the Masters had begun to withdraw from Tibet ("Truth and Honesty," *The Canadian Theosophist* 12, July 1931: 139).

the task of putting it under the control of a rigid system of rule and law did Tsong-kha-pa address himself.

Without re-establishing the system on the previous unreasonable basis of caste exclusiveness, he elaborated a code of rules for the guidance of the adepts, the effect of which was to weed out of the occult body all but those who sought occult knowledge in a spirit of the most sublime devotion to the highest moral principles. (Ibid., p. 138)

As a result of this reform, the secret orders recognized and presided over by the highest Initiates were unified and organized into a centralized federation and given some new directives for guiding their activities. (See *Theosophy*, January 1938). One of these directives obligated them to participate in a continuing effort that had been going on since the first century B.C.E. to restore the light of the mysteries to the Western world (*Collected Writings*, 12:120; 14:294-5). This effort is consistently made during the last quarter of every century. Describing this effort, H. P. Blavatsky wrote as follows:

Among the commandments of Tsong-kha-pa there is one that enjoins the Rahats (Arhats) to make an attempt to enlighten the world, including the "white barbarians," every century, at a certain specified period of the cycle. (*Collected Writings*, 14:431)

We may tabulate briefly some of the events which have occurred in the last quarter of each century from the fourteenth to this day in seeming fulfillment of this plan:

14 <sup>th</sup> century	"Foundation" of the fraternity of the Rosy Cross by Christian Rosenkreutz
15 <sup>th</sup> century	Work of the Florentine Platonic Academy Introduction of printing into Europe Columbus discovers the "new world" Birth of Paracelsus, the reformer of medicine
16 <sup>th</sup> century	Work of Akbar in India Publication of first "Shakespeare" plays Foundations laid for revival of Rosicrucian activity Giordano Bruno tries to reconcile Catholics and Protestants through Neoplatonism
17 <sup>th</sup> century	Publication of Newton's <i>Principia</i> Infancy of the Royal Society Establishment of the Rosicrucian Order in America
18 <sup>th</sup> century	Reform movements within Masonry led by Counts St. Germain and Cagliostro Magnetic healing taught by Mesmer

	Martinism established
	Birth of the United States of America
19 <sup>th</sup> century	Establishment of the Theosophical Society by Blavatsky, Olcott, and Judge Maha Bodhi Society founded Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn founded
20 <sup>th</sup> century	?????

The most significant of the nineteenth century efforts was carried on by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (HPB) with the assistance of Henry Steel Olcott, William Quan Judge, and others. It was the work of HPB to reveal a portion of the Wisdom Religion in a public manner never before attempted in recent centuries. Doctrines such as the seven-fold structure of the human constitution and the planetary system, reincarnation, karma, and spiritual evolution were given out for all to read. Citations were produced from the world's sacred literature to back up the claims made on behalf of the Wisdom Religion. The personality and work of several of the great Initiates were made known to the public, and communications from them were made known and circulated. The qualifications and guidelines for those desiring to set their feet on the path of psychic and spiritual development were set forth.

It is perhaps too early to evaluate the efforts of the twentieth century but the worldwide influence of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama and other Mahayana Buddhist teachers seems worthy of notice. It is reasonable to assume that the help that we may hope to receive in the future will be dependent upon the degree to which we have been able to assimilate the teachings given in the preceding centuries. It is with the intention of providing a concise and compact, if regrettably incomplete, summary of the main points of this teaching that this study manual has been prepared.



REFERENCES FOR SUPPLEMENTARY READING:

Judge, *The Ocean of Theosophy*, ch. 1 "Theosophy and the Masters."

Knoche, *The Mystery Schools*.

Sinnett, *The Occult World*, ch. 1 "Occultism and Its Adepts."

———. *Esoteric Buddhism*, ch. 1 "Esoteric Teachers."

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:

1. What do you think is meant by the term *Mystery School*?
2. Why was secrecy required in esoteric organizations during the Middle Ages?
3. What reform is the Buddha said to have made among the Initiates or Adepts?
4. Why is reform occasionally required, even within the occult brotherhoods? Is this a surprising idea to you?
5. What kind of risk do you think the Adepts were taking in founding the Theosophical Society?
6. How was the Ancient Wisdom brought to humanity? Describe in your own words the evolution of esoteric thought from prehistoric times to modern times.
7. Do you see any evidence that a new spiritual impulse took place during the closing years of the last century?
8. What are some of the ideas common to all the major religious traditions of the world?

## Chapter 2

### First Principles

The scope of Theosophy is the universe as a whole. It is concerned with the whole and wholeness of being and with the place which humanity occupies within the cosmic scheme. From the inconceivably vast to the unimaginably tiny, the universe demonstrates an amazing and awe-inspiring order. Structures within structures, wheels within wheels, an ascending order of complexity characterized by cooperation and mutual interaction links every part together into a vast and magnificent whole.

The beginning and end of Theosophical philosophy is the inscrutable Mystery which has been called *Parabrahm* in Indian philosophy. Beyond qualifications and limiting attributes, It is called the Unknown Deity because it is “unthinkable and unspeakable.” As H. P. Blavatsky wrote, it is “devoid of all attributes and essentially without any relation to manifested, finite Being. It is ‘Be-ness’ rather than Being (in Sanskrit, *Sat*), and is beyond all thought and speculation” (*The Secret Doctrine*, 1:14).

The evolution of the finite universe within the infinity of Parabrahm has been an ancient philosophical puzzle. As the philosopher Alan Watts phrased the question, “If the ultimate Reality is formless, how can it give birth to forms? If it is spaceless and timeless, how can it engender space and time?” (*The Supreme Identity*, p. 63) These questions are answered by the same author in the spirit of the Wisdom Religion:

The infinite is that which by definition *includes* the possibility of the finite . . . If the infinite *could not* manifest the finite, it would be neither infinite nor omnipotent. (Ibid., p. 65)

Co-eternal and one with Parabrahm is that which has been called *Mulaprakriti* or root-substance. It is this which Alan Watts has called “the possibility of the finite” which exists within the infinite. By a process beyond the comprehension of our limited mentality, *Mulaprakriti* differentiates and transforms itself into *prakriti* or substance. The differentiated *prakriti* consists of seven “elements,” one of which is the electromagnetic energy which becomes the “matter” known to science. This brings the universe into a state of active manifestation which is called a *manvantara*. A reverse process of withdrawal brings the universe once more into a state of absorption within *Mulaprakriti*; this resting state is called a *pralaya*. Theosophy teaches that these processes alternate continually throughout the endless duration of eternity. This cyclic alternation has been metaphorically called the outbreathing and inbreathing of the Great Breath.

During cosmic pralaya, the universe being reduced to its ultimate simplicity, everything rests in silent repose. All has become one. At the dawn of the cosmic manvantara, Mulaprakriti differentiates, its primordial simplicity becoming more and more complex, forming all the visible and invisible forms of substance in the universe. Science teaches that matter exists in many states. There would seem to be a definite hierarchy of particles and sub-particles as matter differentiates into denser and denser forms. This is an old teaching of occultism. Mulaprakriti is the true *Prima Materia* underlying all substance. In itself it is not matter but the precursor of matter, differentiating periodically during manvantaras, and then once more resolving into its undifferentiated state during pralayas.

Parabrahm is at once transcendent and immanent. Its immanent aspect, ensouling and vivifying Mulaprakriti and its differentiations, has been called the *Logos*. Logos is a Greek expression whose meaning includes "word," "reason," and "order." Just as a spoken word is the expression of a thought, so the Logos is the expression of the absolute, unconditioned Thought which is Parabrahm. The Logos is the Divine Mind which is the law and order of the Cosmos. It has been described by T. Subba Row, a disciple of HPB's Guru, as "a centre of spiritual energy which is unborn and eternal, and which exists in a latent condition in the bosom of *Parabrahm* at the time of *pralaya*, and starts as a centre of conscious energy at the time of cosmic activity" (*T. Subba Row Collected Writings*, 2:457). T. Subba Row adds that, "In its inmost nature it is not *unknowable* as *Parabrahm*, but it is an object of the highest knowledge that man is capable of acquiring . . . it is not different in substance, as it were, or in essence, from *Parabrahm*, and yet at the same time it is different from it in having an individualized existence." The infinity of Parabrahm contains innumerable Logoi. Each Logos is the spiritual life of a universe which expresses itself in every galaxy, solar system, and planet within its boundless domain. One of the Sacred Scriptures of India expresses the idea in the following manner:

The tree of Eternity has its roots in heaven above and its branches reach down to earth. It is Brahman, pure Spirit, who in truth is called the immortal. All the worlds rest on that Spirit and beyond him no one can go . . . The whole universe comes from him and his life burns through the whole universe. (*Katha Upanishad*, 3:1)

A distinction is made between the Logos as an eternal potentiality within Parabrahm and that same Logos as the manifested Divine Radiance, the guiding intelligence of its universe. As an eternal potentiality the Logos is called "Aja," the unborn. As the active manvantaric divine intelligence, bursting forth from its latency to give life and light to the universe, it is "reborn" with each manvantara. In the latter aspect it is the "First Born of all creation." This is what has become the basis for the Christian doctrine of the immaculate conception. With the differentiation of



Mulaprakriti, a great primordial cosmic miracle takes place: the reflection of the “Unborn” in the seemingly differentiated universe as the Active Creative Deity, or Manifested Logos. The Logos is the Divine Son, born of the cosmic virgin, Substance, before all worlds. Having manifested substance as his “mother” he cannot have a father, the unmanifested Potentiality being absolute and sexless. In all the most ancient cosmogonies, it is the Mother who emerges first from the Unknown Darkness. Within her immaculate womb springs forth the Son, or Logos, who becomes in his turn the Father. This son is the manifested God, the Logos or Verbum, in whom are contained the hosts of creative intelligences, the “Sons of God.”

It is these creative hosts, these sons of God, which collectively constitute the Manifested Logos. They are variously referred to as “Atmic rays,” “facets of the eternal,” or “beams of the Spiritual Sun.” The action of these hosts of creative intelligences in nature—their directing activity—is called *Fohat*, the “Son of the Sons.” It is the out-turned creative activity of the “Sons” acting on prakriti and is sometimes called the “Light of the Logos.” It is this which is the link between Cosmic Mind and Cosmic Matter. Cosmic Mind is the collective Logos, the “Army of the Voice.” Cosmic Matter is prakriti, the elements which differentiate from Mulaprakriti. Fohat, also known as Daiviprakriti, is the mysterious power by which the Logos acts on prakriti imparting to it life and consciousness.

H. P. Blavatsky describes Fohat as “that occult, electric, vital power, which, under the Will of the Creative Logos, unites and brings together all forms, giving them the first impulse which becomes in time law” (*The Secret Doctrine*, 1:109). It is, she writes, the “electric vital power, the transcendental binding Unity of all Cosmic Energies, on the unseen as on the manifested planes, the action of which resembles—on an immense scale—that of a living Force created by WILL, in those phenomena where the seemingly subjective acts on the seemingly objective and propels it to action . . . It is present in the constructive power that carries out, in the formation of things—from the planetary system down to the glowworm and simple daisy—the plan in the mind of nature, or in the Divine Thought” (*Ibid.*, 1:111).

This “Light of the Logos” is the source of all consciousness and awareness, of all life and vitality. Theosophy asserts that the great “Army of the Voice” is active in all things, hence everything is alive and conscious. The paleontologist and philosopher Teilhard de Chardin states in his book *The Phenomenon of Man* that “the apparent restriction of consciousness to the higher forms of life has long served science as an excuse for eliminating it from its model of the universe” (p. 55). Theosophy presents a model of the universe in which consciousness plays a major part, declaring emphatically that there is a Universal Conscious Energy—the Light of the Logos—lighting up the universe from within with the light of intelligent, conscious life. Thus all the kingdoms of terrestrial

life represent the activity of the creative Logos made manifest in matter through the action of Fohat. The culmination of the life-process on earth is humankind, which collectively represents the embodiment of the Logos or, in the terminology of the Christian mysteries, “the Word made flesh.”

Blavatsky has summarized these ideas in the following passage from *The Secret Doctrine*:

Manvantaric impulse commences with the re-awakening of Cosmic Ideation (the “Universal Mind”), concurrently with, and parallel to, the primary emergence of Cosmic Substance—the latter being the manvantaric vehicle of the former—from its undifferentiated *pralayic* state. Then, absolute wisdom mirrors itself in its Ideation; which, by a transcendental process, superior to and incomprehensible by human Consciousness, results in Cosmic Energy (*Fohat*). Thrilling through the body of inert Substance, *Fohat* impels it to activity, and guides its primary differentiations on all the Seven planes of Cosmic Consciousness. (1:328)

### Questions from Students

Q: Going back to the beginning, I don’t understand why it all happens in the first place. Why does Parabrahm create the universe?

A: Somebody asked HPB that question once. Her answer was, “Don’t ask me. Ask Parabrahm.” Seriously, though, in thinking through this question we need to make one thing clear. Parabrahm does not create the universe. Parabrahm does not differentiate. Parabrahm does not *do* anything. Mulaprakriti, Parabrahm’s veil, is said to differentiate and become the universe, but for all that there is no such thing as Creation as understood by Western theology. As one of the Masters of Wisdom said,

Go on saying: “Our planet and men were created”—and you will be fighting against *hard facts* forever, analyzing, and losing time over trifling details—unable to ever grasp the whole. But once admit that our planet and ourselves are no more *creations* than the iceberg now before me . . . that both planet and man are—*states* for a given time; that their present appearance—geological and anthropological—is transitory and but a condition concomitant of that stage of evolution at which they have arrived . . . and all will become plain. (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 119-120)

Mulaprakriti differentiates because of unexpended karma from past cycles of the universe. This has always been going on and will continue always. Karma simply means action and reaction. When our universe ends its long manvantara, there will still be things remaining to be done, action which has not yet

had its reaction, causes yet to bear their karmic fruit. These will necessitate another universal “reincarnation” in which to work themselves out. And that cycle will demand another, and so on and on. It never began and will never end.

Q: How do the occult ideas about Mulaprakriti, cosmic matter, and the rest compare with the concepts of science?

A: Science has come a long way since the days of HPB. The scientists of her day thought that matter was composed of tiny, billiard-ball atoms that were incapable of further division. They didn’t fully understand electricity and called it a “mode of motion” to hide their ignorance. They even laughed when the Theosophists said that it was composed of corpuscular units. The idea that the universe arose within a Deity that was identified with Space, and that that so-called empty space was in reality a plenum, a “fullness” from which all the matter in the universe “differentiated,” was hooted at as being absurd.

But what has science discovered since the time of HPB? They know now that the atom *is* divisible and many subatomic particles have been discovered. One of these particles, the electron, *is* the corpuscular unit of electricity that the Theosophists were talking about. Not only this, but the electron is regarded now as one member of a pair of particles which was produced when that electron was hurled from a state of suspension within “empty” space (*laya* is the Eastern expression), leaving a “hole in space” or a positron in its place. “Empty” space, science now teaches, is jammed full of matter in states of “negative energy.” When a particle assumes a state of positive energy, a complementary “hole” is left in the deserted negative energy state, which then may be interpreted as an anti-particle. Thus from “empty space” appear the countless “pairs” of complementary particles. This corresponds in occultism to the differentiation of prakriti from Mulaprakriti. “The great Breath digs through Space seven holes into Laya to cause them to circumgyrate during Manvantara” (*The Secret Doctrine*, 1:147).

Q: Does the term *Logos* correspond to the God of the Christian religion?

A: If you refer to the religion of some of the great Christian mystics, such as Meister Eckhart, there may be similarities. In Eckhart’s terminology, God corresponds to the Logos and the Godhead to Parabrahm. It is analogous to the Saguna Brahman (Deity with attributes) and Nirguna Brahman (Deity without attributes) of Hindu Philosophy. If, on the other hand, you mean God in the sense of a personal creator, judge, redeemer, etc., as depicted in popular

Christianity, such a god-idea corresponds neither to the Logos nor to the Parabrahm of the esoteric teaching. HPB summed it up very aptly when she wrote the following:

It is not the One Unknown ever-present God in Nature, or Nature in *abscondito*, that is rejected, but the God of human dogma and his *humanized* "word." In his infinite conceit and inherent pride and vanity, man shaped it himself with his sacrilegious hand out of the material he found in his own small brain-fabric, and forced it upon mankind as a direct revelation from the one unrevealed SPACE. (*The Secret Doctrine*, 1:9)

Q: I have read in some Theosophical books about the Solar Logos building the solar system through three outpourings. Could you elaborate further on this?

A: The Logos is the central source of Light and Life for the entire universe, which includes countless millions of solar systems. Its rays—which are itself—are the Atmic beams, one of which overshadows every intelligent being, from a human being to the highest archangels. Collectively, all of these rays comprise the Logos. In the Stanzas of Dzyan, they are called the "Army of the Voice." The term "Solar Logos" may be correctly applied to that portion of these rays that are active in our solar system, just as the term "Pacific Fleet" refers to that portion of the U. S. Navy which is engaged in action in the Pacific Ocean.

There is, in our system, a presiding Hierarch—a highly-developed Dhyan Chohan or archangel—who is the Supreme Lord of evolution within the solar system. If you want to call this Great Being a Solar Logos in the sense that a famous monarch once said, "I am the state," it is perhaps permissible, providing you remember that this being is but the head of a whole hierarchy of spiritual lives. For all that, it is misleading to think in terms of a gigantic, super-being acting in ways described in some of the literature. The same thing may be said of the "Planetary Logos" which, like the solar host, does exist as a division of the cosmic host but does not exist in any anthropomorphized form.

REFERENCES FOR SUPPLEMENTARY READING:

Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, "Proem."

Row, T. *Subba Row Collected Writings*, "Notes on the Bhagavad Gita, I."

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:

1. Read pages 14-18 of the Proem in *The Secret Doctrine*. Summarize in your own words the three fundamental propositions as expounded by HPB. Please try to describe them in your own words, avoiding direct quotations from the text.
2. Do you think the word *Logos* as used in the Proem refers to a specific being? Explain.
3. What brings the universe into manifestation?
4. What is the role of Fohat in cosmic evolution?
5. What part does humanity play in cosmic evolution?
6. This chapter introduces Sanskrit terms which may be new to you. It is better not to treat them as having rigid definitions or definite English equivalents. The larger meaning of the words becomes clearer with continued reading and greater familiarity. For the time being, match words in column A with meanings in column B.

A	B
Parabrahm	A cyclical period of manifestation or activity, which occurs between two pralayas.
Mulaprakriti	A cyclical period of non-manifestation or inactivity, which occurs between two manvantaras.
Pralaya	Indwelling and inherent within the universe.
Transcendent	The absolute, ultimate Reality.
Manvantara	The "root" of matter, or cosmic basis from which matter arises.
Immanent	Above and beyond the universe.



## Chapter 3

### Microcosm

We are familiar with the visible human body composed of chemical substances; many people are content to regard this as if it were all there were to a human being. The Wisdom Tradition asserts that the physical body that we see and touch is a comparatively unimportant aspect of the human constitution. As the greatest part of an iceberg lies concealed beneath the waves of the ocean while its tip protrudes above, so the greatest part of a person exists in the unseen realms beyond the physical.

The esoteric philosophy refers to seven “sheaths”<sup>4</sup> which serve as successive veils of graduated density around the underlying Divine Spark which is one’s innermost nature. The latter is one of the Divine Sons, an undetached ray of the Logos. The seven vehicles, or sheaths, are said to interpenetrate one another as a liquid may penetrate a solid while in turn being interpenetrated by a gas. Each sheath is derived from one of the seven elements that differentiate from Mulaprakriti. Collectively, the seven are overshadowed by the Divine Spark. The seven sheaths may be listed as follows:

- |                   |   |                                |
|-------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. Auric Envelope | } | Karana Sharira                 |
| 2. Buddhi         |   |                                |
| 3. Higher Manas   |   |                                |
| 4. Lower Manas    | } | Sukshma Sharira or Astral Soul |
| 5. Kama           |   |                                |
| 6. Astral Body    |   |                                |
| 7. Physical Body  |   |                                |

Shining its Divine Light into the seven-fold human being is an undetached spark (Scintilla) of the Logos. This is the Divine Atma or Higher Self, the Immortal Spirit. This was described by HPB as follows:

Each immortal spirit that sheds its radiance upon a human being is a god—the Microcosmos of the Macrocosmos, part and parcel of the Unknown God, the First Cause of which it is a direct emanation. It is possessed of all the attributes of

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<sup>4</sup> These “sheaths” may be divided and classified in various ways. The classification used here was employed by HPB in the last years of her life. See “Questions and Answers” and Appendix I for alternative divisions.

its parent source. Among these attributes are omniscience and omnipotence. (*Isis Unveiled*, 2:153)

It should be kept in mind that there is in reality only one Atma, the seemingly individual spirits of men and women being but the facets of the One Spirit. Although there are seven interpenetrating vehicles or sheaths, we may simplify the picture since some of the principles work together. Thus the first three (counting from within outward)—auric envelope, buddhi, and higher manas (overshadowed by the Atma)—cohere together and constitute the permanent entity or monad which passes from life to life. This is sometimes called the *karana sharira* or causal body. The next two—lower manas and kama—likewise cohere and constitute the so-called astral soul or that which is called in the East the *sukshma sharira* or the *mayavi rupa*. The next vehicle, the astral body or etheric double, is the so-called “model-body” around which the physical form is built. On the lowest level is the gross, physical form.

We may now examine the various levels in greater detail, working from without inward. Moving beyond the atoms and subatomic particles of the physical world, we encounter the state of matter immediately “within” the physical. The human form here, composed of matter only slightly finer than physical matter, is the astral body<sup>5</sup> or etheric double. In Eastern occultism this body is often called the *Linga Sharira* which means “model body” since it is supposed to serve as a sort of field of force and vitality over which the physical body is built. In addition to these functions, it evidences the properties of sensation. It is said that the true organs of sensation are in the astral body. It is the astral eye that really sees, the astral ear that really hears, etc.

Moving into finer and finer layers of matter, we penetrate the veil which separates astral matter from kamic matter. *Kama* is a Sanskrit word meaning “desire.” In this third state of matter, life manifests a higher form of consciousness than sensation. Here, thrilling through kamic matter, it gives rise to the lower sorts of emotion, passions, appetites, and desires. As we continue inwardly, this state of consciousness shades gradually into that of intellect, rationality, or the concrete mind. The shading is so gradual that it is impossible to make a neat division between the kamic and the lower manasic vehicles. They function together and constitute a unity which we call the *sukshma sharira* or astral soul. The lower manas is sometimes called kama-manas, which means literally “desire mind” and refers to the more concrete type of thought which is intertwined with desire. When we pass into the fifth state, we enter the domain of the spiritual Ego. The fifth state is characterized by the higher sort of thought process that we might call reason or abstract mind. It is intelligence as opposed to intellect. It is here

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<sup>5</sup> Some writers have used the term “astral body” to refer to the principle which HPB called Kama or Kama Rupa, the seat of the appetites and desires (see Appendix I). This need not cause confusion if we bear in mind the difference in terminology. In this presentation we have chosen to adopt HPB’s usage.



that the perfect memory of all experiences through all our lives is maintained. The sixth is that of *buddhi*—spiritual intuition or wisdom. It is the level of consciousness on which a person no longer says “I think,” but rather “I know.” The auric envelope contains and envelopes the entire person. It contains the karmic patterns which dictate the spiritual, psychic, and material structure of the subordinate principles.

It is important to realize that the denser the vehicle, the more robust are the impressions of that plane. The more rarefied the vehicle, the more subtle and delicate are the impressions of that plane. Our consciousness is normally operating in all seven sheaths simultaneously, although one or the other may be the predominating center of activity at any one moment. As the impressions of the inner worlds are so very delicate and tenuous, the human economy has a built-in system of “psychic centers” or *chakras*<sup>6</sup> which, when active, serve as transformers, amplifying the impressions of these subtle levels of consciousness and making them available to the waking consciousness.

During sleep we experience interiorization of consciousness as it withdraws from the outer world. It is useful to think about the states of dreaming and sleeping to realize the nature of the inner planes. With each degree of separation in consciousness from the physical level, things become increasingly “all in the mind.” As one occultist has remarked, on the inner planes thoughts are things and moods are places. Meditation on this concept is helpful in understanding the seven levels of human consciousness.

In ancient mythology, Sleep was the brother of Death. It has been mentioned that during sleep we experience an interiorization of consciousness. At the moment of “death” we experience a similar phenomenon. Death is a process involving the successive shedding of the perishable vehicles in which the spirit dwells. It is analogous to the discarding of one’s outworn clothing.

The death of the physical body releases the permanent entity, now clothed in astral form. In the ordinary course of nature, the disruption of the normal activities of the astral body, the beginning of its own death, precedes physical death. As a result the astral “dies” shortly thereafter and is left behind. The old, discarded astral vehicle is the wraith or phantom form occasionally seen hovering over graves in cemeteries. It eventually disintegrates on its own plane just as the physical corpse does on its respective plane.

Once released from the astral body, the permanent entity is clothed in the astral soul and is now in the realm called purgatory in the Catholic religion, or *Kama Loka* (world of desire) by the mystics of the East. This is the world of unsatisfied passions and desires, the world of the selfish, personal self. It is here that the inner being must

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<sup>6</sup> The term “chakra” is a Sanskrit word meaning “wheel.” To the clairvoyant vision of ancient seers, the whirling vortices of these subtle energies suggested the idea of wheels of light—hence the designation chakra.

separate and become disentangled from the outer husk. This is not an easy process for it entails a great inner struggle. The final separation involves the separation of the lower manas into two separate sets of affinities. That portion of the lower manas which clings to the permanent spiritual being provides a subtle vesture which will clothe that being in the next stage of the journey; the portion that clings to the transitory earthly desires and appetites is discarded along with the dregs of the desire principle. The discarded astral soul or “shell” disintegrates slowly and fades out on its own plane. It is this “shell” which often appears at spiritualistic séances, masquerading as the “spirit” of the dear departed. Energized by vitality borrowed from a medium, it may fool many people in this way.

The spiritual individuality, clothed in the subtlest elements of the lower manas, now enters into a sublime state which in the East is called *Devachan*, a Tibetan word meaning “happy land.” This is a subjective “dream-state” where the disembodied Ego builds its own scenery. It is a sublimely happy state where all the deepest longings of the personal ego are realized. The Devachanic state is sometimes divided into two levels. These are known as the *Rupa Loka* and the *Arupa Loka*, the “world of form” and the “formless world.” The Devachanic state may last from a few to some thousands of years. It continues till all the spiritual or noble feelings and yearnings of the ego have reached their fruition. One of the purposes of this period of complete happiness and bliss is to assimilate the lessons learned during the past life on earth. The experiences of that life are reviewed and made to yield valuable lessons for the enduring entity.

After a period of time in Devachan, the Ego is ready for a new life in the lower worlds of matter and form. The biological reproductive process provides a new suit of mortal clothing, and at birth the individuality steps into the material world, once more ready to begin a new cycle on the wheel of birth and death.

### Questions from Students

Q: You have described a human being as a divine “spark” clothed in seven sheaths. How does this nomenclature relate to what have been called the seven human “principles”?

A: The Theosophical teaching of the seven principles was given out by HPB over a number of years as her Masters permitted the release of more and more information. In *Isis Unveiled* a three-fold division was used: body, soul, and spirit. Later, A. P. Sinnett was permitted to outline, in his *Esoteric Buddhism*, a tentative seven-fold division of “principles” which was given to him in a series of letters from the Mahatmas. It was still not the real, complete division but was a close approximation, a convenient half-truth, which concealed certain things for which

people were not yet quite ready. But it provided a vocabulary and a basis for communication and was employed for the next few years by Theosophists in general and by HPB, who knew, of course, the real division but was not permitted to talk about it.

This division of the seven principles was as follows:

1. Physical body, *sthula sharira*
2. Prana, the vital force
3. Astral body, *linga sharira*
4. Kama
5. Manas
6. Buddhi
7. Atma

The divine spark or Atma was included as the “seventh principle.” The two aspects of manas (the higher and lower) were lumped into one, the auric envelope was omitted entirely, and prana (the vital life force which animates living matter) was included. In the last years of her life, HPB gave to her pledged pupils the division of Atma and the seven sheaths which has been described previously. Buddhi was shown to have earlier served as a blind, concealing the mystery of the auric envelope—an aspect of the human constitution mentioned by HPB only to her esoteric students. Manas was shown clearly as consisting of two aspects belonging to two separate though intimately related planes of the universe.<sup>7</sup> Prana was relegated to its proper place as a universal vitalizing force, carried in the blood, and closely related to the principle of Kama, or desire. An attentive reading of the E.S. instructions which are included in the twelfth volume of H. P. Blavatsky’s *Collected Writings* will assist in understanding these points. A knowledge, however, of the old seven-fold division of principles used in *Esoteric Buddhism* is essential for an understanding of *The Secret Doctrine* and other Blavatsky writings, since it is used there. A perusal of Appendix I may be helpful in this regard.

Q: How are we to relate the traditional classification of body, soul, and spirit to the septenary division?

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<sup>7</sup> Technically, it is said that upon incarnation the Manasic Ego on the higher plane projects from itself a ray which clothes itself in the temporary form evolved from the material of the lower plane.

A: Again, it is largely semantics. You define certain things, attach certain labels, and go from there. There is very little consistency among writers. HPB, who never won any prizes for consistency, used the terms differently from time to time. But, in general, it is appropriate to define Atma, the Divine Spark which is one with the Logos or Paramatma, as the Spirit. Soul, then, would refer to the intermediate vestures which link the Spirit to the body. In this sense, then, Soul has several levels. The Buddhi (and implicitly the Auric Envelope) is often called the "spiritual soul." Manas, in its higher and lower aspects, is the "human soul," while the Kama or desire principle is the "animal soul." We might even go one step further and call the astral body the "vegetative soul" as this is the most highly developed principle of the plant world. HPB called the "soul" the "double" and showed that it has several aspects. This is what she says:

In truth there is only one [double] under three aspects or phases: the most material portion disappearing with the body; the middle one surviving as an independent entity in the land of shadows; the third, immortal throughout the Manvantara, unless Nirvana puts an end to it before. (*Collected Writings*, 10:219)

Q: It was stated that the period spent in Kama Loka is a time of great struggle. Is this always the case?

A: Not in the case of a pure and holy person who has not been attached during life to the appetites and desires. For such a one the stay in Kama Loka is characterized by a dreamy unconsciousness from which he or she will awaken in Devachan. The Kama Rupa or body of desire is shaken off easily with no great struggle. But, alas, all too many of us are not so free from our passions.

Q: I have heard the word "earthbound." What does this mean?

A: It may refer to several things. "When we die," says the French occultist Eliphas Levi, "our souls must first of all get rid of the unpurified astral light which envelops and imprisons them" (*Transcendental Magic*, 153). Until the soul has done so, it is held captive within the astral envelope of the earth and becomes "earthbound." In the case of extremely materialistic persons, this period of astral imprisonment may be quite lengthy. Other examples, which are very different, include accidental death, murder, or suicide. It was mentioned that under normal circumstances the wearing out of the astral double or Linga Sharira is responsible for the death of the physical body. In accidental death, murder, or suicide this doesn't happen. The astral body is still well and active and the person, although snatched out of the physical shell, is not "dead" in the usual sense, but will remain bound to the earth's atmosphere till the astral body has

lived out its allotted span. For good and unselfish victims, this earthbound period is spent in blissful state of unconsciousness. For those less pure, it is an unpleasant experience. For the suicide it will be a miserable period of “weeping and gnashing of teeth,” living in perpetual memory of the circumstances which led to the taking of his or her own life.

Q: I once read something in a Theosophical book about “lost souls.” What does that mean?

A: It is a sad fact of life that there are occasional persons who are so bound up in material things that there is nothing of the living personality worth taking with the Ego into Devachan. Nothing of the lower mental nature can be saved and the personality of that particular incarnation perishes completely. The life is a complete failure and the following Devachanic period is a blank. It has been compared to a page torn out of a book. The spiritual Ego goes on and quickly reincarnates, but the personality of the previous incarnation passes into a locality known as the “Eighth Sphere” where it is annihilated. An altogether different state is experienced by those whose intensely criminal natures disqualify them for the state of Devachan but whose potential spirituality prevents their utter annihilation as personalities. Such individuals are born into nightmarish astral states which, as the antithesis of Devachan, can only be called hells. The worst of these is *Avitchi*—an unremitting state of suffering. As the result of karma, these states finally come to an end when the causes that brought them about are finally exhausted and the monad takes birth once more. For the sake of completeness, we may state that obstinate persistence in life after life of unrepentant evil-doing eventually leads to even worse consequences that we will not discuss here. These are the real “lost souls.” The details of all these sad possibilities are given in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* and Blavatsky’s *E.S. Instructions (Collected Writings, 12:632-41)*.

Q: What is the point of experiencing Devachan if it is an illusion or a dream?

A: As well ask what is the point of sleeping and dreaming, since it is all either blankness or illusion. Devachan is a period of much needed rest for the spiritual Ego. It is a time for the digestion of the experience gained in the life that was and a preparation for the life that is to be.

Q: Is it possible to communicate with the dead?

A: The disembodied Egos in the Devachan cannot descend to earth. It is up to us to learn how we may ascend to the high spiritual level in which they dwell, and

such communion can indeed be practiced by those who know how to do so. It is said that during sleep all of us enjoy such communion with our loved ones who are in Devachan. However, we do not generally bring back to waking consciousness the memories of such experiences. Spiritualistic practices for attempted communication with the dead, on the other hand, should be avoided. Shells, earthbound spirits of various kinds, including suicides and the victims of accidental death as well as the mischievous elemental spirits, are all there within easy access of the medium. None of these can help the inquirer on this plane, nor can the inquirer be of any help to them. The occultist shuns spiritualistic intercourse with such entities, considering the practice as necromancy pure and simple.

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REFERENCES FOR SUPPLEMENTARY READING:

Besant, *The Seven Principles of Man*.

Blavatsky, *Collected Writings*, vol. 12. "E.S.T. Instructions."

———. *The Key to Theosophy*, sections 6-11.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:

1. Why is a human being called the "Microcosm"?
2. Why is it said that there is only one Atman in the Universe?
3. This chapter postulates the higher and lower mind (manas). Explain how they differ in function, giving examples if possible.
4. Can you conceive of something higher than the mind? Is it hard to think of subjective existence beyond the mind except as speculation? Does it have any meaning to you as something that is part of us here and now?
5. What is the difference between the terms *rupa* and *arupa*? What planes do you think make up the *arupa* levels of a human being?
6. Discuss the concepts of spirit, soul, and body in your own terms and what they mean to you.
7. What part of the human being is permanent? What parts endure from one incarnation to the next? What parts are renewed with each incarnation?
8. What is the role of the chakras in the constitution of the human being?
9. Describe the stages that occur between the end of one human incarnation and the beginning of the next incarnation.





## Chapter 4

### Evolution: The Law of Unfoldment

We have discussed the awakening of the Logos from its pralayaic state of absorption within Parabrahm. We have mentioned the Divine Sons that spring forth within the Logos as the “Army of the Voice.” We have described the seven vehicles that clothe the Divine Sons, transforming them from Gods into humans. We can now discuss the process of involution and evolution by which the worlds and their kingdoms of life are formed. It is only by so doing that we can form an understanding of how the human “sheaths” have reached their present state as described in the preceding section.

The hosts of the Divine Sons—the “Scintillas” of the highest arupa (formless) realm—seek to fashion their reflections in the cosmic elements. As formless radiations, the Scintillas are not endowed with any similitude of the finite consciousness experienced by the creatures of the manifested realms. Too pure to be distinct from the Universal Essence of which they are a part, they exist within the Logos with the same type of individuality characterizing a drop within an ocean of water. The Divine Scintillas can neither progress nor develop, as they represent perfection itself. They can only display in the world of space and time—in limitations of form and developmental sequence—the attributes which exist in them eternally.

The Divine Scintilla, cycling along its spiral path in eternity, overshadows with its light and consciousness the differentiated elements which will eventually become the seven sheaths. The hosts of monadic and atomic “lives” which will form the human principles must evolve through eons of experience in order that they might gain the degree of responsiveness and sensitivity required for the embodiment of the “Heavenly Man.” In the words of an esoteric commentary quoted in *The Secret Doctrine*:

Every form on earth, and every speck (atom) in Space strives in its efforts towards self-formation to follow the model placed for it in the “HEAVENLY MAN” . . . Its [the atom’s] involution and evolution, its external and internal growth and development, have all one and the same object—man; man, as the highest physical and ultimate form on this earth; the MONAD in its absolute totality and awakened condition—as the culmination of the divine incarnations on Earth. (1:183)

The esoteric teachings divide the phases of the journey toward humanity into seven “kingdoms.” The first three are the kingdoms of the elementals. They are sometimes referred to as “nature spirits.” They are “semi-intelligent centres of force”—the “fairies,” “pixies,” “genii,” etc., of folklore. In their more material aspect they are the life of the winds, the rains, the fires, the waves, the earthquakes, etc. In occultism these are

not inanimate things but semi-intelligent beings or “lives” which constitute a link in the evolving chain of existences.

They are the Soul of the elements, the capricious forces in Nature, acting under one immutable Law inherent in these Centres of Force, with undeveloped consciousness and bodies of plastic mould . . . These beings have never been, but will in myriads of ages hence, be evolved into men. *They belong to the three lower kingdoms*, and pertain to the Mysteries on account of their dangerous nature. (*Lucifer*, August 1893: 541)

[They] occupy, as it were, a specific step in the ladder of being, and . . . may properly be called nature-spirits or cosmic agents of nature, each being confined to its own element and never transgressing the bounds of others . . . In the teachings of Eastern Kabalists, and of the Western Rosicrucians and Alchemists, they are spoken of as the creatures evolved in and from the four kingdoms of earth, air, fire, and water, and are respectively called gnomes, sylphs, salamanders, and undines . . . Under the general designation of fairies and fays, these spirits of the elements appear in the myths, fables, traditions, and poetry of all nations, ancient and modern. Their names are legion—peris, devs, djins, sylvans, satyrs, fauns, elves, dwarfs, trolls, norms, nisses, kobolds, brownies, necks, stromkars, undines, nixies, goblins, ponkes, banshees, kelpies, pixies, moss people, good people, good neighbors, wild women, men of peace, white ladies—and many more . . . We will adopt the term “Elemental” to designate only these nature-spirits . . . Elementals, as said already, have no form, and in describing what they are, it is better to say that they are “centres of force” having instinctive desires, but no consciousness as we understand it.” (*Lucifer*, September 1893: 30-31)

The fourth kingdom of life is the mineral kingdom. Far from being the dead, inert things that the profane imagine them to be, the minerals comprise a kingdom of slumbering life embodied in forms provided for them by the elementals which lag behind them in the evolutionary journey. As more and more complex forms develop, the current of life gives rise to the three higher kingdoms of evolution: the plants, animals, and finally humanity.

Cosmic and planetary evolution, therefore, is not a purely mechanical process but instead represents the creative activity of Cosmic Life. The fiery nebula that condenses to form a planet is vibrant with elemental and atomic life that will eventually give rise to plant, animal, and human life. As organic forms grow in complexity so that a highly developed nervous system and brain are evolved, the light of Atma becomes increasingly focalized in the organism. As forms develop from the simple and homogeneous to the complex and heterogeneous, the Divine Life can express itself more and more fully within these forms, unfolding its potentialities of consciousness and realization, thereby reflecting the majesty of Divine Thought in the evolving mirror of mortal mind. Finally,

humanity—the microcosmic reflection of the macrocosm—is formed and in this formation spirit and matter, heaven and earth, are indissolubly linked.

A Master has given the following summary of the evolution of the seven kingdoms:

Now the life impulse reaches . . . that which . . . so far is but cosmic dust. A centre is formed in the nebulous matter of the condensation of the solar dust disseminated through space and a series of three evolutions invisible to the eye of flesh occur in succession, *viz.*, three kingdoms of elementals or nature forces are evolved: in other words the animal soul of the future globe is formed; or as a Kabbalist will express it, the gnomes, the salamanders, and the undines are created. (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, 184-185)

The three evolutions completed, palpable globe begins to form. The mineral kingdom fourth in the whole series, but first in this stage leads the way. Its deposits are at first vaporous, soft and plastic, only becoming hard and concrete in the seventh ring . . . At this juncture the evolution of the vegetable kingdom commences . . . When the latter has made its seventh ring . . . the germs of the animal kingdom enter . . . When the animal has seven rings . . . then comes man. Evolving seven parent races with many offshoots of sub-races, he, like the preceding kingdoms completes his seven rings. (*Ibid.*, 185)

Long cycles in the lower kingdoms are required before the evolving cosmic essence acquires the responsiveness and sensitivity to reflect the image of the “Self-Existent Lord.” It is only at the later stages of the animal kingdom that the ocean of Buddhi-Manas (monadic essence) begins to break up into its constituent drops or individual monads. In the human kingdom, the monad begins its cycle of regular reincarnations under the quickening influence of the “Sons of Wisdom,” evolved entities from preceding world cycles in whom the fires of self-consciousness burned brightly, and who were thus fit to light the fire of self-consciousness in humanity. From that time onward, it is no longer a pilgrimage of the Divine Life through varying stages of rudimentary consciousness, but a matter of countless individual human reincarnations in which the fully individualized monad gathers the fruits of self-conscious experience.

As human beings, we are especially concerned with the pilgrimage of the Divine Life as it travels through the human kingdom unfolding and expressing its transcendental powers. Theosophy teaches that the process of unfoldment occurs through a long series of rebirths or reincarnations. This refers to the repeated entry of the spiritual self into fleshly covering, its repeated embodiment on this and other worlds. We have established that a human being has four outer, perishable vehicles—mental, kamic, astral, and physical—with their organs of action and sensation. These are renewed with each incarnation.

The undying inner being that passes from life to life is the Eternal Pilgrim, the Atmic Ray with its Auric Envelope, Buddhi and Higher Manas. Life is a school of

experience for this inner Pilgrim. Emerging from the animal kingdom as a rudimentary and undeveloped human, the evolutionary journey in the human kingdom will carry one from this primitive state to that of the fully enlightened and integrated individuality—and beyond. The Inner Self is an actor playing many roles who dwells in many personalities (the root-word *persona* means “mask”) and takes forward from each the experiences gathered. As we live we produce causes that must react upon us in the future for good or bad. This is called karma, the law of cause and effect by which we reap the effects of the actions we sow—either in this or in some future life. Karma from the past determines the type of body our Ego receives, our environment, and the things which happen to us.

The goal of evolution is to master life, to become people who know who we are and where we are going. Such people know exactly what they are doing. They see clearly, understanding themselves and conditions around them. Filled with compassion for less progressed beings, they help others learn who they are in the deepest meaning of these words. Such people help others find, as they themselves have found, their true spiritual identity. For all that, one can only point the way to others since all must find the way and *become* the way for themselves.

There are seven stages or “rounds” of human unfoldment which correspond to the development of the seven sheaths:

1. The first stage is that of pure mechanical being. One at this level lives and that’s about all.
2. At the second stage the person is wrapped up in and fascinated by things perceived.
3. At the third stage one is wrapped up in the emotions and desires aroused by sensations, and seeks out more and more experience.
4. At the fourth stage the person has developed intellect by which to plot ways to gain the objects of desire.
5. At this stage spiritual intelligence begins to dawn. One begins to realize that there is more to life than formerly believed. Thought becomes more abstracted and not confined to gratifying self. It begins to be concerned with understanding things, and senses deeper levels of consciousness within.
6. At this stage intuition, wisdom, and the sense of oneness grounded in all-embracing love become the person’s natural state. Knowledge arises spontaneously from within.
7. At this stage one has become a fully enlightened soul with no more lessons to learn on this earth.

The final goal of human evolution is to become *more* than human. It is the self-realization of the Divine. From each of the personalities which it informs, the monad extracts the essence—those thoughts and aspirations which are capable of adding to its stock of cosmic experience. When it has assimilated the experiences of the successive personalities; when it has overcome the passions and desires which bound it to the wheel of birth and death; when it has learned to maintain a continuous, self-conscious existence in spirit; the monad then becomes a “Dhyan Chohan” or “Planetary Spirit.” Its evolution is now a matter of attaining consciousness on higher and higher planes of cosmic consciousness. New worlds open and consciousness unfolds on levels which are as the overtones, as it were, of the seven planes of terrestrial consciousness. Builders, Planetary Spirits, Lipika—these are but a few of the names assigned to some of the innumerable classes of Dhyan Chohans (literally, Lords of Meditation) evolving in higher worlds of conscious life—realms greater, more vast, more all-encompassing than can be imagined by the greatest and most holy saint on this speck of mud called earth.

## Questions from Students

Q: It is not clear to me in reading HPB what is meant by the term *monad*. Could you elaborate on this?

A: It would have been easier for all of us if HPB had not borrowed the word *monad* from Leibnitz and had made up some term of her own to put across her ideas. The German mathematician Leibnitz used the word *monad* to refer to a spiritual unit, an indivisible point. But as HPB said, “What are called collectively *Monads* by Leibnitz . . . may be separated into three distinct Hosts” (*The Secret Doctrine*, 1:632). These she calls “gods,” “elementals or monads,” and “atoms.” The “gods” answer to what we have been calling the Divine Scintillas, the rays of the Logos. The second category is that of the elementals or *monads* (same word but a new meaning now) or the “atomic souls,” the lives” which make up the “*anima mundi*” or “world soul.” These are supposed to be like countless tiny mirrors, each reflecting every other. Collectively, vivified by the light shining from the “gods,” they are called by HPB the monadic or cosmic essence. The third category consists of atoms, material units which make up more differentiated matter.

Regarding the “gods” Blavatsky writes, “It stands to reason that a monad cannot either progress or develop, or even be affected by the changes of states it passes through. *It is not of this world or plane*, and may be compared only to an indestructible star of divine light and fire, thrown down onto our earth as a plank of salvation for the personalities in which it indwells” (Ibid., 1:174-75).

“Atma,” she writes in another place, “neither progresses, forgets, nor remembers. It does not belong to this plane; it is but the ray of light eternal which shines upon and through the darkness of matter—when the latter is willing”(Ibid., 1:244).

But Atma can act only through cosmic matter in its various states of differentiation as atoms and monads (the universal mirrors). “Now the Monadic [or rather Cosmic] Essence . . . in the mineral, vegetable, and animal, though the same throughout the series of cycles . . . yet differs in the scale of progression . . . The Ocean [of matter] does not divide into its potential and constituent drops until the sweep of the life-impulse reaches the evolutionary stage of man-birth. The tendency towards segregation into individual monads is gradual, and in the higher animals comes almost to the point”(Ibid., 1:178).

In humanity, with the formation of a permanent, reincarnating entity, “the *Formless* (Arupa) Radiations . . . unite together an infinitude of monads—and thus individualize for the time being an independent mind, omniscient and universal; and by the same process of magnetic aggregation they create for themselves visible bodies out of the interstellar atoms”(Ibid., 1:632-33). At this point we have yet another use of the same word *monad*. Now, the first kind of monad (the god or divine spark) forms itself a vehicle composed of the second kind of monads (the universal mirrors), and together the spark and its vehicle constitute yet another kind of monad which passes from one human incarnation to the next. Thus the human monad is the unified triad (Atma; Buddhi, concealing the mystery of the auric envelope; and Manas) or, when it is desired to distinguish between the Ego or “thinking principle” and the monad proper, it is Atma-Buddhi alone. I’m sorry if this seems confusing; it is confusing since one word is being used in so many different ways.

Q: I have read in several Theosophical books about *group souls*. What is the meaning of this term?

A: You cannot rely on the description of group souls in some of the literature. The basic idea is sound, but it has been rather badly materialized by certain writers. The fundamental meaning is simply that the lower kingdoms of life are not inhabited by individualized, reincarnating Egos as is the human kingdom. The stream of consciousness passing through the early phases of experience overshadows a multitude of mineral, plant, or lower animal forms, as the case may be. The death of an organism in one of the lower kingdoms has been compared to pouring a cup of water back into the vessel from which it was originally taken. The experience acquired by a particular organism goes then to enrich the entire

“group soul.” This latter is composed of monadic lives or universal, mirror-like “soul-atoms” which have not yet reached the stage of individualization in the human kingdom.

Q: Are we to understand this process as continually occurring? Are new human monads continuously passing out of the lower kingdoms and starting their cycles of reincarnation?

A: Not any longer, evidently. It is said that several million years ago the “door” to the human kingdom was closed and since that time no new recruits have entered the human evolution. It is like registration for a class in school. Up until a certain time registration is carried on actively, but once the class has filled, registration must stop so that the work of learning can actually begin in earnest. If new stragglers were continuously coming in, the class as a whole could never get anywhere. It is the same with the transition between kingdoms. There are exceptions, however, here as everywhere else. It is said that the monads of the apes will gradually become human. This is because the apes as a whole are a special case. They are the offspring of the sexual indiscretion of the early human races and thus they are handled differently by nature. We will come back to that topic later.

Q: Could you then summarize, “in twenty words or less,” the process of evolution through the lower kingdoms and up through humanity?

A: I don’t know if we can get it down to twenty words or less, but HPB gave a very nice description when she wrote the following words:

At the beginning of every Manvantara [life cycle] the natural tendency of every Deva [god] is *manward*. A Deva drops its essence into the body of a planet and becomes a stone; from the rocky womb, it creeps into the moss and plant; thence Karma carries it into an animal, and there it remains until united with Alaya’s light, after which the animal blooms into thinking man. It is the latter who furnishes every new Manvantara with intelligent and wise architects and builders. (*Lucifer*, February 1891: 455)

REFERENCES FOR SUPPLEMENTARY READING:

Blavatsky, *Collected Writings*, vol. 5 “About the Mineral Monad.”  
———. *The Secret Doctrine*, 1:610-634 “God, Monads, and Atoms.”

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:

1. What is meant by the term *evolution*?
2. Through the process of evolution, what is it that becomes able to achieve a sharper focus in the physical body, especially in the human being?
3. What is the goal of reincarnation?
4. What part does karma play in evolution?
5. Is there an “end” to evolution? If so, what is it?
6. What does HPB’s teaching about the monad add to your understanding of our human constitution? Do you find her statements helpful or confusing?
7. What is your concept of a Dhyan Chohan?



## Chapter 5

### Macrocosm

The cosmology of *The Secret Doctrine* carries us back to that time when the universe was not yet born. The forms of the preceding manvantara had been dissolved; in their state of dissolution, they rested within the bosom of Mulaprakriti. When the long pralaya had run its course, Mulaprakriti once again began to differentiate and the universe emerged from the state of latency in which it had remained for incalculable aeons.

This emerging universe is dual, consisting on the one side of cosmic substance, or prakriti, and on the other side of cosmic ideation, or purusha—the vivifying Logos with its constituent hosts of active radiations. During the state of pralaya these two aspects are merged together. At the dawn of the new manvantara they separate from one another, the successive differentiations of Mulaprakriti providing the illusive shadows required to set off and make manifest the light of the Logos.

The Wisdom Religion describes three preliminary stages of cosmic unfoldment by which the emergence of the universe occurs, and these stages are symbolized in the old teachings by geometrical figures. The basis of these symbols is a white disk  $\bigcirc$  in a field of darkness. The white disk symbolizes Mulaprakriti with consciousness lying asleep within it during the cosmic night. The field of darkness represents the ever-unknowable Parabrahm.

The first germ of differentiation is represented by the point within the circle  $\odot$ . From the form side of things, it is the first stage of differentiation by which root-matter (Mulaprakriti) becomes cosmic matter (prakriti). From the life side of things, it is the “germ of mind” —the bare potentiality of manifested consciousness.

The second stage of primordial unfoldment is symbolized by the diameter drawn horizontally across the circle  $\ominus$ . The veil of cosmic matter is becoming more differentiated and now represents “an immaculate mother-nature within the all-embracing infinitude.” Divine Mind is able to manifest in a more concrete form and is now “Universal (latent) Ideation.” It is the “concealed father in the womb of the mother” and contains in their barest potentiality the seven hosts of celestial Intelligences, which exist—like the seven colors of the spectrum—concealed within the white radiance of the Eternal Light.

The third stage of pre-cosmic evolution is symbolically represented by a cross within the circle  $\oplus$ . Cosmic matter has reached that stage of differentiation (cosmic matter in its third stage of manifestation is called Maha Buddhi) in which the concealed

Divine Mind becomes active Cosmic Intelligence. The vertical line represents this active Intelligence which, as the male element in primordial nature, is born at this stage as the Son—the awakened cosmic mind or Mahat. These three primordial stages of evolution are called the three Logoi or, more correctly, the one Logos in its three hypostases or natures.

Springing up within Mahat are the seven hosts of celestial Intelligences (Ah-hi) who are said to “contain” Divine Mind and give it its vehicle for manifestation. The hosts of Mahat are the Sparks (Scintillas) from the Divine Flame which have been described previously as the “Army of the Voice,” the “Intelligent Forces that give to and enact in Nature her ‘laws.’” The seven hosts are sometimes referred to as seven “Rays” which emanate from the Central Spiritual Sun. Together with the Logos in its triple hypostasis, they constitute the Sacred Ten of Pythagorean and Kabbalistic lore. In the Judeo-Christian tradition they are the “seven spirits before the throne of God,” each of which is symbolized by a great Archangel. In Tibetan esotericism they are symbolized by the “Dhyani Buddhas”—each of which is the symbolic archetype of a particular aspect of the Divine Wisdom. In explaining this teaching Lama Anagarika Govinda writes:

The forms in which the *Dhyani Buddhas* appear . . . have been compared by us with the different colors into which the rays of the sun are separated, when passing through a prism, thus revealing in each color a particular quality of the light. This comparison is all the more adequate, as colors play an important role in the appearances of the *Dhyani Buddhas*. Their colors indicate certain properties and spiritual associations, which to the initiate are as significant and meaningful as notes to the musically trained. They convey the particular vibration, characteristic for each aspect of transcendental knowledge or Wisdom, which in the realm of sound is expressed by the corresponding vibration of the *mantra*, in the realm of corporeality by the corresponding gesture or *mudrā*, and in the innermost realm by the corresponding spiritual attitude. (*Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*, pp. 115-16)

Each of the Primordial Seven is called in esoteric teaching a “Tanmātra,” the spiritual prototype of a particular cosmic element. HPB wrote, “The Tanmātras are literally the type or rudiment of an element devoid of qualities; but esoterically, they are the primordial *noumena* of that which becomes in the progress of evolution a Cosmic element in the sense given to the term in antiquity, not in that of physics. They are the Logoi, the seven emanations or rays of the Logos” (*The Secret Doctrine*, 1:572n).

Simultaneously with the emergence of the seven “rays” of the Logos and their constituent hosts, primordial matter issues forth as the seven “elements,” which in the East are called *tattvas*. Each element is “ruled” by one or the other of the seven “rays.” The *tattvas* may be enumerated as follows:

1. Adi tattva—the “first” or primordial element
2. Anupadaka tattva—the “parentless”
3. Akasa tattva—the Pater-Aether of the Greeks
4. Vayu tattva—etherial or gaseous state or element
5. Tejas tattva—fiery or radiant element
6. Apas tattva—watery, liquid, fluidic element
7. Prithivi tattva— earthly element (physical matter and energy)

These are the seven rudimentary elements in their purest and most sublimated form. It is these elements that will give rise, after innumerable differentiations, to the seven human sheaths, each of which is the heir to the powers of one of the great cosmic elements and to the “Ray” of Divine Wisdom which stands behind it. In his book *The Inner Life*, Charles Leadbeater quotes T. Subba Row, who explains the relationship between the tanmātras and the tattvas:

The tanmātra is the modification in the consciousness of the Logos, and the tattva is the effect produced in matter by that modification. You have seen how on a sandy shore a little wave comes quietly in, runs up on the sand and retires. But it has left behind it a tiny ridge to mark its limit. If the tide is rising, the next wave which comes in goes a little further up the beach, makes its mark in turn and then retires. You may think of the tanmātra as imaged by the wave, which is the temporary modification of the ocean, and you may think of the little ridge made in the sand and symbolizing the tattva. (*The Inner Life*, 2:176)

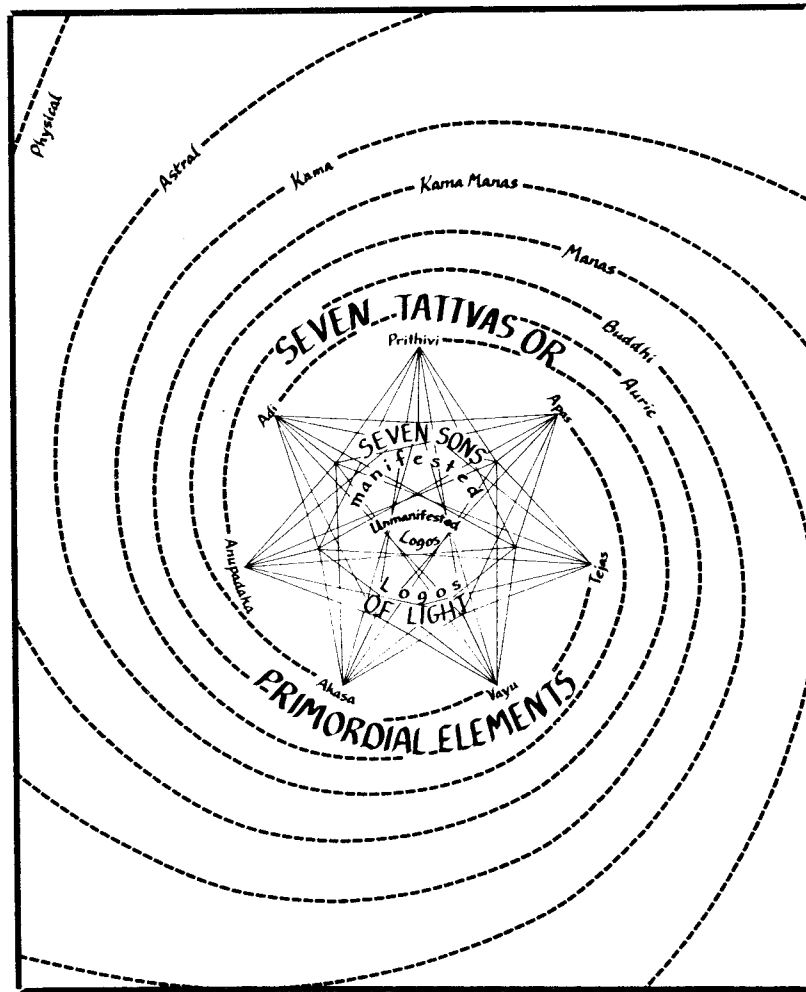
Like seven rays of different colors spiraling outward from a central point, the seven tattvas, or elements, become coarser with every turn (see Figure 2 on the next page). As the wave of cosmic differentiation sweeps outward in its cyclic gyrations, each element becomes less and less spiritual while at the same time acquiring more and more material characteristics. At the same time, the divine emanations, which shoot forth like tongues of fire from the macrocosmic center, gradually clothe themselves in the elements. Thus, after innumerable turns, are formed the seven great “planes” of the universe, each of which may be again and again subdivided. These are the “seven shells surrounding Brahma’s egg” described in the Puranas under a veil of theological blinds.

The ancient Stanzas of Dzyan, on which *The Secret Doctrine* is based, describes the formation of the universal planes in the following way:

Father-Mother spin a web whose upper end is fastened to spirit—the light of the one darkness—and the lower one to its shadowy end, matter; and this web is the

universe spun out of the two substances made in one, which is Svabhavat. (*The Secret Doctrine*, 1:29)

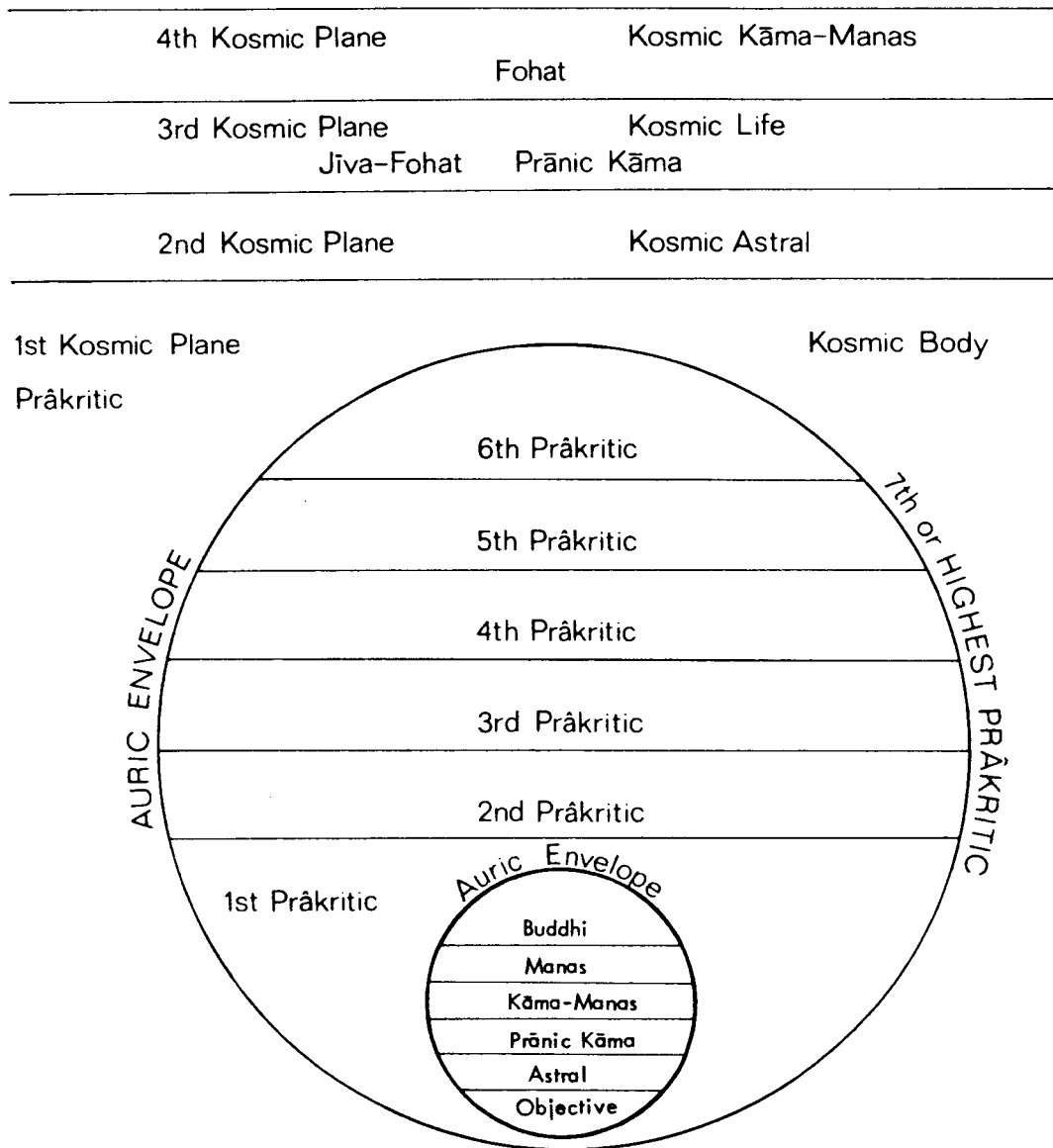
Figure 2



This is what has been described as the great keyboard of cosmic substance. To explain the seven planes of the universe is impossible. It is said that the highest beings in our solar system are in ignorance as to what exists on the second septenary plane. The lowest of these seven cosmic planes contains the seven planes of the solar systems (see Figure 3).

Figure 3

In this diagram all the Kosmic Planes should be figured as of one size -- the size given to the lowest plane, Prakriti. Further, within the circle all the Prakritic Planes should be one size -- that given to the first, or lowest. To do this would make so large a diagram that the planes are compressed. (From: *E.S. Instructions printed in The Secret Doctrine*, Adyar, V:527.)



HPB gives the following names for the seven solar planes: (*Collected Writings*, 12:658).

7. Auric
6. Alayic
5. Mahatic
4. Fohatic
3. Jivic
2. Astral
1. Prakritic

The six higher solar planes are accessible only to the adepts. It is said that the consciousness of a Pratyeka Buddha (one who reaches the wisdom of a Buddha but who does not help others to reach that state) can reach as far as the third solar plane (the Jivic) while only a Buddha of Compassion (one who renounces the attainment of nirvana in order to help others attain Buddhahood) can penetrate beyond. These planes are the habitation of the heavenly hosts of our solar system.

It is on the lowest four subdivisions of the prakritic plane that the planets bearing humanity exist. Our Earth and the other visible planets, which belong to the same layer of differentiated matter, are on the most material of these subdivisions. It is at this level of existence at the periphery of being that we live in our material bodies and pursue our terrestrial occupations.

### **Questions from Students**

- Q. How do the Theosophical teachings relate to modern scientific theories of cosmology, i.e., the “big bang,” etc.?
- A. There are many aspects of modern cosmological theory that remind one of *The Secret Doctrine*. One theory, for example, depicts the universe as cyclically expanding and contracting. At present we are believed to be in an expansive phase; all the galaxies appear to be moving away from one another at tremendous velocities. If the cyclic theory is correct, the situation will one day reverse itself and the galaxies will all begin to move together once more, until all the energy in the universe is compressed into a state of incredible density from which it will “explode” once again to form galaxies, stars, etc. In many ways this resembles the account given in the Stanzas of Dzyan:

The mother swells, expanding from within without, like the bud of the lotus . . . the luminous egg . . . curdles and spreads in milk-white curds throughout the depths of mother . . . the sons dissociate and scatter, to return into the mother's bosom at the end of the great day, and re-become one with her. (*The Secret Doctrine*, 1:28-30)

Another interesting point in the scientific theory is that the "expansion of the universe" is not to be thought of as proceeding from any particular point in our space and then moving outward. An observer in a one galaxy sees the same thing as an observer in any other galaxy. An analogy which has been used to make this clearer is that of a balloon being inflated. If the balloon is covered with spots, the view from any one spot will be such that all the other spots appear to be moving away from it. There is no unique point on the balloon's surface from which the expansion began. Therefore, the space of our universe may be compared to the surface of the balloon with the galaxies corresponding to the spots on the balloon. The surface of the balloon is finite since it has a definite surface area at any given time. Yet at the same time it is boundless—it is not closed in by any boundaries. Just as the two dimensions of the surface of the balloon are curved around into a third dimension, the three dimensions of our "extension" are believed to be curved around into a fourth dimension. This is not a dimension of extension, as we understand it, but is best thought of as a mathematical abstraction which may be visualized as a fourth quantity specifying a particular event. Thus our three-dimensional space may be, like the surface of a sphere, "finite but unbounded."

Now let us see what HPB says in *The Secret Doctrine*. Speaking of a sphere or circle as an ancient mystical symbol she says:

Though the idea *per se* is, of course, an abstraction, a symbolical mode of expression, it is a symbol truly, as it suggests the idea of infinity as an endless circle. It brings before the mind's eye the picture of Cosmos emerging from and in boundless space, a Universe as shoreless in magnitude if not as endless in its objective manifestation. The simile of an egg also expresses the fact taught in Occultism that the primordial form of everything manifested, from atom to globe, from man to angel, is spheroidal, the sphere having been with all nations the emblem of eternity and infinity. (*The Secret Doctrine*, 1:65)

The phrase "as shoreless in magnitude if not as endless in its objective manifestation" is most suggestive in relation to the idea of a "finite yet boundless" universe as postulated in modern cosmology. Interestingly enough, this

idea was promulgated by Albert Einstein who actually studied *The Secret Doctrine!*<sup>8</sup> Even more striking is the following quotation:

There is but one indivisible and absolute Omniscience and Intelligence in the Universe, and this thrills throughout every atom and infinitesimal point of the whole finite Kosmos which hath no bounds, and which people call SPACE.  
(Ibid., 1:277)

Q: I am not sure how to relate your description of the universal planes with other things I have read. I thought that our “bodies” were derived one by one from the successive planes of the solar system.

A: It all depends on what you mean by a plane. A human has various sheaths or “bodies.” Each of these sheaths comes from a particular element, or “plane.” But each of these elements or planes has its own scale of manifestation from the lowest to the highest, or from the periphery to the center of the hyper-spherical universe just described (see also Figure 2). The planes described in this chapter relate to this latter meaning.

To use an analogy, if we begin at the lowest register of the piano keyboard and play a melody there, we can call that melody our world or plane. Its various notes represent the seven principles ranging from material to spiritual. Now we can go an octave higher on the keyboard and play the same tune there. This represents a higher “plane” on which planets invisible to our senses can exist coexistent with our world or plane. There really are such planets on such higher planes, and we will talk about that in the next section. And so we may go on up the scale of vibration, repeating the process till we reach levels which are beyond such things as planets and the like.

HPB does not discuss what lies beyond the fourth plane of prakriti. She simply calls it the “Divine and Formless World of Spirit.” But, as she says, “the seven states of human consciousness pertain to quite another question.” Evidentially, the seven solar planes contain a great deal more than some of the elementary books would lead you to believe. At the risk of confusing you more, I might as well go one step further by telling you that when HPB uses the word “solar,” she oftentimes means more than the system which surrounds our visible sun. The highest Dhyan Chohans and Intelligences associated with our visible sun and its system are on a comparatively low plane relative to the greater solar system of which it is a part.

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<sup>8</sup> “Reminiscences of Lomaland: Madame Tingley and the Theosophical Institute in San Diego” by Iverson Harris. Published in *The Journal of San Diego History*, (Summer 1974).



Q: Could you comment further on the seven *tattvas* or elements?

A: The exoteric Hindu classification of elements includes five: *akasa* (ether), *vayu* (air), *tejas* (fire), *apas* (water), and *prithivi* (earth). To these the esoteric philosophy adds two more to make up the total seven. *Adi* and *Anupadaka* are the names of the two highest *tattvas* or elements. As adjectives, they mean “the first” and “the parentless,” respectively. It is said that each *tattva* is presided over by a particular *tanmātra* or Logoic keynote, although it contains the other six keynotes as well. Thus *prithivi tattva* is composed of vibratory energies which reflect the natures of all seven rays of the Logos, but it is dominated by the one that is the presiding influence of the physical world. Similarly, *apas tattva* has energies belonging to all the *tanmātras*, but the presiding *tanmātra* is different from that of the physical world. Each of the *tattvas* gives rise to one of the seven human sheaths. Each corresponds to a musical note, a color, a planet, a “Ray” of Divine Wisdom and to a thousand other things.

Q: Does the relationship of elements to sounds and colors correspond to the series of notes along the piano keyboard, or the colors of the spectrum from red to violet?

A: Not in the order you might suppose. The order of these things as we perceive them on earth is a kind of illusion, or *maya*. This order changes on the various planes (see Appendix III) and it is a very complex subject, the complete story of which cannot be divulged as it would reveal the key to the production of magical phenomena for which the world is not yet ready. All that can be said about this subject is contained in Blavatsky’s E.S. Instructions, which are included in the twelfth volume of her *Collected Writings*. If you are interested in pursuing the subject, there you can find as much as can be told. You will also find a great deal of information about the septenary division of the planets and the solar system. But the information is fragmentary and in the form of notes, so you will have to use your intuition to try to understand it.

Q: I have read before about the First, Second, and Third Logoi. Aren’t they supposed to be the Will, Wisdom, and Activity of the Solar Logos?

A: As mentioned in an earlier section, a great deal of rather misleading information has been presented in trying to describe the “Solar Logos,” its “aspects,” and its “outpourings.” In reading some of these descriptions, one may well recall a Master’s words in speaking to an early Theosophist who was unable to shake off his conditioned belief in a personal God. “Must I repeat again,” wrote the Mahatma, “that the best Adepts have searched the Universe during millenniums and

found nowhere the slightest trace of such a Machiavellian schemer—but throughout, the same immutable, inexorable law. You must excuse me if I positively decline to lose my time over such childish speculations” (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 283). An attempt to theosophize the “Lord God” of theology and set him up again in occult disguise is unwarranted. The three Logoi of which HPB spoke is the One Logos of the Universe in its three stages of emergence from the unknown darkness of Parabrahm:

There seems to be great confusion and misunderstanding concerning the First and Second Logos. The first is the already present yet still unmanifested potentiality in the bosom of Father-Mother; the second is the abstract collectivity of creators called “Demiurgi” by the Greeks or the Builders of the Universe. The *third logos* is the ultimate differentiation of the second and the individualization of Cosmic Forces, of which Fohat is the chief; for Fohat is the synthesis of the Seven Creative Rays or Dhyan Chohans which proceed from the third Logos. (*Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, p. 33)

Q: Should we accept H. P. Blavatsky as an infallible authority?

A: Absolutely not. This issue was addressed by I. K. Taimni with great clarity:

The Eternal Wisdom is a transcendent Reality which cannot be poured into a mould, preserved and then worshipped as a fetish . . . The moment its expression becomes static and is treated as a creed, to be studied religiously and followed piously, it has really become dead . . . To treat the Occult doctrines discussed in *The Secret Doctrine* as a creed and to consider what has been said in it with regard to various matters as the last word on the subject is therefore really a betrayal of the Eternal Wisdom which the book was meant to partially unveil. Let us understand this fact thoroughly . . . if we want to preserve the freshness and dynamic nature of the Wisdom which was sought to be partially revealed. (*Man, God, and the Universe*, pp. 379-80)

But there is another side to the question. We have to remember that the modern Theosophical movement owes its very existence to H. P. Blavatsky and the Masters, whose faithful agent she claimed to be. It would be extremely unwise to reject the teachings given through her without understanding what those teachings really were in the first place. And how can we acquire this understanding if we do not study her writings? We don’t have to blindly accept what she says or take her views as the last word, but at least we should become familiar with those views firsthand. Then we can reject or accept intelligently. When the works of other and later writers who claim to be continuing the work begun by Blavatsky present viewpoints and “revelations” which are at direct variance with the original lines of teaching, we may feel justified in questioning

the source of the newer pronouncements. A familiarity with the original writings, therefore, provides a criterion for intelligent judgment.

Q: But Blavatsky's writings are so hard to read.

A: They are indeed. Often students have a difficult time because they try to read Blavatsky in a vacuum. They have never heard of the various schools of Oriental philosophy, they have never read the Greek classics, and the ideas of Spinoza and Leibnitz, Descartes and Newton are unfamiliar to them. They know next to nothing of the traditions of the Kabbala, magic, and alchemy. Such students are apt to be bewildered by HPB's style, which scrambles all these together, seasons the mixture with the precious truths of the most profound esotericism, and serves it to the student as a syncretic curry which is as apt to irritate serious scholars as to flabbergast the less hearty. Nevertheless, there is method in her madness, and perseverance pays off. Scattered throughout her many writings are innumerable signposts pointing to the highest truths. The following ideas, taken from Robert Bowen's notes made from conversations with HPB, may be helpful:

It is worse than useless going to those whom we imagine to be advanced students (she said) and asking them to give us an "interpretation" of the *S.D.* They cannot do it. If they try, all they give are cut and dried exoteric renderings which do not remotely resemble the TRUTH. To accept such interpretation means anchoring ourselves to fixed ideas, whereas TRUTH lies beyond any ideas we can formulate or express . . .

Come to the *S.D.* (she says) without any hope of getting the final Truth of existence from it, or with any idea other than seeing how far it may lead TOWARDS the TRUTH. See in study a means of exercising and developing the mind never touched on by other studies . . . (*Madame Blavatsky on How to Study Theosophy*, pp. 8-9)

This mode of thinking (she says) is what the Indians call Jnana Yoga. As one progresses in Jnana Yoga, one finds conceptions arising which, though one is conscious of them, one cannot express nor yet formulate into any sort of mental pictures. As time goes on these conceptions will form into mental pictures. This is a time to be on guard and refuse to be deluded with the idea that the new found and wonderful picture must represent reality. It does not. As one works on, one finds the once admired picture growing dull and unsatisfying, and finally fading out or being thrown away. This is another danger point, because for the moment one is left in a void without any conception to support one, and one may be tempted to revive the cast-off picture for want of a better to cling to. The true student will, however, work on unconcerned, and presently further formless gleams come, which again in time give rise to a larger and more beautiful picture than the last. But the learner will now know

that no picture will ever represent the TRUTH. This last splendid picture will grow dull and fade like the others. And so the process goes on, until at last the mind and its pictures are transcended and the learner enters and dwells in the World of NO FORM, but of which all forms are narrowed reflections.

The True Student of *The Secret Doctrine* is a Jnana Yogi, and this Path of Yoga is the True Path for the Western student. It is to provide him with signposts on that Path that *The Secret Doctrine* has been written. (Ibid., 12-13)

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REFERENCES FOR SUPPLEMENTARY READING:

Blavatsky, *Collected Writings*, vol. 12. "E.S.T. Instruction IV."  
———. *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:

1. In this chapter is a list of the seven solar planes. It contains the word *astral*, used again in an entirely different way by HPB. How do you think she is using that word when she says that the planets of the solar system exist on the seventh or Prakritic plane?
2. Why is active cosmic mind awakened only at the third stage?
3. What is meant by a *plane* of consciousness?
4. Why is it important to refuse to become too tightly anchored to a mental picture of the Cosmos?
5. The following words were introduced in the past three chapters. Match the words in column A with the definitions in column B.

A	B
Manvantara	Mind.
Monad	A wheel of energy connecting the sheaths, so they can interact.
Manas	An energy structure or body which surrounds and penetrates the physical body and allows an interchange of prana, or vital energy.
Rupa	Desire, emotion, instinct.
Linga sharira	Possessing the ability to take a form or shape, or already having a shape.
Chakra	The process by which spirit/matter gradually involves itself in creation by slowly densifying matter.
Involution	The period in which there is manifestation of life cycles.
Kama	Universal Mind.
Mahat	Defined as "single unit." Can refer to Atma; also often used to mean "Atma-Buddhi, and in many writings refers to Atma-Buddhi-Manas.

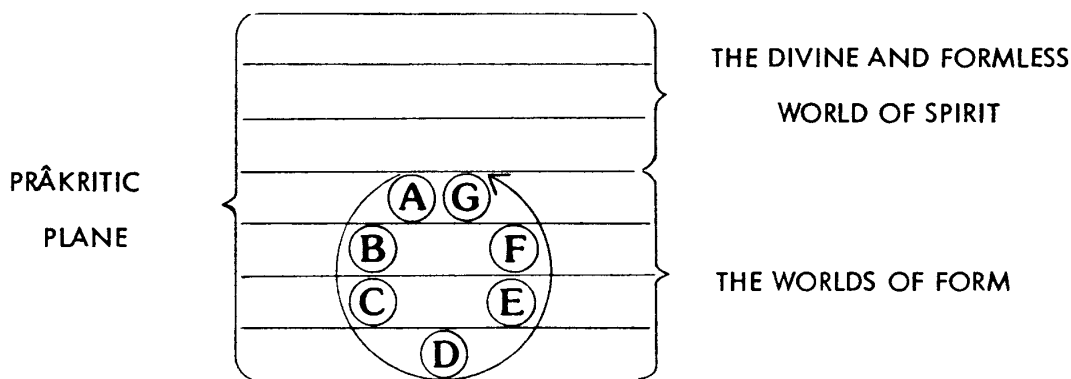


## Chapter 6

### The Scope of Planetary Evolution

It has been mentioned that the planets of our solar system exist on the four lower subdivisions of the prakritic plane of the solar cosmos. It is on the lowest of these four that our visible and tangible Earth exists. The occult teaching asserts that the evolution of the Earth is linked with that of six other planets which are found on the three planes above the lowest prakritic plane. These six invisible worlds plus our visible Earth make a total of seven globes which collectively constitute what is called a “planetary chain.” Every planetary chain in our solar system is a septenary unit consisting of seven globes and each of the visible planets that circle the sun is the coarsest and most material member of such a seven-fold chain of globes.

Figure 4



It is said that the impulse of life—the wave of evolution—moves gradually around this chain of worlds, inhabiting one globe for a period of time and then moving on to another where it continues its evolutionary journey. The first globe to be inhabited is shown as globe A in the diagram above. After spending a long period of time on that world, the life-wave with its constituent monads moves on to another world, the globe labeled B. And so the process continues by way of globe C until the life-wave has arrived at the most material of the seven, globe D, or our Earth.

As the wave of cosmic life sweeps downward through the globes, the seven human sheaths and the *tattvas*, or elements to which they belong, become more and more differentiated and acquire more material characteristics. Thus on the terrestrial plane, that of globe D, all the elements take on terrestrial aspects which will be left behind as the life-wave moves on to the next globe (E). When the life-wave finally reaches globe

G, it has returned to that level on which it began its aeonic cycle of planetary activity. This cyclical motion from the first to the seventh globe is called one “round.” It has carried the wave of life with its seven kingdoms from the highest to the lowest world and back again. We are taught that seven rounds or circuits of the planetary chain constitute the complete life cycle of our chain of worlds.<sup>9</sup> In each round up to the fourth, the same general evolution is carried out in successively more concrete stages. During the last three rounds life becomes more and more spiritual. Our life-wave is now in its fourth round, occupying the fourth globe (D) of the chain, and thus it is approximately halfway through its long evolutionary journey.

A question arises at this point: “What becomes of the life-wave when the seven rounds are completed?” Occult science answers by explaining that planetary chains, like human beings and everything else in nature, are governed by the cyclic law of death and rebirth. An active period is succeeded by a passive, resting period, followed again by another active period, and so on throughout eternity. Thus planetary chains are reborn after a period of rest, and the various monads constituting the life-wave continue to carry on their evolution on a new chain. In fact, the occult doctrine teaches that the Moon is the remnant of the fourth globe of a planetary chain that preceded ours. Each of the seven globes of our chain has such a satellite which is presently in the process of disintegration—a corpse, truly, as the life which once animated it has moved on to a more perfect and higher chain—our Earth chain. Many millions of years from now, after our chain has finished its seven rounds, the globes now constituting our chain of worlds will become “moons” of the seven new globes which will be built by the re embodying life wave.

According to occult teachings, the monads evolving on the planetary chain after passing over from the old scene of evolution—the lunar chain—are divided into seven classes.<sup>10</sup> Of these seven, the first is that which we call the *Lunar Pitris* or Fathers. The Lunar Pitris lead the other monadic classes into incarnation. They do this by passing themselves in the first round through the seven kingdoms of planetary life. In this way they actually build from within the forms of the various kingdoms before turning them over to the less progressed classes of monads.<sup>11</sup> They do this on each globe of the chain in the first round.

A certain group of the Lunar Pitris remains in human form on each globe as a “seed” for new human life in the next round. In this capacity they are known as the

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<sup>9</sup> With successive rounds the human monads pass through the seven stages of evolution described in Chapter Four.

<sup>10</sup> See Appendix II.

<sup>11</sup> Thus at the end of the life cycle on each planet, each class of monads has worked through the various kingdoms up to the terminal states shown in the table in Appendix II.



*Sishta* or “remainders.” They continue to act in this way in each round, remaining as a seed for new human life when the life-wave returns to a particular globe.

After the first round, these “Builders” (Lunar Pitris) need no longer traverse the lower kingdoms, the prototypes of the forms having already been built and needing only to develop and expand in future cycles.

The monads of the next three classes are those which reach the human stage during the first three and a half rounds, at the end of which time the “door into the human kingdom” is closed for the duration of the planetary manvantara. The monadic essence of the three other classes pursues its evolution in the animal, plant, and mineral worlds throughout the rest of this cycle.<sup>12</sup>

In addition to the seven classes of “lunar monads” who moved over to the Earth chain when the Moon chain reached the end of its life cycle, there are higher Dhyan Chohans who are active in the evolution of our world. One of these classes is the *Solar Pitris*, otherwise called the Kumaras, Agnishvattas, Lords of the Flame, Manasaputras, Asuras, and “Sons of Wisdom.” These are progressed entities of long-forgotten evolutions. They are the “fallen angels” who endow our humanity with the fire of real intelligence and self-consciousness. It is they who bring the light of self-conscious mind to our humanity. In a very special sense, they are our own Higher Egos, our “Holy Guardian Angels.”

The highest Dhyan Chohans associated with the development of our chain are known as the Sons of Will and Yoga. These great beings incarnated millions of years ago on our planet. The bodies in which they incarnated were created by mind-power, that mysterious power called *Kriyasakti* in the East. Their Chief, often called the Great Sacrifice or the One Initiator, is the Supreme Lord of evolution on earth.

As they pass from globe to globe within a given chain, the wave of human monads has to work through seven great periods of evolution called “root races” before passing on to the next globe.<sup>13</sup> Each of these “root races” is subdivided into numerous sub-races and branch races. Each monad has to pass through all of these stages, acquiring experience in every realm of human life. Each root race differentiates from the previous race, develops along its own line, gives birth to the next race, gets old, and slowly dies. In

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<sup>12</sup> See Appendix II for the progress of the monads round by round. In the present study manual, the author has followed the scheme outlined in *Theosophical Gleanings* by “Two Students of the E.S.,” a series of discourses first published in *Lucifer* under the editorship of HPB. There are, however, alternative interpretations (see Adam Warcup: *Cyclic Evolution*, Wheaton: Theosophical Publishing House, 1987).

<sup>13</sup> It is very important to note that the “root races” are not the ethnic classifications known to profane anthropology. They refer rather to the various stages of the progressive awakening of human consciousness during its sojourn on a particular planet.

other words, the monads undergo seven root races on globe A, followed by another seven on globe B, and so forth through globe G.

We have been given limited information about the root races on our planet in this our fourth round. The first race was the progeny of the Lunar Pitris who had remained on Earth while the life-wave passed around the chain and back again. This race, as well as the second, was supposed to have had giant, ethereal bodies, becoming more compact as time went on.

It was during the third root race, the Lemurian, that humankind assumed its present dense, material form about 18 million years ago. Reproduction during the early races occurred in all sorts of strange ways, the present mode of sexual intercourse being inaugurated when humanity assumed the dense material form. Before that, humans were hermaphrodites, being neither male nor female. It was during this period (third root race), with the division of the sexes, that the Solar Pitris (perfected human spirits of a past cycle) awakened the self-conscious mind in humans and made them responsible for good and evil. It is said that volcanoes and earthquakes destroyed the third race. The Lemurian civilization, which dwelt on lands now submerged beneath the Pacific and Indian Oceans, was totally destroyed.

The nucleus of new racial types, which was to become the next race, had been developing for several thousands of years. They occupied the new configuration of continents and islands produced by the cataclysmic upheavals in Lemuria and are known as the Atlanteans—the fourth root race. They developed a high civilization but one which was much less spiritual than that of Lemuria. It was the bottom of the cycle of seven root races and represented the apex of materiality. Toward the end of their period, the Atlanteans became divided into two classes—the followers of black and of white magic. The former were doomed to destruction by karma while the latter were destined to become the “seed stock” of the fifth root race—the Aryan.

The nucleus of the fifth race formed in Central Asia under the direction of the Great Ones and became distinct as a racial type about one million years ago. Atlantis perished in a series of cataclysms, the island described by Plato being the last part to go (about 11,000 years ago). The seeds of the next phase of consciousness, the sixth sub-race of the fifth root race, will emerge from the melting pot of America, it is said. Two additional root races remain to be evolved before humanity moves on to globe E at some distant time in the future.

We have seen that the evolution of form is but the reflection of the evolution of the soul-consciousness animating that form. As it passes from race to race on planet after planet on its evolutionary journey, the “Pilgrim Soul” is striving to realize its true nature. It seeks to understand itself for what it really is. It seeks to realize its identity with the Universal Life, Light, and Love, which has been called God, and to grow more

responsive to the creative power within itself. It is the accumulated experience in all the heights and depths of life that assists the Pilgrim in attaining this realization. This process of internal growth awakens little by little all the potentials of innate godliness. The analogy of a flower, unfolding as it grows, is an apt one.<sup>14</sup> The attributes of a Buddha or a Christ exist as seed-like potentialities in the Inner Self of everyone. In order that the seed of divine life might germinate and grow, it is buried in the soil of material conditions. Here the seed sprouts and gives rise to the plant, which bears finally the blossom of divinity. In the course of this growth process, one becomes an immensely powerful being, a conscious co-worker with the evolutionary process. The expansion of the faculties of the mental and spiritual natures endows humanity with divine powers of which “extrasensory perception” and “clairvoyance” are but shadowy presentiments.

As a mass, our humanity has reached only the fourth round with its accompanying stage of spiritual unfoldment. However, there are some individuals who are passing through the higher stages or rounds of life-experience, those which deal with one’s immortal nature. There are a few who are vastly ahead of most in the process of spiritual evolution. These are radiant individuals such as Gautama the Buddha and Jesus the Christ. Fully awakened to the Divine Radiance within, Jesus, the Buddha, and all those mighty personalities (Indian tradition call them “Mahatmas” or “Great Souls”) who come at different times as saviors to the many different peoples, are the Elder Brothers of the human race. They are compassionate and loving guides and teachers, tirelessly working to kindle within humanity the realization of spiritual values and ideals. They reveal the potentialities that lie within everyone.

“These things I do ye shall do also” was not an idle statement but a solemn prophecy. In the far-distant past these Great Ones had to go through experiences such as we are now encountering. There was a time when they were sinning and erring mortals like ourselves, bound to their karma, and caught in a web of suffering of their own making. But they found the path that leads to the cessation of suffering and they followed it, as every being must eventually do. The future will see every living being climb the upward path, and ultimately every victorious ego will be able to say with Jesus, “I have overcome the world” and “I and my Father are one.” The one-time human beings, now entering the ranks of the conscious gods, will begin to climb the long ladder back to the Divine Source from which they emerged. They are now Lords of Life and are to become the conscious, creative agents in the universe called in Eastern Occultism the Dhyān Chohans—the “Lords of Meditation.” The vast hierarchy of Dhyān Chohans of various grades and orders is the “heavenly host” of all sacred literature.

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<sup>14</sup> This is the symbol of the Rosicrucian Order. The rose blooming on the cross symbolizes our spiritual nature unfolding through the trials and tribulations of earth-life.

## Questions from Students

Q: I have read in some Theosophical books that the planetary chain, of which you speak, includes the planets Mars and Mercury. It is said, I believe, that we came from Mars and will go on to Mercury when we are through here.

A: That is an old controversy. Theosophists have been arguing about it for over one hundred years. In the early days of the Theosophical Society, A. P. Sinnett interpreted a passage in a letter from a Master to say that Mars and Mercury were in the Earth chain. He published this mistaken idea in *Esoteric Buddhism*, and HPB had to correct it in *The Secret Doctrine* (See 1:162-170). It is all there as she wrote it and you can read it for yourself. But Sinnett could never bring himself to accept her explanation. After HPB's death, with the help of "clairvoyants" who claimed to have visited Mars to check him out, he convinced others that his version was the correct one. At any rate, since those early days the idea has been promulgated by many Theosophists down even to the present time.

Q: Other books, I believe, have located the invisible globes of the planetary chain on the higher and lower mental and on the emotional planes.

A: This is another misconception. As HPB wrote in Section Six of *The Key to Theosophy*, each of the globes of the chain has its own subjective and objective existence, its own visible and invisible aspects. Humanity has the same seven principles when embodied on any globe of the septenary chain, but these principles are in different states on the different globes. This is a difficult subject as HPB explained: "Those alone, whom we call adepts, who know how to direct their mental vision and to transfer their consciousness—physical and psychic both—to other planes of being, are able to speak with authority on such subjects." And even these adepts "are aware how difficult it is, *even for them*, to put themselves into full rapport . . . with the planes of consciousness within our system, but differing from the states of consciousness possible on this globe; i.e., on the three planes of the chain of spheres beyond our earth" (*The Secret Doctrine*, 2:701).

Q: Some writers have said that the other globes of the planetary chain are merely the inner, invisible "principles" of our Earth.

A: This is another misunderstanding, I believe. In a letter to A. P. Sinnett, HPB affirmed that the seven globes are "scattered about" (*The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 92), whatever that may be interpreted to mean. It is wrong, really, to think of them in terms of our notions of spatial relationships. As she wrote in *Key to Theosophy*, "It is not only that their material density, weight, or

fabric are entirely different from those of our earth and the other known planets; but they are (to us) on an entirely different *layer* of space, so to speak . . . What I mean by 'layer' is that plane of infinite space which by its nature cannot fall under our ordinary waking perceptions, whether mental or physical; but which exists in nature outside of our normal mentality or consciousness, outside our three dimensional space, and outside our division of time" (p. 54).

Q: We are in the fourth chain of our cycle, are we not, and the Moon chain was the third?

A: It is generally assumed that there are seven reïmbodiments of our chain that take place during the solar manvantara. HPB did not state categorically in which of these cycles we are living. Many writers speculate that the Moon chain was the third of the series and that our Earth chain is the fourth. Another speculation would place us in the fifth, making the Moon the fourth. This conjecture, which may be traced back to an article by W. Q. Judge (*The Path*, July 1892:117-19) has been related by Geoffrey Barborka (*The Peopling of the Earth*) to the following cryptic statement contained in the Stanzas of Dzyan:

The Dhyanis came and looked . . . the Dhyanis from the bright Father-Mother, from the white (*Solar-lunar*) regions they came, from the abodes of the Immortal Mortals. (*The Secret Doctrine*, 2:55)

Displeased they were. Our flesh is not there (*they said*). [This is] no fit rupa for our brothers of the fifth. No dwellings for the lives. Pure waters, not turbid, they must drink. Let us dry them. (*Ibid.*, 2:57)

These stanzas refer to the period of time during which the foundations for human evolution in the fourth round were being laid. It is suggested that the sentence, "No fit rupa (forms) for our brothers of the fifth" refers to the fifth manvantaric reïmbodiment of our chain. Another interpretation of these words, however, may be given. We would suggest that "the fifth" refers, not to the chain cycle at all, but to the fifth creative hierarchy, which is to "enter" humanity and awaken Manas. For HPB writes, "It becomes the task of the fifth Hierarchy, the mysterious beings that preside over the constellation Capricornus, Makara, or 'Crocodile' in India as in Egypt, to inform the empty and ethereal animal form and make of it the Rational Man" (*Ibid.*, 1:233). It would seem that this interpretation of "our brothers of the fifth" is equally valid, leaving the question of the exact world-cycle unanswered. There is a strange statement in the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge* which says, "The sun is older than any of its planets though younger than the moon" (*Collected Writings*, 10:401). This would seem to suggest

that our present chain is the first of a series of seven to be evolved in a relatively new solar system! All we can do is speculate.

Q: Can you say more about the Lunar Pitris who lead the other classes of monads into incarnation?

A: They are the highest human monads from the lunar chain, the highest that move on *to our chain as humans* at any rate.

Q: Are they Dhyan Chohans?

A. They are. The advanced humanity of the lunar chain became the “creators” or “builders” of the Earth chain. So it is quite correct to say that the Lunar Pitris are Dhyan Chohans, although of a low order.

Q: I have trouble understanding, then, how they can pass through the lower kingdoms in the first round. If they are already Dhyan Chohans, how is this possible?

A: When we say they pass through the lower kingdoms in the first round we do not mean that they pass through the kingdoms as we know them today. They gather cosmic matter around themselves and throw it off again as the prototypes for the various kingdoms. The lower kingdoms develop from the “cast off clothes” of the Lunar Dhyan Chohans, if that makes any sense. The Pitris who act in this way are called the Builders.

Q: Where are they today? What has become of them?

A: It may sound odd to you, but the leading edge of our humanity belongs to the lower classes of Builders. The Masters are higher ones. The highest have already gone into nirvana.

Q: How about the ones who gave birth to the first race?

A: They are the higher ones who have gone into nirvana. They had already completed their human cycle when the life-wave left the Earth in the last round. They sacrificed themselves by remaining here while we made our circuit of the chain, and when we came back they threw off “doubles” of themselves for us to enter in the first Root Race. Then they passed on into nirvana.

Q: You say that some of us are Builders. How about the rest?

A: Our human race is composed of the first four classes of monads that came over from the lunar chain. Along with the three classes which are now animals, plants, and minerals, they make up the seven main classes. There are also relative newcomers who are the nature spirits. Those of our humanity who belong to the first class are Lunar Pitris. They assumed human form in the first round and became the leaders or the front guard of our humanity. The next class is less advanced. They emerged from the animal kingdom in the second round. The other two classes of humanity began their human incarnations in the third and fourth rounds respectively.

Q: If these latter classes became human only in the later rounds, how can they finish seven rounds on earth?

A: They do not all reach the goal in this manvantara or cycle. Some “flunk out of school,” you might say. But in the next planetary manvantara when they move on to another “chain,” they will belong to a more advanced group. It takes us several manvantaras to master being human. Why do you think the Masters are able to move so rapidly through their evolution as to reach in this fourth round the stage of inner evolution which most will attain only in the fifth round? It is because they have manvantaras of experience behind them. Many have speculated about the “inner rounds” but it comes to this: at an inner level, you may be in the fifth round while the life-wave has completed, in the outer sense, only four circuits of the chain. But you can do this only if you have accumulated enough experience in past cycles of planetary evolution that the lessons of earth life come relatively easily to you in this cycle.

Q: Then there are not actually among us monads which are passing for the fifth time around the chain of worlds?

A: There are, in fact, such monads. They have been coming into our planet for the last several thousand years. But this pertains to a different phase of the teaching, one which is profoundly esoteric. If you will study *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* and also *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, you may obtain a glimmer of the idea. Study especially, in the latter book, the notes given by HPB on the “lokas and talas,” the seven and fourteen “worlds” which collectively constitute each globe of the planetary chain.

Q: I have heard it said that the Lunar Pitris are our lower principles and not our monadic selves.

A: Many words used in the early Theosophical writings were never clearly and rigidly defined. "Pitri" is one of these words. Sometimes all the classes of monads which came from the Moon have been called "Pitris." With this use of the word, all the kingdoms are Pitris and, as there is an interblending or overlapping of all the kingdoms in us, it is permissible to say in this sense that our lower principles are animated by lower classes of Pitris while our human monads are higher classes. We borrow from all the kingdoms in building our vehicles of expression. You may complete the picture by thinking about the Solar Pitris or Manasaputras who *overshadow* our lunar monads and fire up our manas, using us as vehicles for their own evolution on a higher level.

Q: Do the Solar Pitris come from Venus? I seem to have read this somewhere.

A: Some writers have said this. However, it is not so stated in *The Secret Doctrine*. What is stated there is that the third root race, during which time the great manasic awakening occurred, was presided over by the planetary hierarchy of Venus, which rules the Higher Manas. Venus is also called the sister planet of the Earth.

Q: Where, then, do these Solar Pitris come from?

A: From planets which lived and died countless aeons ago, in another solar system perhaps. This is what HPB wrote on the subject:

After becoming a Dhyān Chohan, a man does not, according to the Law of Nature, incarnate on any of the other planetary chains of this Solar System. The whole Solar System is his home. He continues to discharge his duties in the Government of this Solar System until the time of Solar Pralaya, when his monad, after a period of rest, will have to *overshadow* in another Solar System a particular human being during his successive incarnations, and attach itself to his higher principles when he becomes a Dhyān Chohan in his turn. (*Collected Writings*, 6:248-9)

Q: Then the Solar Pitris become a part of our own constitution?

A: That is right. They are our Higher Egos. They overshadow and inform the lunar parts of us, inflaming our Manas and setting it into activity. They pass on the light of self-consciousness to us as they received it from others, and so on and on. HPB treats this subject extensively in *The Secret Doctrine*, especially in the portion on Anthropogenesis. The following passage fairly well sums it up:

It is only when, from a potential androgyne, man has become separated into male and female, that he will be endowed with this conscious, rational, individual Soul (*Manas*), 'the principle, or the intelligence, of the Elōhīm,' to



receive which, he has to eat of the fruit of Knowledge from the Tree of Good and Evil. How is he to attain all this? The Occult doctrine teaches that while the monad is cycling on downward into matter, these very Elōhīm—or Pitris, the lower Dhyani-Chohans—are evolving *pari passu* with it on a higher and more spiritual plane, descending also relatively into matter on their own plane of consciousness, when, after having reached a certain point, they will meet the incarnating senseless monad, encased in the lowest matter, and blending the two potencies, Spirit and Matter, the union will produce that terrestrial symbol of the “Heavenly Man” in space—PERFECT MAN. (*The Secret Doctrine*, 1:247)

Q: Does this passing on of the flame of Manas from the Solar Pitris to our humanity occur all at one time—once and for all—in the third root race on our planet in the fourth round?

A: No, this lighting up of the Manas is a gradual process, and the same drama is repeated on each planet. The different classes of humanity, the different grades of lunar monads, differ in their degree of progress and hence in their receptivity to the quickening influence of the Solar Pitris.

Q: Then this is why there are some “elect” who do not fall into sin?

A: Just so. The most progressed monads become, from the moment of their “quickenings,” the perfect “incarnations” of their overshadowing Dhyanis. They have “fallen” and been “redeemed” time and time again in the past and can no longer yield to the temptations of self-conscious Earth life. They become the “elect” of humanity, its guides and teachers, its masters, in short.

Q: How about the Sons of Will and Yoga? You say their bodies were created by mind power. Who did the creating?

A: The “elect” did it. That portion of the race, which having been endowed with self-consciousness did not fall into sin, and created by the union of their spiritual will a vehicle into which the highest Dhyanis could incarnate. HPB explained it this way:

It was not a Race, this progeny. It was at first a wondrous Being, called the “Initiator,” and after him a group of semi-divine and semi-human beings. “*Set apart*” in Archaic *genesis* for certain purposes, they are those in whom are said to have incarnated the highest Dhyanis, “Munis and Rishis from previous Manvantaras”—*to form the nursery for future human adepts*, on this earth and during the present cycle. These “Sons of Will and Yoga” born, so to speak, in an immaculate way, remained, it is explained, entirely apart from the rest of mankind. (*The Secret Doctrine*, 1:207)

Q: To change the subject, how does the Theosophical view of evolution relate to the Darwinian theory?

A: The Darwinian theory does not recognize the existence and overruling influence of the Builders, the creative Dhyan Chohans. It attributes the differentiation of biological forms to chance molecular interactions, the unsuitable organisms being eliminated by "natural selection" or the "survival of the fittest." Occultism, on the other hand, postulates the activity of the Builders behind it all. It is only after they have furnished the prototypes of all the kingdoms that natural selection begins to play an important part, weeding out unsuitable modifications which branch off from the original prototypes, and allowing the fit to survive. You may find *Man in Evolution* by G. de Purucker and *Evolution and Creation: A Theosophic Synthesis* by W.T.S. Thackara, both published by the Theosophical University Press, to be helpful in understanding these points.

Q: I take it you do not accept the idea that we descended from any species of ape?

A: That's right. In this round, the human form was already here when the cycle began on our planet. The Sishta had preserved it through the "obscuration," and all that was required was for them to throw off astral images of themselves, which became the bodies for those of the first root race. The monads coming in from Globe C stepped into these bodies and began their evolution.

All the mammalian species can be traced back to the first ethereal races of early humanity. The very first human stock reproduced by "division," almost as the microscopic amoeba does today. Later they exuded "buds" from themselves, which developed into new human organisms. Just as occasional "monsters" are produced in childbirth even today, some of the "buds" developed not into human beings but into other kinds of creatures which then, reproducing, gave rise to whole new species on their own pathways of evolution. This was the origin of all the various mammalian species.

During the third race, after the division of sexes but before the minds of all humankind had been awakened, some of the "mindless" ones bred with some of the early mammals and produced a stock of ape-like creatures. Later on, during the Atlantean period, others renewed the "sin of the mindless," breeding with the descendants of these first ape-like creatures. But as their minds were now awakened, they were to be held karmically responsible for their actions. At any rate, the present apes were brought into existence as the offspring of this interbreeding.

Q: That is certainly a strange idea, and it is hard to imagine science ever accepting it.

A: It is a strange teaching, no doubt. Nevertheless, it is the teaching of the Masters, and we can only wait to see if science will confirm it as it has confirmed other occult teachings.

Q: I have read somewhere about the seven creative hierarchies. It is said that humanity is the fourth, is it not?

A: This has been stated by various writers, but it is interesting to note that HPB never said this in so many words. What she did say is that the fourth hierarchy is “the nursery of the human conscious spiritual souls” (*The Secret Doctrine*, 1:218). It is easy to see how this may be interpreted to mean that humankind is the fourth hierarchy. It all hinges on the word “nursery.” You will recall that a passage was quoted above in which HPB said that the Sons of Will and Yoga formed a nursery for future human adepts. That quotation did not imply that the Sons of Will and Yoga *are* the future adepts. They were the Divine Instructors of those adepts. In the same way it seems to me that the fourth creative hierarchy is not the “human, conscious spiritual souls” but, again, the instructors and Divine Prototypes of the latter. This viewpoint receives further support from the following passage:

Arupa, formless, at the upper rung of the ladder of Being, materializing more and more as they descend in the scale of objectivity and form, ending in the grossest and most imperfect of the Hierarchy, man—it is the former purely spiritual group that is pointed out to us, in our Occult teaching, as the nursery and fountainhead of human beings. (*Collected Writings*, 14:379)

Q: And who, then are the other creative hierarchies?

A: According to this classification, which is numbered beginning with the sixth of the complete series (see Appendix III), the hierarchy we have been discussing is the fourth, the Solar Pitris are the fifth, the Lunar Pitris are the sixth, and the seventh is earthly humanity along with the lower orders of terrestrial life, the various elementals. This corresponds to the Hindu classification of the “four bodies of Brahma.” These have been explained as “gods, demons, pitris, and men.” The gods are the higher Dhyān Chohans. The demons are the Solar Pitris, the “fallen angels,” who fire up self-consciousness in humanity and make humans responsible agents for good and evil. The Lunar Pitris are monads who have passed beyond the animal kingdom but who have yet to realize the full promise of humanity and the last is earthly or animal humanity and the subhuman elementals.

It may perhaps help you to think of all these hierarchies as different levels of one stream of consciousness. Separate in one sense, each with its own set of “principles,” they yet interpenetrate and unite together to make us the complex beings we are today. Thus we take from the seventh hierarchy our terrestrial and elemental aspects. This is animated by the form-creating aspect, i.e., the evolving human awareness of the lunar monads (sixth hierarchy) which, in turn, is informed by the fully self-conscious and intellectual aspect (fifth hierarchy) and overshadowed by the archetypal and spiritual aspect (fourth hierarchy). In this sense humanity is a composite of all the hierarchies.

Q: You confused me when you mentioned the elementals. I thought they preceded the mineral kingdom.

A: “Elemental” is another vague word. In its broadest sense, it includes all the lower orders of life. In this sense HPB wrote, “no units of either of the kingdoms are animated any longer by monads destined to become human in their next stage, but only by the lower Elementals of their respective realms,” adding that “these ‘Elementals’ will become human monads, in their turn, only at the next great planetary Manvantara” (*The Secret Doctrine*, 1:184). The door has been closed to their future progress in this our cycle. But you are right. In its more limited sense the term *elemental* does refer to the three kingdoms of involving life, the kingdoms which precede the mineral and which have been called nature spirits.

Q: How do we distinguish between the nature spirits of which you speak and the devas who are supposed to constitute an evolution parallel to our own? I have read that they come from certain species like birds and insects and develop into angels from fairies and such.

A: I would remind you that this study is based on the teachings as given by HPB, and she nowhere mentions a parallel evolution of the kind described by other and later writers. On the contrary, she affirmed that all spiritual intelligences in the universe either have been or are progressing toward becoming human. This is what she wrote pertaining to this matter:

Each of these Beings either *was*, or prepares to become, a man, if not in the present, then in a past or a coming cycle (Manvantara). They are *perfected*, when not *incipient*, men . . . As from the Highest Archangel (Dhyan Chohan) down to the last conscious “Builder” (the inferior class of Spiritual Entities) all such are *men*, having lived aeons ago, in other Manvantaras, on this or other Spheres; so the inferior, semi-intelligent and non-intelligent Elementals—are all *future* men. That fact alone—that a Spirit is endowed with intelligence—is a

proof to the Occultist that that Being must have been a *man*, and acquired his knowledge and intelligence throughout the human cycle. (Ibid., 1:275-77)

In other words, the life-stream has to pass through the human stage at some point. It has been argued that “humanity” means any self-conscious being and that if a parallel kingdom of “devas” becomes self-conscious somewhere along the way, there is no contradiction. From a theoretical point of view this may be true, but we should at least take note of the fact that the teachings of HPB did not *explicitly* include this idea.

Q: You say that the third root race flourished eighteen million years ago. When did the first root race begin?

A: The time of the beginning of the first race is not given in *The Secret Doctrine*. All that is given there is the figure of eighteen million years, of which HPB wrote the following:

This duration covers only Vaivasvata-Manu *Man*, i.e., the male and female entity already separated into distinct sexes. The two and a half Races that preceded that event may have lived 300,000,000 years ago for all that science can tell. (Ibid., 2:148-49)

A previously unpublished manuscript in the handwriting of HPB, evidently written four years before the publication of *The Secret Doctrine*, would seem to suggest a somewhat later date for the third race and would make the eighteen million year figure reach back all the way to the first race. It is difficult to decide, however, how much reliance should be placed in the figures contained in the early manuscript since *The Secret Doctrine* contains not only one but many statements to the effect that the eighteen million years is counted from a point of time during the third race up to the present. Students interested in the chronology of the world cycles as contained in the 1884 manuscript are referred to *The Peopling of the Earth* by Geoffrey Barboroka. (See also *Collected Writings* 13:301-6.)

REFERENCES FOR SUPPLEMENTARY READING:

Sinnett, *Esoteric Buddhism*, chs. 3 "The Planetary Chain," 4 "The World Period," 7 "The Human Tide-Wave," and 8 "The Progress of Humanity."

Two Students, *Theosophical Gleanings*.

Van Pelt, *Man's Divine Parentage and Destiny*.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:

1. Who were the Builders? What did they build and how?
2. What is a Chain and what is a Round?
3. At what stage of evolution is our present mankind now in regard to the seven Globes and the seven Rounds in our Chain?
4. Approximately how old is physical man on our planet?
5. What is a Fallen Angel? In what way is it "Fallen"?
6. There are vast differences among mankind regarding intellect, temperaments, capacities, etc. Usually we can account for this in terms of karma from the actions (positive and negative) in past lives that developed intellect, artistic talent, etc. This chapter introduces another explanation that helps account for differences. What is it?
7. In the "questions and answers" section of this chapter, reference is made to monads that "flunk out of school." This is referred to in the Bible as the Day of Judgment, and has caused a great deal of problems in beliefs. Does "flunk out of school" sound better to you? What happens to humans who "flunk"? Are they lost forever, as some people believe happens at Judgment Day?
8. How does the occult theory of evolution differ from the Darwinian theory?

## Chapter 7

### The Path of Initiation

The process by which individuals learn to take their own evolution in hand and to proceed consciously into higher levels of spiritual unfoldment has been called the "Path." Seekers may enter the more advanced stages of the Path when they have progressed to that point in evolution where the desire arises for liberation from the wheel of birth and death. Until this desire arises, the necessary drive is missing that will lead upward and onward toward the final consummation. The ordeals and lessons learned along the Path have as their object the perfecting of the complete septenary nature of a person. The triad (Auric Envelope, Buddhi, and Higher Manas) is to become the perfect vehicle for the overshadowing Spirit. At the same time, the lower quaternary (Lower Manas, Kama, Linga Sharira, and Sthula Sharira) is to become the perfect vehicle of the triad. The pivotal element on which these higher stages of evolution hinge is Manas in both its lower and higher aspects, since it is in this aspect of our being that the quaternary meets the triad. In *The Voice of the Silence*, a Theosophical classic in which the stages of the Path are set forth, the aspirant is counseled:

Before that path is entered, thou must destroy thy lunar body, cleanse thy mind body, and make clean thy heart. (p. 12)

The "lunar body" that is to be "destroyed" refers to the carnal desires and mortal senses which bind the ego to mortal existence. The cleansing of the "mind body" refers to the purification of mind, which has two phases:

1. On the lower mental level, the matter-of-fact, everyday, conscious mind must be disengaged from the appetites and senses and united with its parent-mind—the higher mental nature which contains the accumulated mental impressions from all past existences. When this process is completed the "corruptible is raised up incorruptible." The mundane personality becomes one with the undying individuality.
2. On the higher mental level, the realm of the egoic mind or reincarnating intelligence, Manas, must become more and more radiant (Tajjasi) with the light of wisdom, Buddhi.

The mind has been referred to as a mirror. Just as a mirror may collect dust and thus reflect a distorted image, so the mind may fail to perfectly reflect the image of the Resplendent Lord of which it is the vehicle. The mind must therefore be cleansed and polished so that it becomes a perfect reflector of its Inner God. The cleansing process is necessarily painful. It is the "sorting of the sheep and the goats"—i.e., the separation of

those elements that are worthy to be taken into eternity from those which are not suited to soar higher than the earthly plane to which they belong. For this reason, no sooner does one set their feet on the Path than it becomes necessary to face oneself honestly. Whatever karmic skeletons may be shut up within the closets of the forgotten past must be revealed. Those aspects of the personality and character which require further cultivation must be worked upon. The roots of unwholesome conduct—delusion, anger, and greed—must be understood and annihilated. The roots of wholesome conduct—wisdom, loving-kindness, and self-sacrifice—must be quickened and brought to active life.

The Buddha's Four Noble Truths set forth a framework in which the Path may be understood. The first Noble Truth says that all life is unsatisfactory. Whipped about by delusion, greed, and anger, human life is a perpetual series of ups and downs with the downs in the majority. *The Voice of the Silence* describes this poignantly:

Behold the Hosts of Souls. Watch how they hover o'er the stormy sea of human life, and how exhausted, bleeding, broken-winged, they drop one after another on the swelling waves. Tossed by the fierce winds, chased by the gale, they drift into the eddies and disappear within the first great vortex. (p. 9)

The second Noble Truth is the insight that all this suffering has a cause, and this cause is desire or craving, having its root in ignorance. The third Noble Truth proclaims that by overcoming this ignorance, the wheel of birth and death may be brought to a halt. The fourth Truth sets out the Noble Eightfold Path to achieve this goal. This Path is as follows:<sup>15</sup>

1. Right Understanding or Knowledge  
(The first step, and the basis from which all others must follow, or we will go astray.)
2. Right Aspiration  
(The will to attain, based on self-discipline and inner intuitive vision.)
3. Right Speech  
(Shun gossip, slander, abuse of others, and foolish talk; be truthful and kind in all you say.)
4. Right Action or Conduct  
(Let each action be guided by the inner law of Love, Compassion, and Wisdom.)
5. Right Livelihood  
(Engage in work which injures no one, human or any other living creature.)
6. Right Effort  
(Apply one's strength and energy, with understanding, to wise and useful purposes.)

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<sup>15</sup> The comments added in parentheses are taken from *Buddhism for the West* by Dorothy C. Donath.



7. Right Mindfulness  
(In every activity of life.)
8. Right Meditation or Contemplation

By living according to these standards, the aspirant is cleansed, regenerated, and gradually liberated from the fetters preventing liberation and enlightenment. As disciples become freed from the fetters, innumerable virtues arise within them. In Mahayana Buddhism, the primary virtues are called the Paramitas or “perfections.” These are tabulated in *The Voice of the Silence* as follows: (pp. 52-3).<sup>16</sup>

1. Charity and love immortal
2. Harmony in word and act
3. Patience sweet that naught can ruffle
4. Indifference to pleasure and pain
5. Dauntless energy that fights its way to supernal TRUTH
6. Ceaseless contemplation
7. Penetrating insight or perfect wisdom

Progress along the Path eventually leads to contact with a Teacher who is to initiate the aspirant into the mysteries of the inner Self. Written words cannot express the sacredness of the relationship between the disciple and the Master or Guru. H. P. Blavatsky spoke of her Teacher in the following words, which give perhaps a glimmer of the guru-chela relationship:

I venerate the Masters and worship MY Master—the sole creator of my inner self which but for His calling it out, awakening it from its slumber, would have never come to conscious being—not in this life, at all events . . . (*The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 104)

The Guru is often referred to as a father who gives new birth to the regenerated person. This idea is expressed as follows in *The Voice of the Silence*:

Seek for him who is to give thee birth in the Hall of Wisdom, the Hall which lies beyond, wherein all shadows are unknown, and where the light of truth shines with unfading glory. (p. 8)

Besides the assistance of the embodied, living Guru, there is another and higher Master with whom the aspirant must come into intimate contact in the higher stages of the journey. This Master is the Solar Pitri who first kindled the flame of Manas and who will initiate the aspirant into the mysteries of the Macrocosm. The highest and greatest Master is Atma, the God within—the ray of the Divine Logos.

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<sup>16</sup> Most sources list six or ten paramitas.

As they progress in their journey along the Path, aspirants pass through a series of “initiations” which mark the stages of their Pilgrimage.<sup>17</sup> Although there are countless more or less minor initiations, esoteric teaching speaks of four major ones which are of great importance as they mark the final four steps toward spiritual victory. In the Buddhist teachings, these initiations are described as the four “Paths” leading to nirvana. The first initiation is that in which the aspirant “enters the stream.” The disciple, called at this time *Srotapatti* or “stream-enterer,” is beginning to move down the “home-stretch” of spiritual attainment. From the moment of entering the stream, it is taught, the candidate for spiritual conquest has but seven more obligatory earth lives. The next initiation is that of the *Sakridagamin*, the “once-returned.” The final life on earth will be a life of trial—the final trial which, once passed, will lead beyond this veil of tears called earth to spiritual vistas hitherto unknown. There is an interesting double meaning in the title *Sakridagamin*, “he who is to receive birth.” Not only does it refer to the final life of trial, that of the “suffering servant,” but it refers to the “new birth” to be received. The suffering Christos is to be reborn as the triumphant, glorified Christos. The Adept, receiving new birth, becomes an *Anagamin*—“he who is no more reborn” unless voluntarily for the sake of humanity. The Hindu equivalent is a *Jivanmukta*, meaning a “liberated soul.”

The three initiations which have been described find their parallel in many systems. Freemasons have their Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and Master Mason initiations, the last of which preserves the mystery of mystical death and rebirth implicit in the *Anagamin* initiation. The Martinists similarly have three degrees of initiation, reflecting the ancient tradition. The third initiation is sometimes referred to as the last, not because it is really the last—for there are other and greater summits which may be reached—but because it is the last to be received by the “old” man or personality. The Adept, now reborn as Perfect Master, begins life anew from this point onward. The Initiate must now choose whether to progress on toward the goal free and clear of the suffering of earth, or to remain with humanity, voluntarily reincarnating again and again for the sake of humankind. The fourth, or *Arhat* initiation, can be attained either way. One who remains “in the world but not of the world,” voluntarily reincarnating, becomes what is called in Northern Buddhism a “Bodhisattva.” Because such a one remains with and helps humanity along its way, the Bodhisattva is regarded as superior to one who moves onward in the realms of spirit to liberation or Pratyeka Buddhahood, the state of the so-called “selfish Buddha.” The Bodhisattva becomes, later on, a “perfect Buddha,” whose state of perfect Enlightenment far transcends the more limited goal of liberation or nirvana. As vision awakens and grows on the higher planes of the cosmos, the Pratyeka Buddha is able to reach in full consciousness the third solar plane—the

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<sup>17</sup> The Dark Adepts or “Brothers of the Shadow” have a parallel system of initiation by which they become co-workers with the destructive side of Nature but we shall not speak further of it here.

jivic—but the vision of such a lofty one stops there. Only the Buddhas of Compassion can soar beyond, the Teachers affirm.

In the ordinary course of evolution, humanity will reach the state of full spiritual responsibility during the fifth great round of evolution. A critical time of great trial will mark the transition to that state, and those who survive the trials will be a new “reborn” humanity. Those who are unable to keep up with the others are the “failures” of this manvantaric cycle. They will have to wait until a new manvantara to continue along their way. This period during the fifth round has been referred to as a “judgment day,” as it brings to mind the allegories of the Christian and other religions, which speak of such an event.<sup>18</sup> Those who attain Mastership before that time, prematurely so to speak, are those who lead and watch over the human race or who, choosing the way of liberation, move onward in spirit toward nirvana.

It is commonly but erroneously believed that, once Mastership is attained, the Adept is free from rebirth throughout the manvantaric cycle. This is not true. The Adept who has passed prematurely through the trials of the fifth round has merely, in the words of a Master, “learned how to burst through the vicious cycles—and to pass periodically into the Paranirvana” (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 358). Doing so, such a person “attains in the interim the wisdom of an Arhat, then that of a Buddha and thus gets relieved of a round or two” (*Ibid.*). When spiritual rebirth has become the common lot of humanity in the fifth round, such advanced Adepts will once more reincarnate along with their fellows who have now caught up. If they have attained Buddhahood (an achievement to be obtained by the masses only in the sixth round), then they must reincarnate along with the sixth round humanity when that time comes. In the meantime, they have earned the right to nirvana if they choose to accept it. If not, they remain and work to uplift humanity.

There exist seven classes (Rays) or groups of Masters, each of which is headed by a particular Chohan or superior adept. The vast majority of the Masters belong to five of these “Rays,” as they are called. The other two Rays are very mysterious and their representatives appear only rarely. These seven classes are referred to by T. Subba Row as follows:

Every class of adepts has its own bond of spiritual communion which knits them together . . . The only possible and effectual way of entering into such brotherhood . . . is by bringing oneself within the influence of the spiritual light which radiates from one’s own Logos. I may further point out here . . . that such communion is only possible between persons whose souls derive their life and substance from the same divine RAY, and that, as seven distinct rays emanate

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<sup>18</sup> This is not to be confused with the “Last Judgment” which takes place at the completion of all seven rounds (*The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, pp. 326-7)

from the “Central Spiritual Sun,” all adepts and Dhyan Chohans are divisible into seven classes, each of which is guided, controlled, and over-shadowed by one of the seven forms or manifestations of the divine Wisdom. (*T. Subba Row Collected Writings*, 2:406)

Figure 5

RAY	CHARACTERISTIC OF RAY	CHARACTERISTIC MAGIC	LAST RELIGION
I	FOHAT, SHECHINAH	*	BRAHMANICAL
II	WISDOM	RAJA YOGA (HUMAN MIND)	BUDDHISM
III	AKASHA	ASTROLOGY (NATURAL MAGNETIC FORCES)	CHALDEAN
IV	BIRTH OF HORUS	HATHA YOGA (PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT)	EGYPTIAN
V	FIRE	ALCHEMY (MATERIAL SUBSTANCES)	ZOROASTRIAN
VI	INCARNATION OF DEITY	BHAKTI (DEVOTION)	CHRISTIANITY, (KABALA, ETC.)
VII	*	CEREMONIAL MAGIC	ELEMENTAL WORSHIP

A great deal of foolishness has been written and taught about the Rays and a great deal of imagination has been utilized to fill in gaps which were intentionally left out of the explanations given to early students. The most authoritative and suggestive statements on this subject—vague and cryptic as they are—are contained in the notes made on instructions given by T. Subba Row to a group of students in the early years. These notes have been published in *T. Subba Row Collected Writings* (2:415-49).

Figure 5 is a brief and very sketchy table of the Rays which is said to have been given by one of the Masters to some of the early members of the Theosophical Society (*The Masters and the Path*, p. 229).

There are many grades and degrees of Mastership. There are Masters living on earth and there are Masters who for the time being are working between incarnations in the spiritual realm. Another mode of work, available to the highest Initiates, is the use of the so-called Nirmanakaya vesture. HPB describes this as the “ethereal form which one would assume when, leaving the physical, he would appear in his astral body—having in addition all the knowledge of an adept” (*Voice of the Silence*, p. 77). She continues her explanation as follows:

The Bodhisattva develops it in himself as he proceeds on the path. Having reached the goal and refused its fruition, he remains on earth, as an Adept; and when he dies, instead of going into Nirvana, he remains in that glorious body he has woven for himself, invisible to uninitiated mankind, to watch over and protect it. (Ibid.)

The Nirmanakayas work in a number of mysterious ways. Some form around themselves an illusory material form which they can use for work in the world. Others actually reincarnate, taking either an ordinary birth or reanimating the just-deceased body of another. Others “overshadow” from time to time selected sympathetic individuals who thus become their instruments in helping humanity. It would appear for example, from certain cryptic remarks made by HPB, that W. Q. Judge, one of the founders of the Theosophical Society, was overshadowed by such a Nirmanakaya (*William Quan Judge: A Theosophical Pioneer*, p. 19).

It is in this mysterious teaching that the true explanation of the “reincarnating lamas” of Tibet is to be found. One of the most mysterious things about the Nirmanakayas is that the “phantom body” which remains in the world watching over humankind and acting in this way may be only the terrestrial symbol of the true individual—the monad-ego that is—who has already entered Nirvana. Gautama Buddha, it is affirmed, is the highest Nirmanakaya known to humanity. The story of his manifestations or “reincarnations,” as they have been rather misleadingly called, after his attainment of Nirvana is one of the most recondite mysteries of occultism. A fuller, but still incomplete, discussion of this mystery is contained in the papers of HPB which were published after her death as the third volume of *The Secret Doctrine*.

Seven Buddhas who represent the second “Ray” appear at rare intervals during the evolution of humanity on a planet. Gautama Buddha was the fourth of this series. Gautama, as mentioned earlier, was a sixth round man and represents the type which will be the common heritage of humankind when the life-wave has passed twice more around our chain of worlds. Maitreya, the next Buddha to appear, is expected in the

sixth root-race. This great being is identified with the Kalki Avatar of the Hindus who is to appear at the end of the present dark age and to inaugurate a new era of Light.

At considerably longer intervals even greater beings representing the first “Ray” appear among humanity. A Master describes the appearance of these great beings as follows:

These appear on Earth but at the origin of every *new* human kind; at the junction of, and close of the two ends of the great cycle. And they remain with man no longer than the time required for the eternal truths they teach to impress themselves so forcibly upon the plastic minds of the new races as to warrant them from being lost or entirely forgotten in ages hereafter, by the forthcoming generations. The mission of the planetary Spirit is but to strike the KEY NOTE OF TRUTH. Once he has directed the vibration of the latter to run its course uninterruptedly along the catenation of that race and to the end of the cycle—the denizen of the highest inhabited sphere disappears from the surface of our planet—till the following “resurrection of flesh.” (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 59-60)

According to T. Subba Row, when such a Great One has passed away the power of the first Ray remains on earth as a substitute for himself. This Presence manifests in a number of different ways ministering to the spiritual needs of humanity. One of these is the “still small voice” which is heard by the aspirant at a certain stage of progress along the Path. Another is that which overshadows certain great Adepts and works through them for a time. Tradition affirms that the Master Jesus was so overshadowed for the three years of his ministry. Another manifestation of the Presence of the planetary spirit is an overshadowing ray which continually expresses itself through the current highest Chohan on the planet. The reader is referred to the notes on oral teachings by T. Subba Row. It may be hinted that there is a connection between these mysteries and that concerning the Buddha which was described by HPB. It is this mystery which, fully understood one day, will explain the mysterious connection between the esoteric or “heart doctrine” of Gautama Buddha, the Advaita Vedanta of Sri Sankaracharya, and the innermost mysteries of Christianity.

### Questions from Students

Q: I always thought that a Master was someone who had passed the Fifth Initiation.

A: “Master” is a relative term, of course. But if you define a Master as one who, for the time being, is exempt from earthly incarnation except on a voluntary basis, then this stage is attained at the third or Anagamin Initiation. This was clearly stated by HPB when she wrote “the third is called Anagamin, ‘he who will be

reincarnated no more', unless he so desires in order to help mankind" (*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 50). In another place she wrote:

In order to become a "perfect One," the Sakridagamin ("he who will receive new birth," lit.) had, among other trials, to descend into Patala, the "nether world," after which process only he could hope to become an "Anagamin" — "one who will be reborn no more." (*Collected Writings*, 7:276)

The next step beyond the Anagamin is the Arhat. "The Arhan," wrote HPB, "though he can see the Past, the Present, and the Future, is not yet the highest Initiate; for the Adept himself, the initiated candidate, becomes chela (pupil) to a higher Initiate. Three further grades have to be conquered by the Arhan who would reach the apex of the ladder of Arhatship" (*The Secret Doctrine*, 1:206). So, you see, from our vantage point it is very unwise to dogmatize about the various levels or degrees of occult initiation. Even a high chela, though at a level far removed from a full Mahatma, would appear to us as a "Master." In discussing these things we are like children in elementary school wondering about what goes on in college or even beyond that in the grades and degrees of graduate school.

Q: But all these things are well known, are they not? I have read descriptions of the various initiation ceremonies, of their presiding officials, the "rods of power" which are used, etc. Can you add anything to these descriptions?

A: Nothing save to urge you to try to forget all about what you have read and thought you understood and believed. Don't you see that the details of real, esoteric initiation will never be published in books? The best advice that can be given to those desiring to make true spiritual progress is to "first deserve, then desire intimacy with the Mahatmas." Cultivate the virtues, remain humble, study the lives and teachings of the world's adepts, do your work, and treat others as you would be treated yourself. The homely Golden Rule is worth its weight in "initiations" and degrees and ceremonies and its application will do more for the true aspirant than a thousand "rods of initiation" whether charged on Venus or Sirius.

Q: I had thought that the Rays had been fairly well characterized. Now you tell me that very little is known about them.

A: Less even than about the initiations, and we know next to nothing about those. Many people think they know all about the Rays. When they see a bossy, pushy person they say, "Oh, he is a First Ray person" or when they see a teacher they say, "She is on the Second Ray." But surely you must see that this is too simple

and easy. If you really want to learn about the Rays—and even then you won't know very much until you get yourself really initiated—study the little table given on one of the preceding pages and the cryptic notes on T. Subba Row's oral teachings. Another source is the description of the Shaktis or powers in nature given by the same writer and quoted by HPB in *The Secret Doctrine*. These, HPB assures us, are the names of the hierarchies of Dhyan Chohans or the "Rays" which emanate from the Central Spiritual Sun. Study also, in this connection, the five "buddha families," as they are called in Mahayana Buddhism, and the attributes associated with the five "Dhyani Buddhas" who preside over these families. Put all these things together and meditate on them and you can evolve for yourself an understanding of the Rays which will be a closer approximation to the truth of the matter than anything that has been written.

Q: I had always identified the Christ with the second Ray, the same as the Buddha. But you seem to associate him with the first.

A: That is right, Christos is the first ray "Presence." Many people identify Christ either with the Master Jesus or with a particular individual on the second ray, Maitreya, the future Buddha of the sixth root race, whom they call the "World Teacher." This individual, they say, occupied the body of Jesus for the three years of his ministry. They expect him to reappear, and many Theosophists, in the early decades of this century, expected him to manifest through the body of a young Indian boy who was "prepared" for that purpose. There is, however, good reason to believe that the Christ Spirit which manifested for three years through the Initiate Jesus (who himself might have belonged to any Ray) was no living adept but a power, a principle. This power, according to T. Subba Row, was the active, earthly reflex, the manifested Presence, of a high spiritual being, the "planetary" of the first Ray, who set the current of evolution going in the first root race and then later on entered nirvana. Some sects of Chinese Buddhism call this great being Amitabha Buddha and picture him as ruling over a celestial paradise. His active power on earth, his Presence here while he himself is in nirvana, they call Avalokitesvara. (You must be careful here not to confound Amitabha and Avalokitesvara used in this sense with the use of the same words in a cosmological sense to describe Parabrahm and the Logos. To do so would be to make the same mistake as is made by the Christians in identifying the earthly man Christ with the "first-born" Christ, the Logos of cosmogenesis.)

Q: What can I do to prepare myself for walking along the "Path?"



A: HPB once gave to her students a paragraph which sets out some of the characteristics of a disciple who is treading the Path. Perhaps it would be a fitting way to close this series of lessons:

A clean life, an open mind, a pure heart, an eager intellect, an unveiled spiritual perception, a brotherliness for all, a readiness to give and receive advice and instruction; a courageous endurance of personal injustice, a brave declaration of principles, a valiant defense of those who are unjustly attacked, and a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection which the sacred science depicts. These are the golden stairs, up the steps of which the learner may climb to the Temple of Divine Wisdom.

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REFERENCES FOR SUPPLEMENTARY READING:

Collins, *Light on the Path*.

Blavatsky, *Voice of the Silence*.

Hanson, *An Introduction to the Mahatma Letters*, chs. 1 “What is a Mahatma?” and 5 “Probation and Chelaship.”

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:

1. Why should one be very careful to take into account the context within which such words as *astral*, *monad*, etc. are used, who the author is, and how he/she used the terms?
2. What is meant by the Path?
3. Why is Manas the pivotal principle in man?
4. How does a Master differ from an ordinary person?
5. What are the roots of wholesome and unwholesome conduct?

## Source Materials

It is hoped that a perusal of these pages has stimulated the reader to dig into the original source materials that were produced in such abundance during the early years of the Theosophical Society. These books are a priceless treasure, an invaluable heritage, and an intensive study of their contents will open before the reader's eyes a glimpse into the Temple of Divine Wisdom. The following books are especially recommended for study. See the Bibliography for further details.

A. Trevor Barker, comp.

*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*

H. P. Blavatsky

*Isis Unveiled*

*Collected Writings*

*The Secret Doctrine*

*The Key to Theosophy*

*The Voice of the Silence*

*A Theosophical Glossary*

*Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*

*The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*

*The Inner Group Teachings of H. P. Blavatsky*

Mabel Collins

*Light on the Path*

*Through the Gates of Gold*

*Idyll of the White Lotus*

Franz Hartmann

*Magic*

*Paracelsus*

*The Doctrines of Jacob Boehme*

*Among the Rosicrucians*

*The Life of Jehoshua*

C. Jinarajadasa, comp.

*Letters from the Masters of Wisdom*

W. Q. Judge

*The Ocean of Theosophy*

*Echoes of the Orient (3 vols.)*

*Letters That Have Helped Me*

T. Subba Row

*T. Subba Row Collected Writings*

A. P. Sinnett

*The Occult World*  
*Esoteric Buddhism*

Two Students

*Theosophical Gleanings*

Claude Falls Wright

*Modern Theosophy*

The materials listed below are out of print but will be well worth the price of locating:

Mohini Chatterjee, editor

*Five Years of Theosophy*

“Two Chelas”

*Man: Fragments of a Forgotten History*

Theosophical Journals \*

*The Theosophist*  
*Lucifer*  
*The Path*

\* These journals are stored at the Henry S. Olcott Memorial Library of the national center of the Theosophical Society in America in Wheaton, Illinois. Photocopies of specific articles are available from the library at a nominal cost.

## Appendix I

### The Seven Principles Alternative Divisions of the Human Constitution

#### 7th principle—Atma (Spirit)

The human immortal Monads—the Atma, or the irradiating Spirit of every creature of the human family. (*The Secret Doctrine*, 1:120)

As many men on earth, so many Gods in Heaven; and yet these Gods are in reality ONE, for at the end of every period of activity, they are withdrawn, like the rays of the setting sun, into the Parent Luminary, the Non-Manifested Logos, which in turn is merged into the One Absolute. (*Collected Writings*, 12:533)

Atma neither progresses, forgets, nor remembers. It does not belong to this plane: it is but the ray of light eternal which shines upon and through the darkness of matter—when the latter is willing. (*The Secret Doctrine*, 1:244)

#### 6th principle—Buddhi (Spiritual Soul)

Cosmic Ideation focussed in a principle or *upādhi* (basis) results as the consciousness of the individual Ego. Its manifestation varies with the degree of *upādhi* . . . through that known as *Manas* it wells up as Mind-consciousness; through the more finely differentiated fabric (sixth state of matter) of *Buddhi* resting on the experience of *Manas* as its basis—as a stream of spiritual INTUITION. (*Ibid.*, 1:329n)

*Buddhi* is but a mirror which *reflects* absolute bliss . . . *that reflection* itself is yet not free from ignorance, and is *not* the Supreme Spirit, being subject to conditions, being a spiritual modification of *Prakriti* and an effect; *Atma* alone is the one real and eternal . . . “the One Witness.” (*Ibid.*, 1:570)

The Sixth Principle in man (*Buddhi*, the Divine Soul) though a mere breath, in our conceptions, is still something material when compared with divine “Spirit” (*Atma*) of which it is the carrier or vehicle. *Fohat* . . . is shown allegorically as trying to bring the pure Spirit, the Ray inseparable from the ONE absolute, into union with the Soul, the two constituting in man the MONAD. (*Ibid.*, 1:119)

It may be wrong on strictly metaphysical grounds to call Atma-Buddhi a MONAD, since in the materialistic view it is dual and therefore compound. But . . . since the Universe and the Deity which informs it are unthinkable apart from each other, so in the case of Atma-Buddhi. (Ibid., 1:179)

“A Dhyani has to be an Atma-Buddhi; once the Buddhi-Manas breaks loose from its immortal Atma of which it (Buddhi) is the vehicle, Atman passes into NON-BEING, which is absolute Being.” (Ibid., 1:193)

## 5th principle—Manas (Human Soul)

Divine Wisdom being diffused throughout the infinite Universe, and our impersonal HIGHER SELF being an integral part of it, the *atmic* light of the latter can be centered only in that which though eternal is still individualized—*i.e.*, the noetic Principle, the manifested God within each rational being, or our Higher *Manas* at one with *Buddhi*. (“The Dual Aspect of Wisdom.” *Lucifer*, September 1890, p. 4)

The Human Soul, Manas . . . is dual . . . These, then, are what we call the two principles or aspects of *Manas*, the higher and the lower; the former, the higher Manas, or the thinking, conscious EGO gravitating toward the spiritual Soul (Buddhi); and the latter, or its instinctual principle, attracted to *Kama*, the seat of animal desires and passions in man. (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 73)

It is Manas . . . which is the real incarnating and permanent *Spiritual Ego*, the INDIVIDUALITY, and our various and numberless personalities only its external masks. (Ibid., p. 83n)

It is that Ego, that “Causal Body” which overshadows every personality Karma forces it to incarnate into; and this Ego which is held responsible for all the sins committed through, and in, every new body or personality—the evanescent masks which hide the true Individual through the long series of rebirths. (Ibid., pp. 83-4)

Since Manas, in its lower aspect, is the seat of the terrestrial mind, it can, therefore, give only that perception of the Universe which is based on the evidence of that mind; it cannot give spiritual vision. (Ibid., p. 100)

If it can be said of Buddhi-Manas that it is unconditionally immortal, the same cannot be said of the lower Manas . . . Manas is, in its lower aspect, a qualitative attribute of the terrestrial personality. (Ibid., p. 100)

In its purely metaphysical aspect, Manas, being again one remove (on the downward plane) from Buddhi, is still so immeasurably higher than the physical man that it cannot enter in direct relation with the personality, except through its reflection, the lower mind . . . Buddhi Manas . . . is entirely unfit to manifest during its periodical incarnations, except through the human mind, or lower Manas . . . It is, therefore, the task of the lower Manas, or thinking personality, if it would blend itself with its God, the Divine Ego, to dissipate and paralyze the . . . properties of the material form. (*Collected Writings*, 12:630-31)

#### 4th principle—Kama Rupa (Animal Soul)

The two higher principles *can have no individuality on earth*, cannot be *man*, unless there is (a) the Mind, the *Manas-Ego*, to recognize itself, and (b) the terrestrial *false* personality, or the body of egotistical desires and personal Will, to cement the whole, as if round a pivot (which it is truly) to the physical form of man. (*The Secret Doctrine*, 2:241)

Kama rupa . . . the seat of animal desires and passions . . . this is the center of the animal man, where lies the line of demarcation which separates the mortal man from the immortal entity. (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 56)

. . . the principle of animal desire, which burns fiercely during life in matter, resulting in satiety; it is inseparable from animal existence. (*The Secret Doctrine*, 2:593)

. . . the most dangerous and treacherous of the Principles. (*Paradoxes of the Highest Science*, p. 123n)

To get rid of Kama we must crush out all our material instincts—“crush out matter.” The flesh is a thing of habit; it will repeat mechanically a good impulse as well as a bad one. (*The Inner Group Teachings of H. P. Blavatsky*, pp. 41–2)

#### 3rd principle—Linga Sharira (Astral Body)

Linga sharira . . . the inert vehicle or form on which the body is molded; the vehicle of Life. It is dissipated very shortly after the disintegration of the body. (*The Secret Doctrine*, 2:593)

. . . man has his “double” or *shadow*, properly so called, around which the physical body of the fetus—the future man—is built. The imagination of the mother, or an accident which affects the child, will affect also the astral body . . . This “double” is

born with man, dies with him, and can never separate itself far from the body during life, and though surviving him, it disintegrates, *pari passu*, with the corpse. It is this which is sometimes seen over the graves like a luminous figure of the man that was, during certain atmospheric conditions. (“Dialogues Between Two Editors.” *Lucifer*, December 1888: 328)

The Linga Sharira is the intermediary between Prana and our physical body, and pumps in the life. (*The Inner Group Teachings of H. P. Blavatsky*, p. 120)

## 2nd principle—Prana (Vital Life Force)

“Prana” or “Life” is, strictly speaking, the radiating force or Energy of Atma—as the Universal Life and the ONE SELF—its lower or rather (in its effects) more physical, because manifesting, aspect. Prana or Life permeates the whole being of the objective Universe; and is called a “principle” only because it is an indispensable factor and the *deus ex machina* of the living man. (*Key to Theosophy*, p. 108)

Now Life is in reality Divinity, Parabrahm. But in order to manifest on the Physical Plane it must be assimilated; and as the purely physical is too gross, it must have a medium, viz. the Astral. (*The Inner Group Teachings of H. P. Blavatsky*, p. 120)

The Astral supports life; it is the reservoir or sponge of life, gathering it up from all the natural kingdoms around, and is the intermediary between the kingdoms of Pranic and physical life. (*Ibid.*, p. 119)

Prana is the parent of the “lives.” As an example, a sponge may be immersed in an ocean. The water in the sponge’s interior may be compared to Prana; outside is Jiva. Prana is the motor-principle in life. The “lives” leave Prana; Prana does not leave them. Take out the sponge from the water, and it becomes dry, thus symbolizing death. (*Ibid.*, p. 25)

## 1st principle—Sthula Sharira (Physical Body)

The gross matter of the body; the substance formed and molded over the Linga Sharira by the action of Prana. (*Secret Doctrine*, 2:593)

The *body* of man is wedded to and remains forever within the body of his planet. (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 119)



**Divisions of the Human Constitution  
Used by H.P. Blavatsky**

<b>Isis Unveiled (1877)</b>	<b>Mahatma Letters Esoteric Buddhism (1880-83)</b>	<b>Secret Doctrine Key to Theosophy (1888 &amp; 89)</b>	<b>H.P.B.'s Private "Papers" (1889-91)</b>	<b>Dialogues Between Two Editors (1888)</b>
Spirit	Atma	Atma	Atma	Atma
Soul	Buddhi	Buddhi	Auric Egg	Causal Body
			Buddhi	
	Manas	Manas a) higher b) lower	Manas EGO	Mayavi Rupa
			Kama Manas or Lower Manas	
	Kama Rupa	Kama Rupa	Kama-Prana	
	Linga Sarira	Prana	Linga Sarira	Protean Double
Prana	Linga Sarira			
Body	Body	Body	Living Body in Prana or Animal Life	Body

**SEPTENARY DIVISION IN DIFFERENT INDIAN SYSTEMS  
(S.D. I:157)**

CLASSIFICATION IN ESOTERIC BUDDHISM	VEDANTIC CLASSIFICATION	CLASSIFICATION IN TARAKA RAJA YOGA
1. Sthula Sarira	Annamaya kosa *	Sthulopadhi §
2. Prana †	Pranamaya kosa	
3. The Vehicle of Prana ‡		Sukshmopadhi
4. Kama Rupa	Manomaya kosa	
5. Mind a. Volitions and feelings, etc. b. Vignanam	Vignanamaya kosa	
6. Spiritual Soul	Anandamaya kosa	Karanopadhi
7. Atma	Atma	Atma

\* Kosa (kosha) is "sheath" literally, the sheath of every principle

† "Life"

‡ The astral body or linga sarira

|| Buddhi

§ Sthula-upadhi, or basis of the principle

**ALTERNATIVE DIVISIONS**

FUNCTIONAL GROUPS	LATER WRITINGS	ATMA AND SEVEN SHEATHS	SEVEN PRINCIPLES
Atma	Monad	Atma - the spark of the Logos	7. Atma
Karana Sarira or Causal Body	Atma	Auric Envelope - karmic patterns a mystery	6. Buddhi
	Buddhi		
Astral Soul or Sukshma Sarira or Mayavi Rupa	Causal Body	Higher Manas - intelligence reincarnating Ego	5. Manas
	Mental Body	Lower Manas - intellect terrestrial mind	4. Kama Rupa
Astral Body	Astral Body or Emotional Body	Kama - desires, passions, appetites	
	Etheric Double	Linga Sarira - body of sensation body-prototype	3. Astral Body
Physical Body	Dense Physical	Sthula Sarira - dense physical form	2. Prana=vitality 1. Body

## Appendix II

### The Progress of the Lunar Monads

The Monads cycling round any septenary chain are divided into seven classes or hierarchies according to their respective stages of evolution, consciousness, and merit. (*The Secret Doctrine*, 1:171)

When Globe A of the new chain is ready, the first class or Hierarchy of Monads from the Lunar chain incarnate upon it in the lowest kingdom, and so on successively. The result of this is, that it is only the first class of Monads which attains the human state of development during the first Round, since the second class, on each planet, arriving later, has not time to reach that stage. Thus the monads of Class 2 reach the incipient human stage only in the Second Round, and so on up to the middle of the fourth Round. But at this point—and on this Fourth Round in which the human stage will be *fully* developed—the “Door” into the human kingdom closes; and henceforth the number of “human” Monads, *i.e.*, Monads in the human stage of development, is complete. For the Monads which had not reached the human stage by this point will, owing to the evolution of humanity itself, find themselves so far behind that they will reach the human stage only at the close of the seventh and last Round. They will, therefore, not be men on this chain, but will form the humanity of a future Manvantara and be rewarded by becoming “Men” on a higher chain altogether, thus receiving their karmic compensation. To this there is *but one solitary exception . . .* (*Ibid.*, 1:173)

The Monadic Host may be roughly divided into three great classes:

1. The most developed Monads (the Lunar Gods or “Spirits” called, in India, the Pitris), whose function it is to pass in the first Round through the whole triple cycle of the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms in their most ethereal, filmy, and rudimentary forms, in order to clothe themselves in, and assimilate, the nature of the newly-formed chain. They are those who first reach the human form (if there can be any form in the realm of the almost subjective) on Globe A in the first Round. It is they, therefore, who lead and represent the human element during the second and third Rounds, and finally evolve their shadows at the beginning of the Fourth Round for the second class, or those who come behind them.
2. Those Monads that are the first to reach the human stage during the three and a half Rounds, and to become men.

3. The laggards; the Monads which are retarded, and which will not reach, by reason of Karmic impediments, the human stage at all during this cycle . . . (Ibid., 1:174-5)

The most developed Monads (the lunar) reach the human germ-stage in the first Round; become terrestrial, though very ethereal human beings toward the end of the Third Round, remaining on it (the globe) through the “obscuration” period as the seed for future mankind in the Fourth Round, and thus become the pioneers of Humanity at the beginning of this, the Fourth Round. Others reach the human stage only during later Rounds, *i.e.*, in the second, third, and first half of the Fourth Round. And finally the most retarded of all *i.e.*, those still occupying animal forms after the middle turning-point of the Fourth Round—will not become men at all during this Manvantara. They will reach to the verge of humanity only at the close of the seventh Round to be, in their turn, ushered into a new chain after *pralaya*—by older pioneers, the progenitors of humanity, or the Seed-Humanity (*Śishta*), viz, the men who will be at the head of all at the end of these Rounds. (Ibid., 1:182)

Now every “Round” (on the descending scale) is but a repetition in a more concrete form of the Round which preceded it, as every globe—down to our fourth sphere (the actual earth)—is a grosser and more material copy of the more shadowy sphere which precedes it in their successive order, on the three higher planes . . . Thus it becomes clear that the “origin of man,” so called, on this our present Round, or life-cycle on this planet, must occupy the same place in the same order—save details based on local conditions and time—as in the preceding Round. Again, it must be explained and remembered that, as the work of each Round is said to be apportioned to a different group of so-called “Creators” or “Architects,” so is that of every globe; *i.e.*, it is under the supervision and guidance of special “Builders” and “Watchers”—the various Dhyan Chohans. The group of the hierarchy which is commissioned to “create” men is a special group, then; yet it evolved shadowy man in this cycle just as a higher and still more spiritual group evolved him in the Third Round. (Ibid., 1:232-33)

The reigning kings had finished their cycle on Earth and other worlds, in the preceding Rounds. In the future manvantaras they will have risen to higher systems than our planetary world; and it is the Elect of our Humanity, the Pioneers on the hard and difficult road of progress, who will take the places of their predecessors. The next great Manvantara will witness the men of our own life cycle becoming the instructors and guides of a mankind whose Monads may now yet be imprisoned—semi-conscious—in the most intellectual of the animal kingdom, while their lower principles will be animating, perhaps, the highest specimens of the Vegetable world. (Ibid., 1:267)

**CLASSES OF LUNAR MONADS AND THEIR PROGRESS IN THIS MANVANTARA**

Classes of Lunar Monads		Terminal Status in First Round	Terminal Status in Second Round	Terminal Status in Third Round	† Terminal Status in Fourth Round
I.	1.	Human	Human	Human	Human
	2.	Animal	Human	Human	Human
II.	3.	Plant	Animal	Human	Human
	4.	Mineral	Plant	Animal	Human
III.	5.	Elemental III	Mineral	Plant	Animal
	6.	Elemental II	Elemental III	Mineral	Plant
	7.	Elemental I	Elemental II	Elemental III	Mineral

† It will be noted that it is only at the fourth round that the lower kingdoms assume their present state. Up till that time they are inhabited by classes of “human” monads in various stages of *recapitulation* and by monads destined to become human for the first time in this manvantara.



### Appendix III

#### THE TWELVE CREATIVE HIERARCHIES

ZODIACAL ATTRIBUTION	CHARACTERISTICS
Aries Taurus Gemini Cancer	Four have reached liberation to the end of the “Great Age”
Leo	The fifth is ready to reach it but still remains active on the intellectual planes
Virgo	Fire Virgins of Life
Libra	Fire-Aether Prototypes of monads / provide Buddhi
Scorpio	Fire-Aether-Water “triads”
Sagittarius	Fire-Aether-Water-Air Imperishable Jivas / nursery of human souls
Capricorn	Sons of Wisdom Solar Dhyanis / Fire of Mind
Aquarius	Creators of Form Lunar Monads or Pitris
Pisces	Spirits of Life Lower Lunar “Lives”

**OCCULT CORRESPONDENCES - E.S. Instructions**

<b>HUMAN CONSTITUENTS</b>	<b>PRESIDING PLANETS</b>	<b>DAYS OF WEEK</b>	<b>COLORS</b>	<b>METALS</b>	<b>TATTVAS</b>	<b>MUSICAL NOTES</b>
Auric Envelope	Jupiter	Thursday	Blue	Tin	Adi	So
Buddhi	Mercury	Wednesday	Yellow	Mercury	Anupadaka	Mi
Higher Manas	Venus	Friday	Indigo	Copper	Akasa	La
Lower Manas	Saturn	Saturday	Green	Lead	Vayu	Fa
Kama	Mars	Tuesday	Red	Iron	Tejas	Do
Linga Sarira	Moon <sup>1</sup>	Monday	Violet	Silver	Apas	Si
Sthula Sarira	Sun <sup>2</sup>	Sunday	Orange	Gold	Prithivi	Re

1. Moon is a substitute for a secret planet.
2. Sun is a substitute for a secret planet.



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