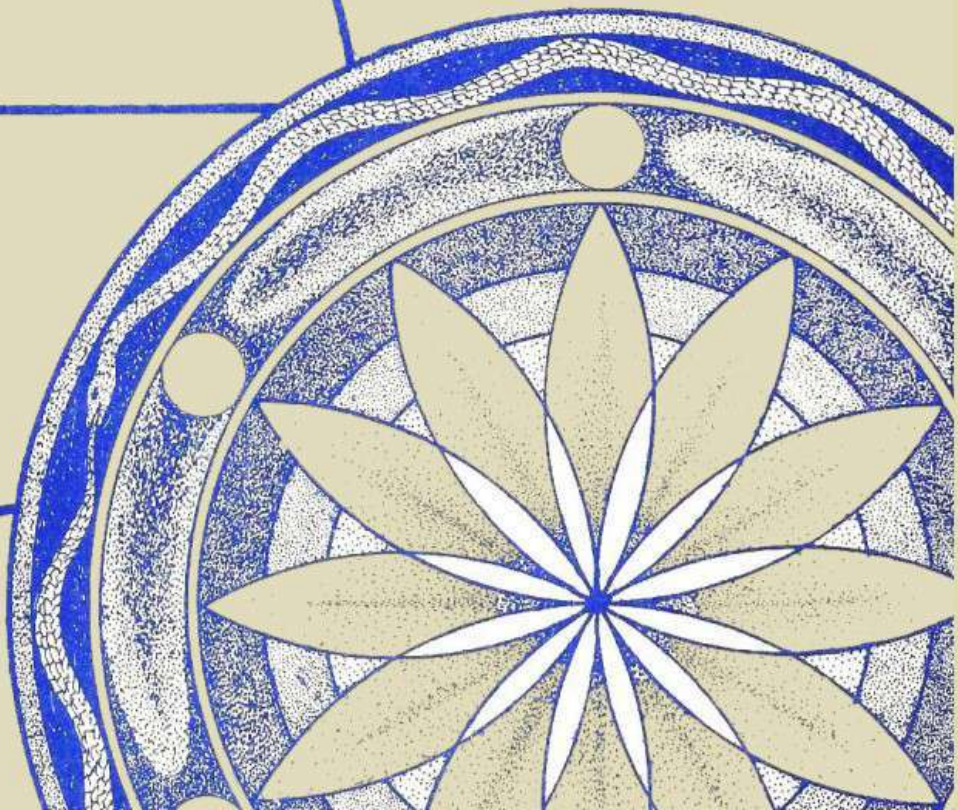




an
introduction
to
**ESOTERIC
PRINCIPLES**

The left side of the cover features a series of geometric diagrams. At the top is a small circle. Below it is a larger circle with a central dot. Further down is a circle divided horizontally. Below that is a circle divided vertically. The bottom-most diagram is a circle divided into four quadrants by both horizontal and vertical lines. A small signature 'Doss David '85' is visible at the bottom left of this diagram.

Doss McDavid



An Introduction to Esoteric Principles

An Introduction to Esoteric Principles

A Study Course

by William Doss McDavid

Fifth Edition

The Blavatsky Study Center/
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2024

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

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 they 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. 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.

David Bruce and Nicholas Weeks helped greatly in the production of the 2008 Edition by reviewing the manuscript and making suggestions for its improvement.

For this 2024 edition, Daniel Caldwell has helped me to modify the format, turning the study manual into a regular book. In doing this, we have borrowed relevant glossary entries from HPB's *Theosophical Glossary* and placed them at the end of each chapter to support and further elucidate the teachings being discussed. We are aware that her glossary entries are oftentimes based on 19th century scholarship and may be at times misleading. Nevertheless, they reflect the spirit of the esoteric teaching if not the letter of the terminology employed. We have also added W.Q. Judge's *Epitome of Theosophy* as Appendix V.

William Doss McDavid
San Antonio, Texas, September 2024

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.

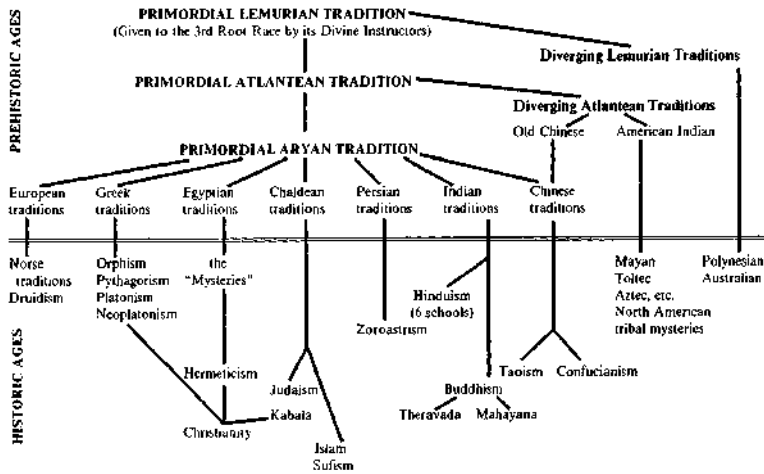
These ancient Mystery Schools became "a continuous association of men of the highest intelligence linked together by a bond stronger than any other tie of which mankind has experience" while their teachings provided "a complete system of knowledge...cultivated in secret, and handed

down to initiates..." (A.P. Sinnett, *The Occult World*, p.17).

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 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 the 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, 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, the esoteric schools became more hidden until their very existence passed from the public eye. This was especially true in Western lands where the intolerance of the 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 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 incarnations¹ in order to carry out more thoroughly the task he had taken in hand, and confer a correspondingly increased

¹ A few hints on Buddha's subsequent "incarnations" are given in "The Mystery of Buddha" in the third volume of *The Secret Doctrine* (See *Collected Writings*, 14:388-407).

benefit on mankind. (*Esoteric Buddhism*, pp. 132-133)

His third appearance was in the person of Tsong-kha-pa,² 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,³ 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

² 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").

³ 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).

and power then found to be disseminated. To 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:

14th century	**“Foundation” of the fraternity of the Rosy Cross by Christian Rosenkreutz
15th century	**Work of the Florentine Platonic Academy **Introduction of printing **Discovery of the “new world” **Birth of Paracelsus, the reformer of medicine
16th 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
17th century	**Publication of Newton’s <i>Principia</i> **Infancy of the Royal Society **Establishment of the Rosicrucian Order in America
18th 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
19th century	**Establishment of the Theosophical Society by Blavatsky, Olcott, and Judge **Maha Bodhi Society founded **Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn founded
20th 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.

GLOSSARY FOR CHAPTER 1

Theosophia (*Gr.*). Wisdom-religion, or “Divine Wisdom”. The substratum and basis of all the world-religions and philosophies, taught and practised by a few elect ever since man became a thinking being. In its practical bearing, Theosophy is purely divine ethics; the definitions in dictionaries are pure nonsense, based on religious prejudice and ignorance of the true spirit of the early Rosicrucians and mediæval philosophers who called themselves Theosophists.

Theosophical Society, or “Universal Brotherhood”. Founded in 1875 at New York, by Colonel H. S. Olcott and H. P. Blavatsky, helped by W. Q. Judge and several others. Its avowed object was at first the scientific investigation of psychic or so-called “spiritualistic” phenomena, after which its three chief objects were declared, namely (1) Brotherhood of man, without distinction of race, colour, religion, or social position; (2) the serious study of the ancient world-religions for purposes of comparison and the selection therefrom of universal ethics; (3) the study and development of the latent divine powers in man.

Theosophists. A name by which many mystics at various periods of history have called themselves. The Neo-Platonists of Alexandria were Theosophists; the Alchemists and Kabbalists during the mediæval ages were likewise so called, also the Martinists, the Quietists, and other kinds of mystics, whether acting independently or incorporated in a brotherhood or

society. All real lovers of divine Wisdom and Truth had, and have, a right to the name.

Wisdom Religion. The one religion which underlies all the now-existing creeds. That "faith" which, being primordial, and revealed directly to human kind by their *progenitors* and informing EGOS (though the Church regards them as the "fallen angels"), required no "grace", nor *blind* faith to believe, for it was *knowledge*. It is on this Wisdom Religion that *Theosophy is based*.

Exoteric. Outward, public; the opposite of esoteric or hidden.

Esoteric (*Gr.*). Hidden, secret. From the Greek *esotericos*, "inner" concealed.

Gupta Vidyâ (*Sk.*) The same as Guhya Vidyâ; Esoteric or Secret Science; knowledge.

Sacred Science. The name given to the *inner* esoteric philosophy, the secrets taught in days of old to the initiated candidates, and divulged during the last and supreme Initiation by the Hierophants.

Gnôsis (*Gr.*) Lit., "knowledge". The technical term used by the schools of religious philosophy, both before and during the first centuries of so-called Christianity, to denote the object of their enquiry. This Spiritual and Sacred Knowledge, the *Gupta Vidya* of the Hindus, could only be obtained by Initiation into Spiritual Mysteries of which the ceremonial "Mysteries" were a type.

Mysteries. Greek *teletai*, or finishings, celebrations of initiation or the Mysteries. They were observances, generally kept secret from the profane and uninitiated, in which were taught by dramatic representation and other methods, the origin of things, the nature of the human spirit, its relation to the body, and the method of its purification and restoration to higher life.

Mystery Language. The sacerdotal secret jargon employed by the initiated priests, and used only when discussing sacred things. Every nation had its own “mystery” tongue, unknown save to those admitted to the Mysteries.

Secret Doctrine. The general name given to the esoteric teachings of antiquity.

Seer. One who is a clairvoyant; who can see things visible, and invisible—for others—at any distance and time with his spiritual or inner sight or perceptions.

Rishi-Prajâpati (*Sk.*). *Lit.*, “revealers”, holy sages in the religious history of Âryavarta. Esoterically the highest of them are the Hierarchies of “Builders” and Architects of the Universe and of living things on earth; they are generally called Dhyan Chohans, Devas and gods.

Rishis (*Sk.*). Adepts; the inspired ones. In Vedic literature the term is employed to denote those persons through whom the various Mantras were revealed.

Si-dzang (*Chin.*). The Chinese name for Tibet; mentioned in the Imperial Library of the capital of Fo

Kien, as the "great seat of Occult learning", 2,207 years B.C. (*Secret Doctrine*, I., p. 271.)

Vedas (*Sk.*). The "revelation". the scriptures of the Hindus, from the root *vid*, "to know ", or "divine knowledge". They are the most ancient as well as the most sacred of the Sanskrit works. The *Vedas* on the date and antiquity of which no two Orientalists can agree, are claimed by the Hindus themselves, whose Brahmans and Pundits ought to know best about their own religious works, to have been first taught orally for thousands of years and then compiled on the shores of Lake Mânasa-Sarovara (phonetically, *Mansarovara*) beyond the Himalayas, in Tibet. When was this done? While their religious teachers, such as Swami Dayanand Saraswati, claim for them an antiquity of many decades of ages, our modern Orientalists will grant them no greater antiquity in their present form than about between 1,000 and 2,000 B.C. As compiled in their final form by Veda-Vyâsa, however, the Brahmans themselves unanimously assign 3,100 years before the Christian era, the date when Vyâsa flourished. Therefore the *Vedas* must be as old as this date. But their antiquity is sufficiently proven by the fact that they are written in such an ancient form, of Sanskrit, so different from the Sanskrit now used, that there is no other, work like them in the literature of this eldest sister of all the known languages, as Prof. Max Muller calls it. Only the most learned of the Brahman Pundits can read the *Vedas* in their original.

Rig Veda (*Sk.*). The first and most important of the four *Vedas*. Fabled to have been “created” from the Eastern mouth of Brahmâ; recorded in Occultism as having been delivered by great sages on Lake Man(a)saravara beyond the Himalayas, dozens of thousands of years ago.

Veda-Vyâsa (*Sk.*). The compiler of the *Vedas* (*q.v.*).

Krishna (*Sk.*). The most celebrated avatar of Vishnu, the “Saviour” of the Hindus and their most popular god. He is the eighth Avatar, the son of Devaki, and the nephew of Kansa, the Indian King Herod, who while seeking for him among the shepherds and cow-herds who concealed him, slew thousands of their newly-born babes. The story of Krishna’s conception, birth, and childhood are the exact prototype of the New Testament story. The missionaries, of course, try to show that the Hindus stole the story of the Nativity from the early Christians who came to India.

Patanjali (*Sk.*). The founder of the Yoga philosophy. The date assigned to him by the Orientalists is 200 B.C.; and by the Occultists nearer to 700 than 600 B.C. At any rate he was a contemporary of Pânini.

Râja-Yoga (*Sk.*). The true system of developing psychic and spiritual powers and union with one’s *Higher Self*—or the Supreme Spirit, as the profane express it. The exercise, regulation and concentration of thought. Râja-Yoga is opposed to Hatha-Yoga, the physical or psycho-physiological training in asceticism.

Sri Sankarâchârya (*Sk.*). The great religious reformer of India, and teacher of the Vedânta philosophy—the greatest of all such teachers, regarded by the *Adwaitas* (Non-dualists) as an incarnation of Siva and a worker of miracles. He established many *mathams* (monasteries), and founded the most learned sect among Brahmans, called the Smârtava. The legends about him are as numerous as his philosophical writings. At the age of thirty-two he went to Kashmir, and reaching Kedâranâth in the Himalayas, entered a cave alone, whence he never returned. His followers claim that he did not die, but only retired from the world.

Vedânta (*Sk.*). A mystic system of philosophy which has developed from the efforts of generations of sages to interpret the secret meaning of the *Upanishads* (*q.v.*). It is called in the *Shad-Darshanas* (six schools or systems of demonstration), *Uttara Mîmânsâ*, attributed to *Vyâsa*, the compiler of the *Vedas*, who is thus referred to as the founder of the Vedânta. The orthodox Hindus call Vedânta_a term meaning literally the “end of all (Vedic) knowledge ”—*Brahmâ-jnâna*, or pure and spiritual knowledge of Brahmâ. Even if we accept the late dates assigned to various Sanskrit schools and treatises by our Orientalists, the Vedânta must be 3,300 years old, as *Vyâsa* is said to have lived 1,400 years B.C. If, as *Elphinstone* has it in his *History of India*, the *Brahmanas* are the *Talmud* of the Hindus, and the *Vedas* the Mosaic books, then the *Vedânta* may be correctly called the *Kabalah* of India. But how vastly more grand!

Sankarâchârya, who was the popularizer of the Vedântic system, and the founder of the *Adwaita* philosophy, is sometimes called the founder of the modern schools of the Vedânta.

Adwaita (*Sk.*). A Vedânta sect. The non-dualistic (*Adwaita*) school of Vedântic philosophy founded by Sankarâchârya, the greatest of the historical Brahmin sages. The two other schools are the *Dwaita* (dualistic) and the *Visishtadwaita*; all the three call themselves Vedântic.

Adwaitin (*Sk.*). A follower of the said school.

Gautama (*Sk.*) The Prince of Kapilavastu, son of Sudhâdana, the Sâkyâ king of a small realm on the borders of Nepaul, born in the seventh century B.c., now called the "Saviour of the World". Gautama or Gôtama was the sacerdotal name of the Sâkyâ family, and Sidhârtha was Buddha's name before he became a Buddha. Sâkyâ Muni, means the Saint of the Sâkyâ family. Born a simple mortal he rose to Buddhahood through his own personal and unaided merit. A man—verily greater than any god!

Son-kha-pa (*Tib.*). Written also *Tsong-kha-pa*. A famous Tibetan reformer of the fourteenth century, who introduced a purified Buddhism into his country. He was a great Adept, who being unable to witness any longer the desecration of Buddhist philosophy by the false priests who made of it a marketable commodity, put a forcible stop thereto by a timely revolution....He is regarded as an Avatar of Buddha, and is the founder

of the *Gelukpa* ("yellow-cap") Sect, and of the mystic Brotherhood connected with its chiefs.

Buddhism. Buddhism is now split into two distinct Churches : the Southern and the Northern Church. The former is said to be the purer form, as having preserved more religiously the original teachings of the Lord Buddha. It is the religion of Ceylon, Siam, Burmah and other places, while Northern Buddhism is confined to Tibet, China and Nepal. Such a distinction, however, is incorrect. If the Southern Church is nearer, in that it has not departed, except perhaps in some trifling dogmas due to the many councils held after the death of the Master, from the public or *exoteric* teachings of Sâkyamuni—the Northern Church is the outcome of Siddhârta Buddha's esoteric teachings which he confined to his elect Bhikshus and Arhats. In fact, Buddhism in the present age, cannot be justly judged either by one or the other of its exoteric popular forms. Real Buddhism can be appreciated only by blending the philosophy of the Southern Church and the metaphysics of the Northern Schools. If one seems too iconoclastic and stern and the other too metaphysical and transcendental, even to being overgrown with the weeds of Indian exotericism — many of the gods of its Pantheon having been transplanted under new names to Tibetan soil — it is entirely due to the popular expression of Buddhism in both Churches.

Zarathustra (*Zend*). The great lawgiver, and the founder of the religion variously called Mazdaism,

Magism, Parseeism, Fire-Worship, and Zoroastrianism. The age of the last Zoroaster (for it is a generic name) is not known, and perhaps for that very reason. Xanthus of Lydia, the earliest Greek writer who mentions this great lawgiver and religious reformer, places him about six hundred years before the Trojan War. But where is the historian who can now tell when the latter took place? Aristotle and also Eudoxus assign him a date of no less than 6,000 years before the days of Plato, and Aristotle was not one to make a statement without a good reason for it. Berosus makes him a king of Babylon some 2,200 years B.C.; but then, how can one tell what were the original figures of Berosus, before his MSS. passed through the hands of Eusebius, whose fingers were so deft at altering figures, whether in Egyptian synchronistic tables or in Chaldean chronology? Haug refers Zoroaster to at least 1,000 years B.C.; and Bunsen (*God in History*, Vol. I., Book iii., ch. vi., p. 276) finds that Zarathustra Spitama lived under the King Vistaspa about 3,000 years B.C., and describes him as "one of the mightiest intellects and one of the greatest men of all time". It is with such exact dates in hand, and with the utterly extinct language of the Zend, whose teachings are rendered, probably in the most desultory manner, by the Pahlavi translation — a tongue, as shown by Darmsteter, which was itself growing obsolete so far back as the Sassanides — that our scholars and Orientalists have presumed to monopolise to themselves the right of assigning hypothetical dates for the age of the holy prophet Zurthust. But the Occult records claim to have the

correct dates of each of the thirteen Zoroasters mentioned in the *Dabistan*. Their doctrines, and especially those of the last (divine) Zoroaster, spread from Bactria to the Medes; thence, under the name of Magism, incorporated by the Adept-Astronomers in Chaldea, they greatly influenced the mystic teachings of the Mosaic doctrines, even before, perhaps, they had culminated into what is now known as the modern religion of the Parsis. Like Manu and Vyâsa in India, Zarathustra is a generic name for great reformers and law-givers. The hierarchy began with the divine Zarathustra in the *Vendîdâd*, and ended with the great, but mortal man, bearing that title, and now lost to history. There were, as shown by the *Dabistan*, many Zoroasters or Zarathustras. As related in the *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II., the last Zoroaster was the founder of the Fire-temple of Azareksh, many ages before the historical era. Had not Alexander destroyed so many sacred and precious works of the Mazdeans, truth and philosophy would have been more inclined to agree with history, in bestowing upon that Greek Vandal the title of "the Great".

Avesta (*Zend*). Lit., "the Law". From the old Persian *Âbastâ*, "the law". The sacred Scriptures of the Zoroastrians. *Zend* means in the "Zend-Avesta"—a "commentary" or "interpretation". It is an error to regard "Zend" as a language, as "it was applied only to explanatory texts, to the translations of the Avesta" (Darmsteter).

Hermes Trismegistus (*Gr.*). The “thrice great Hermes”, the Egyptian. The mythical personage after whom the Hermetic philosophy was named. In Egypt the God Thoth or Thot. A generic name of many ancient Greek writers on philosophy and Alchemy. Hermes Trismegistus is the name of Hermes or Thoth in his human aspect, as a god he is far more than this. As *Hermes-Thoth-Aah*, he is Thoth, the moon, i.e., his symbol is the bright side of the moon, supposed to contain the essence of creative Wisdom, “the elixir of Hermes ”. As such he is associated with the Cynocephalus, the dog-headed monkey, for the same reason as was Anubis, one of the aspects of Thoth. The same idea underlies the form of the Hindu God of Wisdom, the elephant-headed Ganesa, or Ganpat, the son of Parvati and Siva. When he has the head of an *ibis*, he is the sacred scribe of the gods; but even then he wears the crown *atef* and the lunar disk. He is the most mysterious of gods. As a serpent, Hermes Thoth is the divine creative Wisdom. The Church Fathers speak at length of Thoth-Hermes.

Hermetic. Any doctrine or writing connected with the esoteric teachings of Hermes, who, whether as the Egyptian Thoth or the Greek Hermes, was the God of Wisdom with the Ancients, and, according to Plato, “discovered numbers, geometry, astronomy and letters”. Though mostly considered as spurious, nevertheless the Hermetic writings were highly prized by St. Augustine, Lactantius, Cyril and others. In the words of Mr. J. Bonwick, “ They are more or less

touched up by the Platonic philosophers among the early Christians (such as Origen and Clemens Alexandrinus) who sought to substantiate their Christian arguments by appeals to these heathen and revered writings, though they could not resist the temptation of making them say a little too much. Though represented by some clever and interested writers as teaching pure monotheism, the Hermetic or Trismegistic books are, nevertheless, purely pantheistic. The Deity referred to in them is defined by Paul as that in *which* “we live, and move and have our being” — notwithstanding the “in Him” of the translators.

Orpheus (*Gr.*). Lit., the “tawny one”. Mythology makes him the son of Æger and the muse Calliope. Esoteric tradition identifies him with Arjuna, the son of Indra and the disciple of Krishna. He went round the world teaching the nations wisdom and sciences, and establishing mysteries. The very story of his losing his Eurydice and finding her in the underworld or Hades, is another point of resemblance with the story of Arjuna, who goes to Pâtàla (*Hades* or hell, but in reality the Antipodes or America) and finds there and marries Ulupi, the daughter of the Nâga king. This is as suggestive as the fact that he was considered *dark* in complexion even by the Greeks, who were never very fair-skinned themselves.

Orphic Mysteries or *Orphica* (*Gr.*). These followed, but differed greatly from, the mysteries of Bacchus. The system of Orpheus is one of the purest morality and of

severe asceticism. The theology taught by him is again purely Indian. With him the divine Essence is inseparable from whatever is in the infinite universe, all forms being concealed from all eternity in It. At determined periods these forms are manifested from the divine Essence or manifest themselves. Thus through this law of emanation (or evolution) all things participate in this Essence, and are parts and members instinct with divine nature, which is omnipresent. All things having proceeded from, must necessarily return into it; and therefore, innumerable transmigrations or reincarnations and purifications are needed before this final consummation can take place. This is pure Vedânta philosophy. Again, the Orphic Brotherhood ate no animal food and wore white linen garments, and had many ceremonies like those of the Brahmans.

Pythagoras (*Gr.*). The most famous of mystic philosophers, born at Samos, about 586 B.C. He seems to have travelled all over the world, and to have culled his philosophy from the various systems to which he had access. Thus, he studied the esoteric sciences with the *Brachmanes* of India, and astronomy and astrology in Chaldea and Egypt. He is known to this day in the former country under the name of Yavanâchârya ("Ionian teacher"). After returning he settled in Crotona, in Magna Grecia, where he established a college to which very soon resorted all the best intellects of the civilised centres. His father was one Mnesarchus of Samos, and was a man of noble birth and learning. It was Pythagoras. who was the first to

teach the heliocentric system, and who was the greatest proficient in geometry of his century. It was he also who created the word “philosopher”, composed of two words meaning a “lover of wisdom” — *philosophos*. As the greatest mathematician, geometer and astronomer of historical antiquity, and also the highest of the metaphysicians and scholars, Pythagoras has won imperishable fame. He taught reincarnation as it is professed in India and much else of the Secret Wisdom.

Plato. An Initiate into the Mysteries and the greatest Greek philosopher, whose writings are known the world over. He was the pupil of Socrates and the teacher of Aristotle. He flourished over 400 years before our era.

Platonic School, or the “Old Akadéme”, in contrast with the later or *Neo-Platonic* School of Alexandria.

Ammonius Saccas. A great and good philosopher who lived in Alexandria between the second and third centuries of our era, and who was the founder of the Neo-Platonic School of Philaletheians or “lovers of truth”. He was of poor birth and born of Christian parents, but endowed with such prominent, almost divine, goodness as to he called *Theodidaktos*, the “god-taught”. He honoured that which was good in Christianity, but broke with it and the churches very early, being unable to find in it any superiority over the older religions.

Plotinus. The noblest, highest and grandest of all the Neo-Platonists after the founder of the school,

Ammonius Saccas. He was the most enthusiastic of the *Philaletheans* or “lovers of truth”, whose aim was to found a religion on a system of intellectual abstraction, which is true Theosophy, or the whole substance of Neo-Platonism. If we are to believe Porphyry, Plotinus has never disclosed either his birth-place or connexions, his native land or his race. Till the age of twenty-eight he had never found teacher or teaching which would suit him or answer his aspirations. Then he happened to hear Ammonius Saccas, from which day he continued to attend his school. At thirty-nine he accompanied the Emperor Gordian to Persia and India with the object of learning their philosophy. He died at the age of sixty-six after writing fifty-four books on philosophy. So modest was he that it is said he “blushed to think he had a body”. He reached *Samâdhi* (highest ecstasy or “re-union with God” the divine *Ego*) several times during his life. As said by a biographer, “so far did his contempt for his bodily organs go, that he refused to use a remedy, regarding it as unworthy of a man to use means of this kind”. Again we read, “as he died, a dragon (or serpent) that had been under his bed, glided through a hole in the wall and disappeared”—a fact suggestive for the student of symbolism. He taught a doctrine identical with that of the Vedantins, namely, that the Spirit-Soul emanating from the One deific principle was, after its pilgrimage, re-united to It.

Neo-platonism. Lit., “The *new* Platonism” or Platonic School. An eclectic pantheistic school of philosophy

founded in Alexandria by Ammonius Saccas, of which his disciple Plotinus was the head (A.D. 189-270). It sought to reconcile Platonic teachings and the Aristotelean system with oriental Theosophy. Its chief occupation was pure spiritual philosophy, metaphysics and mysticism. Theurgy was introduced towards its later years. It was the ultimate effort of high intelligences to check the ever-increasing ignorant superstition and *blind* faith of the times; the last product of Greek philosophy, which was finally crushed and put to death by brute force.

Schools of the Prophets. Schools established by Samuel for the training of the *Nabiim* (prophets). Their method was pursued on the same lines as that of a Chela or candidate for initiation into the occult sciences, i.e., the development of abnormal faculties or clairvoyance leading to Seership. Of such schools there were many in days of old in Palestine and Asia Minor. That the Hebrews worshipped Nebo, the Chaldean god of secret learning, is quite certain, since they adopted his name as an equivalent of Wisdom.

Sadducees. A sect, the followers of one Zadok, a disciple of Antigonus Saccho. They are accused of having denied the immortality of the (personal) soul and that of the resurrection of the (physical and personal) body. Even so do the Theosophists; though they deny neither the immortality of the Ego nor the resurrection of all its numerous and successive lives, which survive *in the memory of the Ego*. But together with the Sadducees—a sect of learned philosophers

who were to all the other Jews that which the polished and learned Gnostics were to the rest of the Greeks during the early centuries of our era—we certainly deny the immortality of the *animal* soul and the resurrection of the physical body. The Sadducees were the scientists and the learned men of Jerusalem, and held the highest offices, such as of high priests and judges, while the Pharisees were almost from first to last the Pecksniffs of Judæa.

Essenes. A hellenized word, from the Hebrew *Asa*, a “healer”. A mysterious sect of Jews said by Pliny to have lived near the Dead Sea *per millia sæculorum*—for thousands of ages. “Some have supposed them to be extreme Pharisees, and others—which may be the true theory—the descendants of the *Benim-nabim* of the *Bible*, and think that they were Kenites and *Nazarites*. They had many Buddhistic ideas and practices; and it is noteworthy that the priests of the *Great Mother* at Ephesus, Diana-Bhavani with many breasts, were also so denominated. Eusebius, and after him De Quincey, declared them to be the same as the early Christians, which is more than probable. The title ‘brother’, used in the early Church, was Essenean ; they were a fraternity, or a koinobion or community like the early converts.” (*Isis Unveiled.*)

Gnostics (*Gr.*) The philosophers who formulated and taught the Gnôsis or Knowledge (*q.v.*). They flourished in the first three centuries of the Christian era. The following were eminent Gnostic teachers: Valentinus, Basilides, Marcion, Simon Magus, etc.

Kabalists. From Q B L H, KABALA, an unwritten or oral tradition. The kabalist is a student of “secret science”, one who interprets the hidden meaning of the Scriptures with the help of the symbolical Kabala, and explains the real one by these means. The Tanaim were the first kabalists among the Jews; they appeared at Jerusalem about the beginning of the third century before the Christian era. The books of *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, *Henoch*, and the *Revelation* of St. John, are purely kabalistical. This secret doctrine is identical with that of Chaldeans, and includes at the same time much of the Persian wisdom, or “magic”. History catches glimpses of famous kabalists ever since the eleventh century. The Mediæval ages, and even our own times, have had an enormous number of the most learned and intellectual men who were students of the Kabala (or Qabbalah, as some spell it). The most famous among the former were Paracelsus, Henry Khunrath, Jacob Böhmen, Robert Fludd, the two Van Helmonts, the Abbot John Trithemius, Cornelius Agrippa, Cardinal Nicolao Cusani, Jerome Carden, Pope Sixtus IV., and such Christian scholars as Raymond Lully, Giovanni Pico de la Mirandola, Guillaume Postel, the great John Reuchlin, Dr. Henry More, Eugenius Philalethes (Thomas Vaughan), the erudite Jesuit Athanasius Kircher, Christian Knorr (Baron) von Rosenroth; then Sir Isaac Newton., Leibniz, Lord Bacon, Spinoso, etc., etc., the list being almost inexhaustible. As remarked by Mr. Isaac Myer, in his Qabbalah, the ideas of the Kabalists have largely influenced European literature. “Upon the practical

Qabbalah, the Abbé de Villars (nephew of de Montfaucon) in 1670, published his celebrated satirical novel, 'The Count de Gabalis', upon which Pope based his 'Rape of the Lock'. Qabbalism ran through the Mediæval poems, the 'Romance of the Rose', and permeates the writings of Dante." No two of them, however, agreed upon the origin of the Kabala, the *Zohar*, *Sepher Yetzirah*, etc. Some show it as coming from the Biblical Patriarchs, Abraham, and even Seth; others from Egypt, others again from Chaldea. The system is certainly very old; but like all the rest of systems, whether religious or philosophical, the Kabala is derived directly from the primeval Secret Doctrine of the East; through the Vedas, the Upanishads, Orpheus and Thales, Pythagoras and the Egyptians. Whatever its source, its substratum is at any rate identical with that of all the other systems from the *Book of the Dead* down to the later Gnostics. The best exponents of the *Kabala* in the early Theosophical Society were Dr. S. Pancoast, of Philadelphia, Mr. G. Felt, Dr. W. Wynn Westcott, Mr. S. L. Mac Gregor Mathers and a few others.

Druzes. A large sect, numbering about 100,000 adherents, living on Mount Lebanon in Syria. Their rites are very mysterious, and no traveller, who has written anything about them, knows for a certainty the whole truth. They are the *Sufis* of Syria. They resent being called Druzes as an insult, but call themselves the "disciples of Hamsa", their Messiah, who came to them in the ninth century from the "Land of the Word

of God", which land and word they kept religiously secret. The Messiah to come will be the same Hamsa, but called *Hakem* — the "All-Healer." (See *Isis Unveiled*, II 308, *et seq.*)

Sufis (*Gr.*). From the root of *Sophia*, "Wisdom ". A mystical sect in Persia something like the Vedantins; though very strong in numbers, none but very intelligent men join it. They claim, and very justly, the possession of the esoteric philosophy and doctrine of *true* Mohammedanism. The Sufi (or Sofi) doctrine is a good deal in touch with Theosophy, inasmuch as it preaches one universal creed, and outward respect and tolerance for every popular *exoteric* faith. It is also in touch with Masonry. The Sufis have four degrees and four stages of initiation: 1st, probationary, with a strict outward observance of Mussulman rites, the hidden meaning of each ceremony and dogma being explained to the candidate; 2nd, metaphysical training; 3rd, the "Wisdom" degree, when the candidate is initiated into the innermost nature of things; and 4th final Truth, when the Adept attains divine powers, and complete union with the One Universal Deity in *ecstasy* or *Samâdhi*.

Druids. A sacerdotal caste which flourished in Britain and Gaul. They were Initiates who admitted females into their sacred order, and initiated them into the mysteries of their religion. They never entrusted their sacred verses and scriptures to writing, but, like the Brahmans of old, committed them to memory; a feat

which, according to the statement of Cæsar took twenty years to accomplish. Like the Parsis they had no images or statues of their gods. The Celtic religion considered it blasphemy to represent any god, even of a minor character, under a human figure. It would have been well if the Greek and Roman Christians had learnt this lesson from the “pagan” Druids. The three chief commandments of their religion were: — “Obedience to divine laws; concern for the welfare of mankind; suffering with fortitude all the evils of life”.

Rosicrucians (*Mys.*). The name was first given to the disciples of a learned Adept named Christian Rosenkreuz, who flourished in Germany, circa 1460. He founded an Order of mystical students whose early history is to be found in the German work, *Fama Fraternitatis* (1614), which has been published in several languages. The members of the Order maintained their secrecy, but traces of them have been found in various places every half century since these dates. The *Societas Rosicruciana in Anglia* is a Masonic Order..., the Chabroth Zereh Aur Bokher, or Order of the Golden Dawn had a very complete scheme of initiation into the Kabbalah and the Higher Magic of the Western or Hermetic type, admitted both sexes, and claimed to be a direct descendant from mediæval sodalities of Rosicrucians, themselves descended from the Egyptian Mysteries.

Luxor (*Occ.*). A compound word from *lux* (light) and *aur* (fire), thus meaning the “Light of (divine) Fire.”

Luxor, Brotherhood of. A certain Brotherhood of mystics. ... The name is derived from the ancient *Lookshur* in Beloochistan, lying between Bela and Kedjee. The order is very ancient and the most secret of all.

Light, Brothers of. This is what the great authority on secret societies, Brother Kenneth R. H. Mackenzie IX., says of this Brotherhood. "A mystic order, *Fratres Lucis*, established in Florence in 1498. Among the members of this order were Pasqualis, Cagliostro, Swedenborg, St. Martin, Eliphaz Lévi, and many other eminent mystics. Its members were very much persecuted by the Inquisition. It is a small but compact body, the members being spread all over the world."

Martinists. A Society in France, founded by a great mystic called the Marquis de St. Martin, a disciple of Martinez Pasqualis. It was first established at Lyons as a kind of occult Masonic Society, its members believing in the possibility of communicating with Planetary Spirits and minor Gods and genii of the ultramundane Spheres. Louis Claude de St. Martin, born in 1743, had commenced life as a brilliant officer in the army, but left it to devote himself to study and the *belles lettres*, ending his career by becoming an ardent Theosophist and a disciple of Jacob Boehmen. He tried to bring back Masonry to its primeval character of Occultism and Theurgy, but failed. He first made his "Rectified Rite" to consist of ten degrees, but these were brought down owing to the study of the original Masonic orders — to seven. Masons complain that he introduced certain

ideas and adopted rites “at variance with the archæological history of Masonry”; but so did Cagliostro and St Germain before him, as all those who knew well the origin of Freemasonry.

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 (the One Reality) has both subjective and objective aspects. Its subjective aspect, ensouling and vivifying its objective aspect (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 *pralajic* 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, may be 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 ridiculed 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 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 Hierarchy — 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.

As an exercise, 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.

GLOSSARY FOR CHAPTER 2

Parabrahm (*Sk.*). “Beyond Brahmâ”, literally. The Supreme Infinite Brahma, “Absolute”—the attributeless, the secondless reality. The impersonal and nameless universal Principle.

Sat (*Sk.*). The one ever-present Reality in the infinite world; the divine essence which is, but cannot be said to exist, as it is Absoluteness, Be-ness itself.

Be-ness. A term coined by Theosophists to render more accurately the essential meaning of the untranslatable word Sat. The latter word does not mean “Being” for it presupposes a sentient feeling or some consciousness of existence. But, as the term Sat is applied solely to the absolute Principle, the universal, unknown, and ever unknowable Presence, which philosophical Pantheism postulates in Kosmos, calling it the basic root of Kosmos. and Kosmos itself—“Being” was no fit word to express it. Indeed, the latter is not even, as translated by some Orientalists, “the incomprehensible Entity”; for it is no more an Entity than a non-Entity, but both. It is, as said, absolute *Be-ness*, not *Being*, the one secondless, undivided, and indivisible All—the root of all Nature visible and invisible, objective and subjective, to be sensed by the highest spiritual intuition, but’ never to be fully comprehended.

Absoluteness. When predicated of the UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE, it denotes an abstract noun, which is more

correct and logical than to apply the adjective “absolute ” to that which has neither attributes nor limitations, nor can IT have any.

Nirguna (*Sk.*). Negative attribute; unbound, or without *Gunas* (attributes), i.e., that which is devoid of all qualities, the opposite of Saguna, that which has attributes (*Secret Doctrine*, II. 95), e.g., Parabrahmam is Nirguna; Brahmâ, Saguna. Nirguna is a term which shows the impersonality of the thing spoken of.

En (*Chald.*). A negative particle, like a in Greek and Sanskrit. The first syllable of “En-Soph” (*q.v.*), or nothing that begins or ends, the “Endless”.

En (or **Ain**) **Soph** (*Heb.*). The endless, limitless and boundless. The absolute deific Principle, impersonal and unknowable. It means literally “no-thing” i.e., nothing that could be classed with anything else. The word and ideas are equivalent to the Vedantic conceptions of Parabrahm.

Mûlaprakriti (*Sk.*). The Parabrahmic root, the abstract deific feminine principle—undifferentiated substance. Akâsa. Literally, “the root of Nature” (*Prakriti*) or Matter.

Pradhâna (*Sk.*). Undifferentiated substance, called elsewhere and in other schools—Akâsa; and Mulaprakriti or Root of Matter by the Vedantins. In short, Primeval Matter.

Prakriti (*Sk.*). Nature in general, nature as opposed to Purusha— spiritual nature and Spirit, which together are the “two primeval aspects of the One Unknown Deity”. (*Secret Doctrine*, I. 51.)

Pralaya (*Sk.*). A period of obscurity or repose— planetary, cosmic or universal—the opposite of Manvantara (*S. D.*, I. 370.).

Manvantara (*Sk.*). A period of manifestation, as opposed to Pralaya (dissolution, or rest), applied to various cycles. (See Vol. II. of the *Secret Doctrine*, p. 68)

Logos (*Gr.*). The manifested deity with every nation and people; the outward expression, or the effect of the cause which is ever concealed. Thus, speech is the Logos of thought; hence it is aptly translated by the “Verbum” and “Word” in its metaphysical sense.

Paramâtman (*Sk.*). The Supreme Soul of the Universe.

Aja (*Sk.*). “Unborn”, uncreated; an epithet belonging to many of the primordial gods, but especially to the first *Logos*—a radiation of the Absolute on the plane of illusion.

Protogonos (*Gr.*). The “first-born”; used of all the manifested gods and of the Sun in our system.

Purusha (*Sk.*). “Man”, *heavenly man*. Spirit, the same as Nârâyana in another aspect. “The Spiritual Self.”

Purusha Nârâyana (*Sk.*). Primordial male—Brahmâ.

Brahma (*Sk.*). The student must distinguish between Brahma the neuter, and Brahmâ, the male creator of the

Indian Pantheon. The former, Brahma or Brahman, is the impersonal, supreme and uncognizable Principle of the Universe from the essence of which all emanates, and into which all returns, which is incorporeal, immaterial, unborn, eternal, beginningless and endless. It is all-pervading, animating the highest god as well as the smallest mineral atom. Brahmâ on the other hand, the male and the alleged Creator, exists periodically in his manifestation only, and then again goes into pralaya, i.e., disappears and is annihilated.

Daiviprakriti (*Sk.*) Primordial, homogeneous light, called by some Indian Occultists "the Light of the Logos" (see *Notes on the Bhagavat Gita*, by T. Subba Row; when differentiated this light becomes FOHAT.

Fohat (*Tib.*). A term used to represent the active (male) potency of the Sakti (female reproductive power) in nature. The essence of cosmic electricity. An occult Tibetan term for *Daiviprakriti* primordial light: and in the universe of manifestation the ever-present electrical energy and ceaseless destructive and formative power. Esoterically, it is the same, Fohat being the universal propelling Vital Force, at once the propeller and the resultant.

Chapter 3

Microcosm

We are familiar with the visible human body composed of chemical substances and 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 the most superficial 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”⁴ 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:

⁴ 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.

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 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 body⁵ 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.

⁵ 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.

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 emotions, passions, appetites, and desires. As we continue inwardly, this state of consciousness shades gradually into that of intellect, rationality, or the concrete mind (lower manas). 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 (higher manas) 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 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 that 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 chakras⁶ 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

⁶ 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.

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 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.⁷ Prana was relegated to its proper place as a universal vitalizing force, carried in the blood, and closely

⁷ 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.

related to the principle of Kama, or desire. An attentive reading of the E.S. instructions which are included in the twelfth volume of the 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?

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.

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.

GLOSSARY FOR CHAPTER 3

Principles. The Elements or original essences, the basic differentiations upon and of which all things are built up. We use the term to denote the seven individual and fundamental aspects of the One Universal Reality in Kosmos and in man.

Atmâ (or **Atman**) (*Sk.*). The Universal Spirit, the divine Monad, the 7th Principle, so-called, in the septenary constitution of man. The Supreme Soul.

Buddhi (*Sk.*). Universal Soul or Mind. *Mahâbuddhi* is a name of Mahat; also the spiritual Soul in man (the sixth principle), the vehicle of Atmâ exoterically the seventh.

Manas (*Sk.*). Lit., “the mind”, the mental faculty which makes of man an intelligent and moral being, and distinguishes him from the mere animal; a synonym of *Mahat*. *Esoterically*, however, it means, when unqualified, the Higher EGO, or the sentient reincarnating Principle in man. When qualified it is called by Theosophists *Buddhi-Manas* or the Spiritual Soul in contradistinction to its human reflection — *Kâma-Manas*.

Kama (*Sk.*) Evil desire, lust, volition; the cleaving to existence. Kama is generally identified with *Mara* the tempter.

Linga Sharîra (*Sk.*). The “body”, i.e., the aerial symbol of the body. This term designates the *döppelganger* or the “astral body” of man or animal. It is the *eidolon* of the Greeks, the vital and *prototypal* body; the reflection

of the men of flesh. It is born *before* and dies or fades out, with the disappearance of the last atom of the body.

Prâna (*Sk.*). Life-Principle ; the breath of Life.

Sthûla Sarîram (*Sk.*). In metaphysics, the gross physical body.

Upâdhi (*Sk.*). Basis; the vehicle, carrier or bearer of something less material than itself: as the human body is the *upâdhi* of its spirit, ether the *upâdhi* of light, etc., etc.; a mould; a defining or limiting substance.

Kâranopadhi (*Sk.*). The basis or *upâdhi* of Karana, the “causal soul”. In Taraka Rajayoga, it corresponds with both *Manas* and *Buddhi*. See Table in the *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 157.

Kârana Sarîra (*Sk.*). The “Causal body”. Esoterically—the causal body or Kâranopadhi stands in the Taraka Raja yoga as corresponding to *Buddhi* and the Higher “*Manas*,” or Spiritual Soul.

Causal Body. This “body”, which is no body either objective or subjective, but *Buddhi*, the Spiritual Soul, is so called because it is the direct cause of the Sushupti condition, leading to the *Turya* state, the highest state of *Samadhi*. It is called *Karanopadhi*, “the basis of the Cause”, by the Târaka Raja Yogis; and in the Vedânta system it corresponds to both the *Vignânâmayâ* and *Anandamaya Kosha*, the latter coming next to *Atma*, and therefore being the vehicle of the universal Spirit. *Buddhi* alone could not be called a “Causal Body”, but

becomes so in conjunction with Manas, the incarnating Entity or EGO.

Sûkshmapadhi (*Sk.*). In Târaka Râja Yoga the “principle” containing both the higher and the lower Manas and Kâma. It corresponds to the *Manomaya Kosha* of the Vedantic classification and to the *Svapna* state.

Sûkshma Sarîra (*Sk.*). The dream-like, illusive body akin to *Mânasarûpa* or “thought-body”. It is the vesture of the gods, or the Dhyânis and the Devas. Written also *Sukshama Sharîra* and called *Sukshmapadhi* by the Târaka Râja Yogis. (*Secret Doctrine*, I.,157)

Sthûlopadhi (*Sk.*). A “principle” answering to the lower triad in man, i.e., body, astral form, and life, in the Târaka Râja Yoga system, which names only three chief principles in man. *Sthûlopadhi* corresponds to the *jagrata*, or waking conscious state.

Higher Self. The Supreme Divine Spirit overshadowing man. The crown of the upper spiritual Triad in man—Atmân.

Individuality. One of the names given in Theosophy and Occultism to the Human Higher EGO. We make a distinction between the immortal and divine Ego, and the mortal human Ego which perishes. The latter, or “personality” (personal Ego) survives the dead body only for a time in the Kama Loka; the Individuality prevails forever.

Ego (*Lat.*). "Self" ; the consciousness in man "I am I" — or the feeling of "I-am-ship". Esoteric philosophy teaches the existence of two Egos in man, the mortal or personal, and the Higher, the Divine and the Impersonal, calling the former "personality" and the latter "Individuality."

Egoity. From the word "Ego". Egoity means "individuality", never "personality", and is the opposite of egoism or "selfishness", the characteristic par excellence of the latter.

Nous. (*Gr.*). A Platonic term for the Higher Mind or Soul. It means Spirit as distinct from animal Soul—*psyche*; divine consciousness or mind in man.

Inner Man. An occult term, used to designate the true and immortal Entity in us, not the outward and mortal form of clay that we call our body. The term applies, strictly speaking, only to the Higher Ego, the "astral man" being the appellation of the Double and of *Kâma Rupa* (*q.v.*) or the surviving *eidolon*.

Antahkarana (*Sk.*), or Antaskarana. The term has various meanings, which differ with every school of philosophy and sect. Thus Sankârachârya renders the word as "understanding"; others, as "the internal instrument, the Soul, formed by the thinking principle and egoism"; whereas the Occultists explain it as the *path* or bridge between the Higher and the Lower Manas, the divine *Ego*, and the *personal* Soul of man. It serves as a medium of communication between the two, and conveys from the Lower to the Higher Ego all

those personal impressions and thoughts of men which can, by their nature, be assimilated and stored by the undying Entity, and be thus made immortal with it, these being the only elements of the evanescent *Personality* that survive death and time. It thus stands to reason that only that which is noble, spiritual and divine in man can testify in Eternity to his having lived.

Personality. In Occultism—which divides man into seven principles, considering him under the three aspects of the *divine*, the *thinking* or the *rational*, and the *animal* man—the lower *quaternary* or the purely astrophysical being; while by *Individuality* is meant the Higher Triad, considered as a Unity. Thus the *Personality* embraces all the characteristics and memories of one physical life, while the *Individuality* is the imperishable *Ego* which re-incarnates and clothes itself in one personality after another.

Psyche (*Gr.*). The animal, terrestrial Soul; the lower *Manas*.

Mâyâvi Rûpa (*Sk.*). “Illusive form”; the “double” in esoteric philosophy; *döppelgänger* or *perisprit* in German and French.

Mayavic Upadhi (*Sk.*). The covering of illusion, phenomenal appearance.

Plastic Soul. Used in Occultism in reference to the *linga sharira* or the astral body of the lower Quaternary. It is called “plastic” and also “Protean” Soul from its power of assuming any shape or form and moulding or modelling itself into or upon any image impressed in

the astral light around it, or in the minds of the medium or of those present at séances for materialization. The *linga sharira* must not be confused with the *mayavi rupa* or “thought body” —the image created by the thought and will of an adept or sorcerer; for while the “astral form” or *linga sharira* is a real entity, the “thought body” is a temporary illusion created by the mind.

Astral Body, or Astral “Double”. The ethereal counterpart or shadow of man or animal. The *Linga Sharira*, the “Doppelganger”. The reader must not confuse it with the ASTRAL SOUL, another name for the lower Manas, or Kama-Manas so-called, the reflection of the HIGHER EGO.

Prânamâya Kosha (*Sk.*). The vehicle of *Prâna*, life, or the *Linga Sarîra* a Vedantic term.

Rûpa (*Sk.*). Body; any form, applied even to the forms of the gods, which are subjective to us.

Paranirvâna (*Sk.*). Absolute *Non-Being*, which is equivalent to absolute *Being* or “Be-ness”, the state reached by the human Monad at the end of the great cycle (See *Secret Doctrine* I, 135).

Nirvâna (*Sk.*). According to the Orientalists, the entire “blowing out”, like the flame of a candle, the utter extinction of existence. But in the esoteric explanations it is the state of absolute existence and absolute consciousness, into which the Ego of a man who has reached the highest degree of perfection and holiness during life goes, after the body dies, and occasionally,

as in the case of Gautama Buddha and others, during life.

Devachan (*Sk.*). The “dwelling of the gods”. A state intermediate between two earth-lives, into which the EGO (Atmâ-Buddhi-Manas, or the Trinity made One) enters, after its separation from Kâma Rupa, and the disintegration of the lower principles on earth.

Sukhâvati (*Sk.*). The Western Paradise of the uneducated rabble. The popular notion is that there is a Western Paradise of Amitâbha, wherein good men and saints revel in physical delights until they are carried once more by Karma into the circle of rebirth. This is an exaggerated and mistaken notion of Devâchân.

Kamaloka (*Sk.*). The *semi* material plane, to us subjective and invisible, where the disembodied “personalities”, the astral forms, called *Kamarupa* remain, until they fade out from it by the complete exhaustion of the effects of the mental impulses that created these eidolons of human and animal passions and desires; It is the Hades of the ancient Greeks and the Amenti of the Egyptians, the land of Silent Shadows; a division of the first group of the *Trailôkya*.

Avitchi (*Sk.*) A state, not necessarily after death only or between two births, for it can take place on earth as well. Lit., “uninterrupted hell”. The last of the eight hells, we are told, “where the culprits *die and are reborn without interruption*—yet not without hope of final redemption. This is because Avitchi is another name

for Myalba (our earth) and also a state to which some soulless men are condemned on this physical plane.

Trailokya, or *Trilokya* (*Sk.*). Lit., the “three regions” or worlds ; the complementary triad to the Brahmanical quaternary of worlds named *Bhuvanatraya*. A Buddhist profane layman will mention only three divisions of every world, while a non-initiated Brahman will maintain that there are four. The four divisions of the latter are purely physical and sensuous, the *Trailokya* of the Buddhist are purely spiritual and ethical. The Brahmanical division may be found fully described under the heading of *Vyahritis*, the difference being for the present sufficiently shown in the following parallel:

<i>Brahmanical Division of the Worlds.</i>	<i>Buddhist Division of the Regions.</i>
1. <i>Bhur</i> , earth.	1. World of desire, <i>Kâmadhâtu</i> or <i>Kâmalôka</i> .
2. <i>Bhuvah</i> , heaven, firmament.	2. World of form, <i>Rûpadhâtu</i> .
3. <i>Swar</i> , atmosphere, the sky.	} 3. The formless world, <i>Arûpadhâtu</i> .
4. <i>Mahar</i> , eternal luminous essence.	

All these are the worlds of *post mortem* states. For instance, *Kâmalôka* or *Kâmadhâtu*, the region of *Mâra*, is that which mediæval and modern Kabalists call the world of astral light, and the “world of shells” *Kâmalôka* has, like every other region, its seven divisions, the lowest of which begins on earth or invisibly in its atmosphere; the six others ascend gradually, the highest being the abode of those who have died owing to accident, or suicide in a fit of temporary insanity, or were otherwise victims of external forces. It is a place where all those who have

died before the end of the term allotted to them, and whose higher principles do not, therefore, go at once into Devachanic state—sleep a dreamless sweet sleep of oblivion, at the termination of which they are either reborn immediately, or pass gradually into the Devachanic state. Rûpadhâtu is the celestial world of *form*, or what we call *Devâchân*. With the uninitiated Brahmans, Chinese and other Buddhists, the Rûpadhâtu is divided into eighteen *Brahmâ* or *Devalokas*; the life of a soul therein lasts from half a Yuga up to 16,000 Yugas or Kalpas, and the height of the “Shades” is from half a Yojana up to 16,000 Yojanas (a *Yojana* measuring from five and a half to ten miles !), and such-like theological twaddle evolved from priestly brains. But the Esoteric Philosophy teaches that though for the Egos for the time being, everything or everyone preserves its form (as in a dream), yet as Rûpadhâtu is a *purely mental region*, and a state, the Egos themselves have *no form* outside their own consciousness. Esotericism divides this “region” into seven Dhyânas, “regions”, or states of contemplation, which are not localities but mental representations of these. *Arûpadhâtu*: this “region” is again divided into seven Dhyânas, still more abstract and formless, for this “World” is without any form or desire whatever. It is the highest region of the *post mortem* Trailokya; and as it is the abode of those who are almost ready for Nirvâna and is, in fact, the very threshold of the Nirvânic state, it stands to reason that in Arûpadhâtu (or Arûpavachara) there can be neither form nor

sensation, nor any feeling connected with our three dimensional Universe.

Kamadhātu (*Sk.*). Called also Kamāvachara, a region including Kâmalôka. In exoteric ideas it is the first of the Trailâyka—or three regions (applied also to celestial beings) or seven planes or degrees, each broadly represented by one of the three chief characteristics; namely, *Kama*, *Rupa* and *Arupa*, or those of desire, form and formlessness. The first of the Trailokyas, *Kamadhātu*, is thus composed of the earth and the six inferior Devalokas, the earth being followed by *Kamaloka* (q.v.). These taken together constitute the seven degrees of the material world of form and sensuous gratification. The second of the Trailâyka (or Trilâyka) is called *Rupadhātu* or “material form” and is also composed of seven Lokas (or localities). The third is *Arupadhātu* or “immaterial lokas”. “Locality”, however, is an incorrect word to use in translating the term *dhātu*, which does not mean in some of its special applications a “place” at all. For instance, *Arupadhātu* is a purely subjective world, a “state” rather than a place. But as the European tongues have no adequate metaphysical terms to express certain ideas, we can only point out the difficulty.

Kamarupa (*Sk.*). Metaphysically, and in our esoteric philosophy, it is the subjective form created through the mental and physical desires and thoughts in connection with things of matter, by all sentient beings, a form which survives the death of their bodies. After

that death three of the seven “principles” —or let us say planes of senses and consciousness on which the human instincts and ideation act in turn—viz., the body, its astral prototype and physical vitality,—being of no further use, remain on earth; the three higher principles, grouped into one, merge into the state of Devachan (*q.v.*), in which state the Higher Ego will remain until the hour for a new reincarnation arrives; and the *eidolon* of the ex-personality is left alone in its new abode. Here, the pale copy of the man that was, vegetates for a period of time, the duration of which is variable and according to the element of materiality which is left in it, and which is determined by the past life of the defunct. Bereft as it is of its higher mind, spirit and physical senses, if left alone to its own senseless devices, it will gradually fade out and disintegrate. But, if forcibly drawn back into the terrestrial sphere whether by the passionate desires and appeals of the surviving friends or by regular necromantic practices—one of the most pernicious of which is medium-ship—the “spook” may prevail for a period greatly exceeding the span of the natural life of its body. Once the Kamarupa has learnt the way back to living human bodies, it becomes a vampire, feeding on the vitality of those who are so anxious for its company. In India these *eidolons* are called *Pisâchas*, and are much dreaded, as already explained elsewhere.

Elementaries. Properly, the disembodied souls of the depraved; these souls having at some time prior to

death separated from themselves their divine spirits, and so lost their chance for immortality; but at the present stage of learning it has been thought best to apply the term to the spooks or phantoms of disembodied persons, in general, to those whose temporary habitation is the Kâma Loka. Eliphas Lévi and some other Kabbalists make little distinction between elementary spirits who have been men, and those beings which people the elements, and are the blind forces of nature. Once divorced from their higher triads and their bodies, these souls remain in their *Kâma-rupic* envelopes, and are irresistibly drawn to the earth amid elements congenial to their gross natures. Their stay in the Kâma Loka varies as to its duration; but ends invariably in disintegration, dissolving like a column of mist, atom by atom, in the surrounding elements.

Shells. A Kabbalistic name for the phantoms of the dead, the “spirits” of the Spiritualists, figuring in physical phenomena; so named on account of their being simply illusive forms, empty of their higher principles.

Umbra (*Lat.*). The shadow of an earth-bound spook. The ancient Latin races divided man (in esoteric teachings) into seven principles, as did every old system, and as Theosophists do now. They believed that after death *Anima*, the pure divine soul, ascended to heaven, a place of bliss; *Manes* (the Kâma Rûpa) descended into Hades (Kâma Loka); and Umbra (or astral double, the *Linga Sharîra*) remained on earth

hovering about its tomb, because the attraction of physical, objective matter and affinity to its earthly body kept it within the places which that body had impressed with its emanations. Therefore, they said that nothing but the astral image of the defunct could be seen on earth, and even that faded out with the disintegration of the last particle of the body which had been so long its dwelling.

Prêtas (*Sk.*). “Hungry demons in popular folk-lore. “Shells”, of the avaricious and selfish man after death; “Elementaries” reborn as Prêtas, in Kâma-loka, according to the esoteric teachings;

Pisâchas (*Sk.*). In the *Purânas*, goblins or demons created by Brahmâ. In the southern Indian folk-lore, ghosts, demons, larvæ and vampires—generally female—who haunt men. Fading remnants of human beings in *Kâmaloka*, as shells and Elementaries.

Materializations. In Spiritualism the word signifies the objective appearance of the so-called “Spirits” of the dead, who reclothe themselves occasionally in matter; *i.e.*, they form for themselves out of the materials at hand, which are found in the atmosphere and the emanations of those present, a temporary body bearing the human likeness of the defunct as he appeared, when alive. Theosophists accept the phenomenon of “materialization”; but they reject the theory that it is produced by “Spirits”, *i.e.*, the immortal principles of the disembodied persons. Theosophists hold that when the phenomenon is genuine—and it is a fact of rarer occurrence than is

generally believed—it is produced by the *larvæ*, the *eidola* or Kamalokic “ghosts” of dead personalities. As Kâmaloka is on the earth plane and differs from its degree of materiality only in the degree of its plane of consciousness, for which reason it is concealed from our normal sight, the occasional apparition of such shells is as natural as that of electric balls and other atmospheric phenomena. Electricity as a fluid, or atomic matter (for Theosophists hold with Maxwell that it *is* atomic), though invisible, is ever present in the air, and manifests under various shapes, but only when certain conditions are there to “materialize” the fluid, when it passes from its own on to our plane and makes itself objective. Similarly with the *eidola* of the dead. They are present, around us, but being on another plane do not see us any more than we see them. But whenever the strong desires of living men and the conditions furnished by the abnormal constitutions of mediums are combined together, these *eidola* are drawn—nay, *pulled* down from their plane onto ours and made objective. This is *Necromancy*. It does no good to the dead, and great harm to the living, in addition to the fact that it interferes with a law of nature. The occasional materialization of the “astral bodies” or *doubles* of living persons is quite another matter. These “astrals” are often mistaken for the apparitions of the dead, since, chameleon-like, our own “Elementaries”, along with those of the disembodied and cosmic Elementals, will often assume the appearance of those images which are strongest in our thoughts. In short, at the so-called

“materialization” seances it is those present and the medium, who *create* the peculiar likeness of the *apparitions*. Independent “apparitions” belong to another kind of psychic phenomena. Materializations are also called “form-manifestations” and “portrait statues”. To call them materialized spirits is inadmissible, for they are not spirits but animated portrait-statues, indeed.

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. (See figure on page 243.)

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 Kabalist 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," "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 *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 for 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 in the present cycle. 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)

Written toward the end of her life, this summarizes a more elaborate description given in *Isis Unveiled* (I:309) more than ten years earlier:

“When the Central Invisible...saw the efforts of the divine Scintilla, unwilling to be dragged lower down into the degradation of matter, to liberate itself, he permitted it to shoot out from itself a monad, over which, attached to it as by the finest thread, the Divine Scintilla (the soul) had to watch during its ceaseless peregrinations from one form to another. Thus the monad was shot down into the first form of matter and became encased in stone; then, in course of time, through the combined efforts of living fire and living water, both of which shone their reflection upon the stone, the monad crept out of its prison to sunlight as a lichen. From change to change it went higher and higher; the monad, with every new transformation borrowing more of the radiance of its parent, Scintilla, which approached it nearer at every transmigration....Henceforth, growing more and more radiant at each step of his upward progress, he mounts the shining path that ends at the point from which he started around the GRAND CYCLE.”

Compare all this with the last three verses of Stanza VII of the Book of Dzyan. (S.D. I: 238):

5. The spark hangs from the flame by the finest thread of Fohat. It journeys through the Seven Worlds of Maya. It stops in the first, and is a metal and a stone ; it passes into the second and behold—a plant ; the plant whirls through seven changes and becomes a sacred animal. From the combined attributes of these, Manu, the thinker is formed. Who forms him ? the seven lives, and the one life. Who completes him ? The five-fold Lha. And who perfects the last body ? Fish, sin, and soma. . . .

6. From the first-born the thread between the Silent Watcher and his Shadow becomes more strong and radiant with every change. The morning sun-light has changed into noon-day glory. . . .

7. This is thy present wheel, said the Flame to the Spark. Thou art myself, my image, and my shadow. I have clothed myself in thee, and thou art my Vahan to the day, “ Be with us,” when thou shalt re-become myself and others, thyself and me. Then the builders, having donned their first clothing, descend on radiant earth and reign over men—who are themselves. . . .

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 Dhyān Chohan?

GLOSSARY FOR CHAPTER 4

Evolution. As said in *Isis Unveiled*: "Modern Science holds but to a one-sided physical evolution, prudently avoiding and ignoring the higher or spiritual evolution, which would force our contemporaries to confess the superiority of the ancient philosophers and psychologists over themselves. The ancient sages, ascending to the UNKNOWABLE, made their starting-point from the first manifestation of the unseen, the unavoidable, and, from a strictly logical reasoning, the absolutely necessary creative Being, the Demiurgos of the universe. Evolution began with them from pure spirit, which descending lower and lower down, assumed at last a visible and comprehensible form, and became matter. Arrived at this point, they speculated in the Darwinian method, but on a far more large and comprehensive basis."

Anima Mundi (*Lat.*). The "Soul of the World", the same as the *Alaya* of the Northern Buddhists; the divine essence which permeates, animates and informs all, from the smallest atom of matter to man and god. It is in a sense the "seven-skinned mother" of the stanzas in the *Secret Doctrine*, the essence of seven planes of sentience, consciousness and differentiation, moral and physical. In its highest aspect it is *Nirvâna*, in its lowest Astral Light. It was feminine with the Gnostics, the early Christians and the Nazarenes; bisexual with other sects, who considered it only in its four lower planes. Of igneous, ethereal nature in the objective world of form (and then ether), and divine and

spiritual in its three higher planes. When it is said that every human soul was born by detaching itself from the *Anima Mundi*, it means, esoterically, that our higher Egos are of an essence identical with It, which is a radiation of the ever unknown Universal ABSOLUTE.

Monad (*Gr.*). The Unity, the *one* ; but in Occultism it often means the unified triad, Atma-Buddhi-Manas, or the duad, Atma-Buddhi, that immortal part of man which reincarnates in the lower kingdoms, and gradually progresses through them to Man and then to the final goal— Nirvâna.

Sûtrâtman (*Sk.*). Lit., “the thread of spirit”; the immortal Ego, the Individuality which incarnates in men one life after the other, and upon which are strung, like beads on a string, his countless Personalities.

Elementals. Spirits of the Elements. The creatures evolved in the four Kingdoms or Elements—earth, air, fire, and water. They are called by the Kabbalists, Gnomes (of the earth), Sylphs (of the air), Salamanders (of the fire), and Undines (of the water). Except a few of the higher kinds, and their rulers, they are rather forces of nature than ethereal men and women. These forces, as the servile agents of the Occultists, may produce various effects; but if employed by “Elementaries” (*q.v.*)_in which case they enslave the mediums—they will deceive the credulous.

Sylphs. The Rosicrucian name for the elementals of the air.

Salamanders. The Rosicrucian name for the Elementals of Fire. The animal, as well as its name, is of most occult significance, and is widely used in poetry. The name is almost identical in all languages. Thus, in Greek, Latin, French, Spanish, Italian, etc., it is Salamandra, in Persian Samandel, and in Sanskrit Salamandala.

Undines (*Lat.*). Water nymphs and spooks. One of the four principal kinds of elemental spirits, 'which are Salamanders (fire), Sylphs (air), Gnomes (earth), and Undines (water).

Gnomes (*Alch.*) The Rosicrucian name for the mineral and earth elementals.

Metempsychosis. The progress of the soul from one stage of existence to another. Symbolized as and vulgarly believed to be rebirths in animal bodies. A term generally misunderstood by every class of European and American society, including many scientists. *Metempsychosis* should apply to animals alone. The kabalistic axiom, "A stone becomes a plant, a plant an animal, an animal a man, a man a spirit, and a spirit a god", receives an explanation in Manu's *Mânava-Dharma-Shâstra* and other Brahmanical books.

Pre-existence. The term used to denote that we have lived before. The same as reincarnation in the past. The idea is derided by some, rejected by others, called absurd and inconsistent by the third yet it is the oldest and the most universally accepted belief from an immemorial antiquity. And if this belief was

universally accepted by the most subtle philosophical minds of the pre-Christian world, surely it is not amiss that some of our modern intellectual men should also believe in it, or at least give the doctrine the benefit of the doubt. Even the Bible hints at it more than once, St. John the Baptist being regarded as the reincarnation of Elijah, and the Disciples asking whether the blind man *was born blind because of his sins*, which is equal to saying that he had *lived and sinned before being born blind*. As Mr. Bonwick well says: it was "the work of spiritual progression and soul discipline. The pampered sensualist returned a beggar; the proud oppressor, a slave ; the selfish woman of fashion, a seamstress. A turn of the wheel gave a chance for the development of neglected or abused intelligence and feeling, hence the popularity of reincarnation in all climes and times. . . . thus the expurgation of evil was . . . gradually but certainly accomplished." Verily "an evil act follows a man, passing through one hundred thousand transmigrations" (*Panchatantra*)Herodotus tells his readers, that the Egyptians "are the earliest who have spoken of this doctrine, according to which the soul of man is immortal, and after the destruction of the body, *enters into a newly born being*. When, say they, it has passed through all the animals of the earth and sea, and all the birds, it will re-enter the body of a new born man." This is *Pre-existence*....

Reincarnation. The doctrine of rebirth, believed in by Jesus and the Apostles, as by all men in those days, but denied now by the Christians. All the Egyptian

converts to Christianity, Church Fathers and others, believed in this doctrine, as shown by the writings of several. In the still existing symbols, the human-headed bird flying towards a mummy, a body, or "the soul uniting itself with its *sahou* (glorified body of the Ego, and also the *kâmalokic shell*) proves this belief. "The song of the Resurrection" chanted by Isis to recall her dead husband to life, might be translated "Song of Rebirth", as Osiris is collective Humanity....The putting on of flesh periodically by the Soul or the Ego, was a universal belief; nor can anything be more consonant with justice and Karmic law.

Karma (*Sk.*). Physically, action: metaphysically, the LAW OF RETRIBUTION, the Law of cause and effect or Ethical Causation. Nemesis, only in one sense, that of bad Karma. It is the eleventh *Nidana* in the concatenation of causes and effects in orthodox Buddhism ; yet it is the power that controls all things, the resultant of moral action, the metaphysical *Samskâra*, or the moral effect of an act committed for the attainment of something which gratifies a personal desire. There is the Karma of merit and the Karma of demerit. Karma neither punishes nor rewards, it is simply *the one* Universal LAW which guides unerringly, and, so to say, blindly, all other laws productive of certain effects along the grooves of their respective causations. When Buddhism teaches that "Karma is that moral kernel (of any being) which alone survives death and continues in transmigration ' or reincarnation, it simply means that there remains

nought after each personality but the causes produced by it; causes which are undying, i.e., which cannot be eliminated from the Universe until replaced by their legitimate effects, and wiped out by them, so to speak. Such causes, unless compensated during the life of the person who produced them by adequate effects, will follow the reincarnated Ego, and reach it in its subsequent reincarnation until a harmony between effects and causes is fully reestablished. No "personality" — a mere bundle of material atoms and of instinctual and mental characteristics — can of course continue, as such, in the world of pure Spirit. Only that which is immortal in its very nature and divine in its essence, namely, the Ego, can exist for ever. And as it is that Ego which chooses the personality it will inform, after each Devachan, and which receives through these personalities the effects of the Karmic causes produced, it is therefore the Ego, that *self* which is the "moral kernel" referred to and embodied karma, "which alone survives death."

Samsâra (*Sk.*). Lit., "rotation"; the ocean of births and deaths. Human rebirths represented as a continuous circle, a wheel ever in motion.

Nirvâna (*Sk.*). According to the Orientalists, the entire "blowing out", like the flame of a candle, the utter extinction of existence. But in the esoteric explanations it is the state of absolute existence and absolute consciousness, into which the Ego of a man who has reached the highest degree of perfection and holiness during life goes, after the body dies, and

occasionally, as in the case of Gautama Buddha and others, during life.

Dhyan Chohans (*Sk.*). Lit., “The Lords of Light”. The highest gods, answering to the Roman Catholic Archangels. The divine Intelligences charged with the supervision of Kosmos.

Planetary Spirits. Primarily the rulers or governors of the planets. As our earth has its hierarchy of terrestrial planetary spirits, from the highest to the lowest plane, so has every other heavenly body. In Occultism, however, the term “Planetary Spirit” is generally applied only to the seven highest hierarchies corresponding to the Christian archangels. These have all passed through a stage of evolution corresponding to the humanity of earth on other worlds, in long past cycles. Our earth, being as yet only in its fourth round, is far too young to have produced high planetary spirits. The highest planetary spirit ruling over any globe is in reality the “Personal God” of that planet and far more truly its “over-ruling providence” than the self-contradictory Infinite Personal Deity of modern Churchianity.


Lipikas (*Sk.*). The celestial recorders, the “Scribes”, those who record every word and deed, said or done by man while on this earth. As Occultism teaches, they are the agents of KARMA—the retributive Law.

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  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 . 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 . 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 . 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).

Following 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)

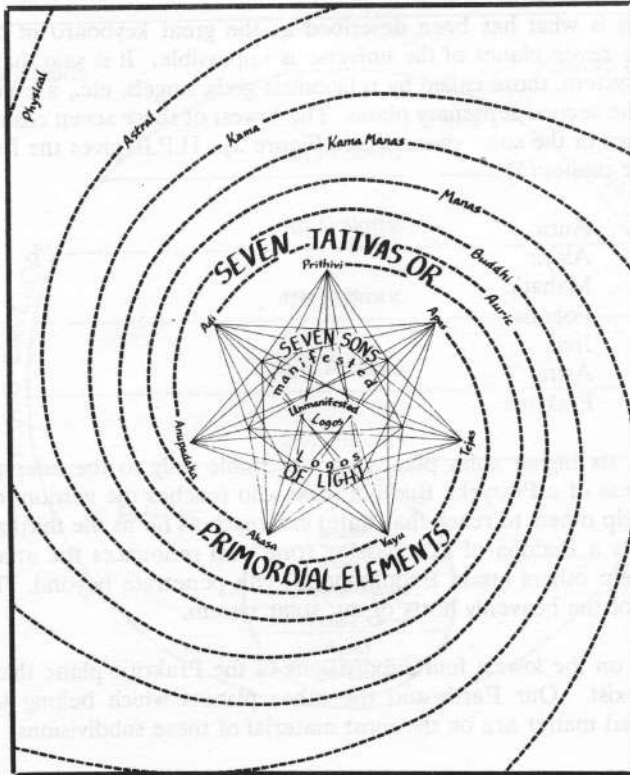
These are the seven rudimentary elements in their purest and most sublimated form. It is these elements that will give rise, after innumerable differentiations, to the seven human sheaths, each of which is the heir to the powers of one of the great cosmic elements and to the “Ray” of Divine Wisdom, which stands behind it. In his book *The Inner Life*, C.W. 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.

Figure 2



The ancient Stanzas of Dzyan, on which *The Secret Doctrine* is based, describe 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)

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 on next page).

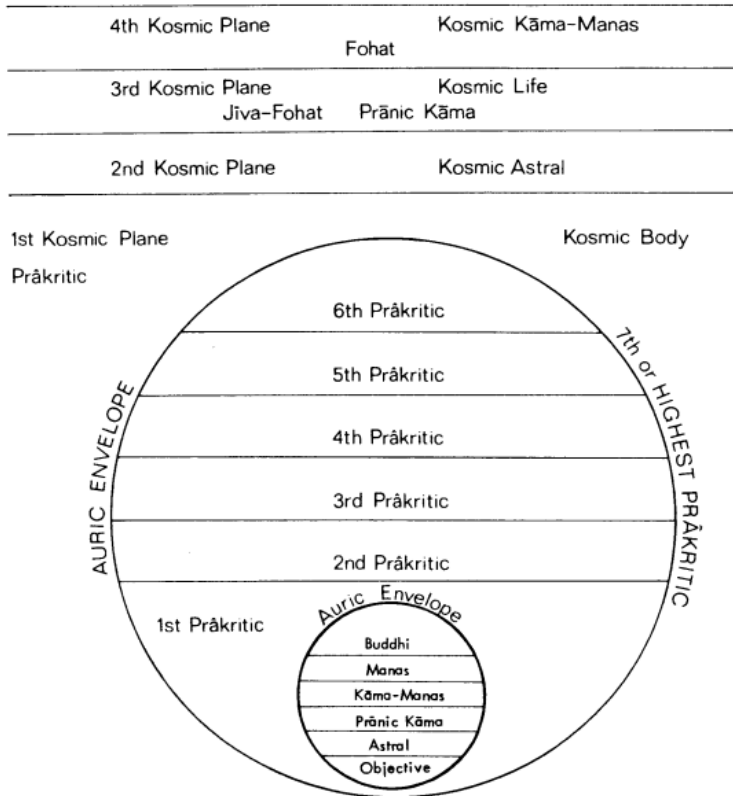
HPB gives the following names for the seven solar planes: (*Collected Writings*, 12:658).

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

The 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.

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.)



It is on the lowest 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!*⁸ 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

⁸ “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).

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.

Q: Could you comment further on the seven *tattoas* 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, you can find there 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," his "aspects," and his "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 Dhyān 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)

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.

GLOSSARY FOR CHAPTER 5

Acosmism (*Gr.*). The precreative period, when there was no Kosmos but Chaos alone.

Laya or *Layam* (*Sk.*). From the root *Li* "to dissolve, to disintegrate" a point of equilibrium (*zero-point*) in physics and chemistry. In occultism, that point where substance becomes homogeneous and is unable to act or differentiate.

Bythos (*Gr.*). A Gnostic term meaning "Depth" or the "great Deep", Chaos. It is equivalent to space, before anything had formed itself in it from the primordial atoms that exist eternally in its spatial depths, according to the teachings of Occultism.

Point within a Circle. In its esoteric meaning the first unmanifested *logos* appearing on the infinite and shoreless expanse of Space, represented by the Circle. It is the plane of Infinity and Absoluteness. This is only one of the numberless and hidden meanings of this symbol, which is the most important of all the geometrical figures used in metaphysical emblematology.

First Point. Metaphysically the first point of manifestation, the germ of primeval differentiation, or the point in the infinite Circle "whose centre is everywhere, and circumference nowhere". The Point is the Logos.

Paramâtman (*Sk.*). The Supreme Soul of the Universe.

Mahat (*Sk.*). Lit., “The great one”. The first principle of Universal Intelligence and Consciousness.

Demiurgic Mind. The same as “Universal Mind”. Mahat, the first “product” of Brahmâ, or himself.

Demiurgos (*Gr*) The Demiurge or Artificer; the Supernal Power which built the universe. Freemasons derive from this word their phrase of “Supreme Architect”. With the Occultists it is the third manifested Logos, or Plato’s “second god”, the second logos being represented by him as the “Father”, the only Deity that he dared mention as an Initiate into the Mysteries.

Prajâpatis (*Sk.*). Progenitors; the givers of life to all on this Earth. They are seven and then ten—corresponding to the seven and ten Kabbalistic Sephiroth; to the Mazdean Amesha-Spentas, &c. Brahmâ the creator, is called Prajâpati as the synthesis of the Lords of Being.

Tanmâtras (*Sk.*). The types or rudiments of the five Elements; the subtile essence of these, devoid of all qualities and identical with the properties of the five basic Elements—earth, water, fire, air and ether; i.e., the *tanmâtras* are, in one of their aspects, smell, taste, touch, sight, and hearing.

Tattwa (*Sk.*). Eternally existing “That”; also, the different principles in Nature, in their occult meaning.

Tattwa Samâsa is a work of Sânkhya philosophy attributed to Kapila himself.

Plane. From the Latin *planus* (level, flat) an extension of space or of something in it, whether physical or metaphysical, *e.g.*, a “plane of consciousness”. As used in Occultism, the term denotes the range or extent of some state of consciousness, or of the perceptive power of a particular set of senses, or the action of a particular force, or the state of matter corresponding to any of the above.

Ain (*Heb.*). The negatively existent; deity in repose, and absolutely passive.

Ain Soph (*Heb.*). The “Boundless” or Limitless; Deity emanating and extending. Ain Soph is also written *En Soph* and *Ain Suph*, no one, not even Rabbis, being sure of their vowels. In the religious metaphysics of the old Hebrew philosophers, the ONE Principle was an abstraction, like Parabrahman, though modern Kabbalists have succeeded now, by dint of mere sophistry and paradoxes, in making a “Supreme God” of it and nothing higher. But with the early Chaldean Kabbalists Ain Soph is “without form or being”, having “no likeness with anything else” (Franck, *Die Kabbala*, p. 126). That Ain Soph has never been considered as the “Creator” is proved by even such an orthodox Jew as Philo calling the “Creator” the *Logos*, who stands next the “Limitless One”, and the “Second God”. “The Second God is its (Ain Soph’s) wisdom”, says Philo (*Quaest. et Solut.*). Deity is NO-THING; it is

nameless, and therefore called Ain Soph; the word *Ain* meaning NOTHING. (See Franck's *Kabbala*, p. 153 ff.)

Ain Soph Aur (*Heb.*). The Boundless Light which concentrates into the First and highest Sephira or Kether, the Crown.

Sephiroth (*Heb.*). The ten emanations of Deity; the highest is formed by the concentration of the Ain Soph Aur, or the Limitless Light, and each Sephira produces by emanation another Sephira. The names of the Ten Sephiroth are:

Kether---The Crown;

Chokmah—Wisdom;

Binah—Understanding;

Chesed—Mercy;

Geburah—Power;

Tiphereth—Beauty;

Netzach—Victory;

Hod—Splendour;

Jesod—Foundation;

Malkuth—The Kingdom.

The conception of Deity embodied in the Ten Sephiroth is a very sublime one, and each Sephira is a picture to the Kabbalist of a group of exalted ideas, titles and attributes, which the name but faintly represents. Each Sephira is called either active or passive, though this attribution may lead to error;

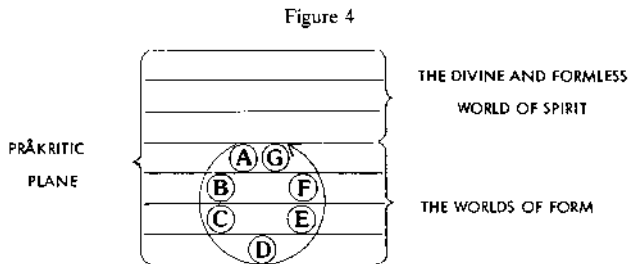
passive does not mean a return to negative existence; and the two words only express the relation between individual Sephiroth, and not any absolute quality.

Adam Kadmon (*Heb*). Archetypal Man; Humanity. In the *Kabalah* Adam Kadmon is the manifested Logos corresponding to our *Third* Logos; the Unmanifested being the first paradigmatic ideal Man, and symbolizing the Universe in *abscondito*, or in its “privation” in the Aristotelean sense. The First Logos is the “Light of the World”, the Second and the Third—its gradually deepening shadows.

Chapter 6

The Scope of Planetary Evolution

It has been mentioned that the planets of our solar system exist on the lower subdivisions of the prakritic plane of the solar cosmos. It is on the lowest of these 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. The chain of which our Earth is a member may be diagrammed as follows (see figure 4).



It is said that the impulse of life—the wave of evolution—moves gradually around this chain of

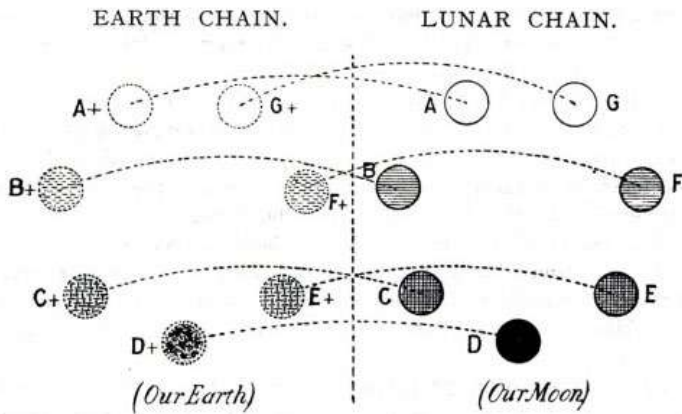
worlds, inhabiting one globe for a period of time and then moving on to another where it continues its evolutionary journey. The first globe to be inhabited is shown as globe A in the diagram above. After spending a long period of time on that world, the life-wave with its constituent monads moves on 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.⁹ In each round up to the fourth, the same general evolution is carried out in successively more concrete stages. During the last

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

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. In *The Secret Doctrine*, H.P.B. illustrated the transfer of life-energies from the seven globes of the lunar chain to those of the earth chain using the following diagram:



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.¹⁰ 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.¹¹ 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 *Sishta* or “remainders.” They continue to act in

¹⁰ See Appendix II.

¹¹ 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.

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 next two 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.¹²

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

¹² 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).

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 Dhyān 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 in 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.¹³ 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 other words, the monads undergo seven root races on globe A, followed by another seven on globe B, and so forth through globe G.

¹³ 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.

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 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.¹⁴ 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 calls them “Mahatmas” or “Great Souls”) who come at different times as saviors to the

¹⁴ 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.

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 Dhyan Chohans.

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 thought 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 assert that the Moon chain was the third of the series and that our Earth chain is the fourth. Another assertion 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 Barboroka (*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 (form) 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 Dhyan 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 pretty 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 created by 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). This has been 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, ie. 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)

An 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 Barborka. (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. 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?

7. How does the occult theory of evolution differ from the Darwinian theory?

GLOSSARY FOR CHAPTER 6

Rings and Rounds. Terms employed by Theosophists in explanation of Eastern cosmogony. They are used to denote the various evolutionary cycles in the Elemental, Mineral, &c., Kingdoms, through which the Monad passes on any one globe, the term Round being used only to denote the cyclic passage of the Monad round the complete chain of seven globes. Generally speaking, Theosophists use the term ring as a synonym of cycles, whether cosmic, geological, metaphysical or any other.

Karshvare (*Zend*). The “seven earths” (our septenary chain) over which rule the *Amesha Spenta*, the Archangels or Dhyan Chohans of the Parsis. The seven earths, of which one only, namely Hvanirata—our earth—is known to mortals. The Earths (esoterically), or seven divisions (exoterically), are our own planetary chain as in *Esoteric Buddhism* and the *Secret Doctrine*. The doctrine is plainly stated in Fargard XIX., 39, of the *Vendidad*.

Qaniratha (*Mazd.*). Our earth, in the Zoroastrian Scriptures, which is placed, as taught in the *Secret Doctrine*, in the midst of the other six *Karshwars*, or globes of the terrestrial chain. (See *Secret Doctrine*, II. p. 759.)

Jambu-dwipa (*Sk.*). One of the main divisions of the globe, in the Purânic system. It includes India. Some say that it was a continent,—others an island—or one of the seven islands (*Sapta dwipa*) It is “the dominion of

Vishnu". In its astronomical and mystic sense it is the name of our globe, separated by the plane of objectivity from the six other globes of our planetary chain.

Sakwala. This is a *bana* or "word" uttered by Gautama Buddha in his oral instructions. Sakwala is a mundane, or rather a solar system, of which there is an infinite number in the universe, and which denotes that space to which the light of every sun extends. Each Sakwala contains earths, hells and heavens (meaning good and bad spheres, our earth being considered as hell, in Occultism); attains its prime, then falls into decay and is finally destroyed at regularly recurring periods, in virtue of one immutable law. Upon the earth, the Master taught that there have been already four great "continents" (the Land of the Gods, Lemuria, Atlantis, and the present "continent" divided into five parts...), and that three more have to appear. The former did *not communicate* with each other", a sentence showing that Buddha was not speaking of the actual continents known in his day (for *Pâtâla* or America was perfectly familiar to the ancient Hindus), but of the four geological formations of the earth, with their four distinct *root-races* which had already disappeared.

Dwipa (*Sk.*). An island or a continent. The Hindus have seven (*Sapta dwipa*); the Buddhists only four. This is owing to a misunderstood reference of the Lord Buddha who, using the term metaphorically, applied the word *dwipa* to the races of men. The four Root-races which preceded our fifth, were compared by

Siddhârtha to four continents or isles which studded the ocean of birth and death—*Samsâra*.

Meru (*Sk.*). The name of an alleged mountain in the centre (or “navel”) of the earth where Swarga, the Olympus of the indians, is placed. It contains the “cities” of the greatest gods and the abodes of various Devas. Geographically accepted, it is an unknown mountain north of the Himalayas. In tradition, Meru was the “Land of Bliss” of the earliest Vedic times. It is also referred to as *Hemâdri* “the golden mountain”, *Ratnasânu*, “jewel peak”, *Karnikâchala*, “lotus-mountain”, and *Amarâdri* and *Deva-parvata*, “the mountain of the gods” The Occult teachings place it in the very centre of the North Pole, pointing it out as the site of the first continent on our earth, after the solidification of the globe.

Hyperborean (*Gr.*). The regions around the North Pole in the Arctic Circle.

Lemuria. A modern term first used by some naturalists, and now adopted by Theosophists, to indicate a continent that, according to the *Secret Doctrine* of the East, preceded Atlantis. Its Eastern name would not reveal much to European ears.

Atlantis (*Gr.*) The continent that was submerged in the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans according to the secret teachings and Plato.

Atlantidæ (*Gr.*) The ancestors of the Pharaohs and the forefathers of the Egyptians, according to some, and as the Esoteric Science teaches. (See *S.D.*, *Vol. II.*, and

Esoteric Buddhism.) Plato heard of this highly civilized people, the last remnant of which was submerged 9,000 years before his day, from Solon, who had it from the High Priests of Egypt. Voltaire, the eternal scoffer, was right in stating that “the Atlantidæ (our *fourth* Root Race) made their appearance in Egypt It was in Syria and in Phrygia, as well as Egypt, that they established the worship of the Sun.” Occult philosophy teaches that the Egyptians were a remnant of the last *Aryan* Atlantidæ.

Ruta (*Sk.*). The name of one of the last islands of Atlantis, which perished ages before *Poseidonis*, the “Atlantis” of Plato.

Daitya (*Sk.*). The name of one of the last islands of Atlantis, which perished ages before *Poseidonis*, the “Atlantis” of Plato.

Poseidonis (*Gr.*). The last remnant of the great Atlantean Continent. Plato’s island Atlantis is referred to as an equivalent term in Esoteric Philosophy.

Aryavarta (*Sk.*). The “land of the Aryas”, or India. The ancient name for Northern India. The Brahmanical invaders (“ from the Oxus” say the Orientalists) first settled. It is erroneous to give this name to the whole, of India, since Manu gives the name of “the land of the Aryas” only to “the tract between the Himalaya and the Vindhya ranges, from the eastern to the western sea”.

Manu (*Sk.*). The great Indian legislator. The name comes from the Sanskrit root *man* “to think” —

mankind really, but stands for Swâyambhuva, the first of the Manus, who started from *Swâyambhu*, "the self-existent" hence the *Logos*, and the progenitor of mankind. Manu is the first Legislator, almost a Divine Being.

Manu Swâyambhuva (*Sk.*). The heavenly man. Adam-Kadmon, the synthesis of the fourteen Manus.

Manus (*Sk.*). The fourteen Manus are the patrons or guardians of the race cycles in a Manvantara, or Day of Brahmâ. The primeval Manus are seven, they become fourteen in the *Purânas*.

Kalpa (*Sk.*). The period of a mundane revolution, generally a cycle of time, but usually, it represents a "day" or "night" of Brahmâ, a period of 4,320,000,000 years.

Ratnâvabhâsa Kalpa (*Sk.*). The age in which all sexual difference will have ceased to exist, and birth will take place in the *Anupâdaka* mode, as in the second and third Root-races. Esoteric philosophy teaches that it will take place at the end of the sixth and during the seventh and last Root-race in this Round.

Samvartta Kalpa (*Sk.*). The Kalpa or period of destruction, the same as *Pralaya*. Every root-race and sub-race is subject to such Kalpas of destruction; the fifth root-race having sixty-four such Cataclysms periodically; namely: fifty-six by fire, seven by water, and one small Kalpa by winds or cyclones.

Three hundred sixty days and nights make a year of Brahmâ. A lifetime or "age of Brahmâ", one hundred of his divine years, is equal to 311,040,000,000,000 of our mortal years. The old Mazdeans or Magi (the modern Parsis) had the same calculation, though the Orientalists do not seem to perceive it, for even the Parsi Moheds themselves have forgotten it. But their "Sovereign time of the Long Period" (*Zervan Dareghâ Hvadâta*) lasts 12,000 years, and these are the 12,000 *divine* years of a Mahâyuga as shown above, whereas the *Zervan Akarana* (Limitless Time), mentioned by Zarathustra, is the *Kâla*, out of space and time, of Parabrahm.

Satya Yuga (*Sk.*). The golden age, or the age of truth and purity; the first of the four Yugas, also called Krita Yuga.

Tretâ Yuga (*Sk.*). The second age of the world, a period of 1,296,000 years.

Dwapara Yuga (*Sk.*). The third of the "Four Ages" in Hindu Philosophy ; or the second age counted from below.

Kaliyuga (*Sk.*). The fourth, the black or iron age, our present period, the duration of which is 432,000 years. The last of the ages into which the evolutionary period of man is divided by a series of such ages. It began 3,102 years B.C. at the moment of Krishna's death, and the first cycle of 5,000 years ended between the years 1897 and 1898.

Sishta (*Sk.*). The great elect or Sages, left after every minor *Pralaya* (that which is called “obscuration” in Mr. Sinnett’s *Esoteric Buddhism*), when the globe goes into its night or rest, to become, on its re-awakening, the seed of the next humanity. Lit. “remnant.”

Pitris (*Sk.*). The ancestors, or creators of mankind. They are of seven classes, three of which are incorporeal, *arupa*, and four corporeal. In popular theology they are said to be created from Brahmâ’s side. They are variously genealogized, but in esoteric philosophy they are as given in the *Secret Doctrine*. In *Isis Unveiled* it is said of them “It is generally believed that the Hindu term means the spirits of our ancestors, of disembodied people, hence the argument of some Spiritualists that fakirs (and yogis) and other Eastern wonder-workers, are *mediums*. This is in more than one sense erroneous. The Pitris are not the ancestors of the present living men, but those of the human kind, or Adamic races; the spirits of human races, which on the great scale of descending evolution *preceded our races* of men, and they *were physically, as well as spiritually, far superior* to our modern pigmies. In *Mânava Dharma Shâstra* they are called the *Lunar Ancestors*.” The *Secret Doctrine* has now explained that which was cautiously put forward in the earlier Theosophical volumes.

Pitar Devata (*Sk.*). The “Father-Gods”, the lunar ancestors of mankind.

Pitaras (*Sk.*). Fathers, Ancestors. The fathers of the human races.

Barhishad (*Sk.*). A class of the "lunar" Pitris or "Ancestors", Fathers, who are believed in popular superstition to have kept up in their past incarnations the household sacred flame and made fire-offerings. Esoterically the Pitris who evolved their shadows or *chhayas* to make therewith the first man. (See *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II.)

Agnishwattas (*Sk.*). A class of Pitris, the creators of the first ethereal race of men. Our solar ancestors as contrasted with the *Barhishads*, the "lunar" Pitris or ancestors, though otherwise explained in the *Purânas*.

Mânasa or *Manaswin* (*Sk.*). "The efflux of the *divine* mind," and explained as meaning that this efflux signifies the *manasa* or divine sons of Brahmâ-Virâj. Nilakantha who is the authority for this statement, further explains the term "manasa" by *manomâtrasarira*. These Manasa are the *Arupa* or incorporeal sons of the Prajâpati Virâj, in another version. But as Arjuna Misra identifies Virâj with Brahmâ, and as Brahmâ is Mahat, the universal mind, the exoteric blind becomes plain. The Pitris are identical with the Kumâra, the Vairaja, the Manasa-Putra (mind sons), and are finally identified with the human "Egos".

Mânasa Dhyânis (*Sk.*). The highest Pitris in the *Purânas*; the Agnishwattas, or Solar Ancestors of Man, those who made of Man a rational being, by incarnating in the senseless forms of semi-ethereal flesh of the men of the third race. (See Vol. II. of *Secret Doctrine*.)

Mânasas (*Sk.*). Those who endowed humanity with *manas* or intelligence, the immortal EGOS in men.

Asuras (*Sk.*). Exoterically, elementals and evil, gods—considered maleficent; demons, and *no* gods. But esoterically—the reverse. For in the most ancient portions of the *Rig Veda*, the term is used for the Supreme Spirit, and therefore the Asuras are spiritual and divine. It is only in the last book of the *Rig Veda*, its latest part, and in the *Atharva Veda*, and the *Brâhmanas*, that the epithet, which had been given to Agni, the greatest Vedic Deity, to Indra and Varuna, has come to signify the reverse of gods. *Asu* means breath, and it is with his breath that Prajâpati (Brahmâ) creates the Asuras. When ritualism and dogma got the better of the Wisdom religion, the initial letter *a* was adopted as a negative prefix, and the term ended by signifying “not a god”, and Sura only a deity. But in the Vedas the Suras have ever been connected with *Surya*, the sun, and regarded as *inferior* deities, *devas*.

Kumâra (*Sk.*). A virgin boy, or young celibate. The first Kumâras are the seven sons of Brahmâ born out of the limbs of the god, in the so-called ninth creation. It is stated that the name was given to them owing to their formal refusal to “procreate their species”, and so they “remained Yogis”, as the legend says.

Mâruts (*Sk.*). With the Orientalists Storm-Gods, but in the *Veda* something very mystical. In the esoteric teachings as they incarnate in every round, they are

simply identical with some of the Agnishwatta Pitris, the Human intelligent Egos. Hence the allegory of Siva transforming the *lumps of flesh into boys*, and calling them Maruts, to show senseless men transformed by becoming the Vehicles of the Pitris or Fire Maruts, and thus rational beings.

Dæmon (*Gr.*) In the original Hermetic works and ancient classics it has a meaning identical with that of “god”, “angel” or “genius”. The Dæmon of Socrates is the incorruptible part of the man, or rather the real inner man which we call Nous or the rational divine Ego. At all events the Dæmon (or Daimon) of the great Sage was surely not the demon of the Christian Hell or of Christian orthodox theology. The name was given by ancient peoples, and especially the philosophers of the Alexandrian school, to all kinds of spirits, whether good or bad, human or otherwise. The appellation is often synonymous with that of gods or angels. But some philosophers tried, with good reason, to make a just distinction between the many classes.

Edom (*Heb.*). Edomite Kings. A deeply concealed mystery is to be found in the allegory of the seven Kings of Edom, who “reigned in the land of Edom before there reigned any King over the children of Israel”. (*Gen. xxxvi. 31.*) The Kabbala teaches that this Kingdom was one of “unbalanced forces” and necessarily of unstable character. The world of Israel is a type of the condition of the worlds which came into existence subsequently in the later period when the equilibrium had become established.

On the other hand the Eastern Esoteric philosophy teaches that the seven Kings of Edom are not the type of perished worlds or unbalanced forces, but the symbol of the seven human Root-races, four of which have passed away, the fifth is passing, and two are still to come. Though in the language of esoteric *blinds*, the hint in St. John's *Revelation* is clear enough when it states in chapter xvii , 10: "And there are seven Kings; five are fallen, and one (the fifth, still) is, and the other (the sixth Root- race) is not yet come Had all the seven Kings of Edom perished as worlds of "unbalanced forces", how could the fifth still be, and the other or others "not yet come" ? In *The Kabbalah Unveiled*, we read on page 48, " The seven Kings had died and their possessions had been broken up", and a footnote emphasizes the statement by saying, "these seven Kings are the Edomite Kings"

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 (Kama 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 (Tajasi) 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: ¹⁵

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

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

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).¹⁶

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

¹⁶ Most sources list six or ten paramitas.

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 within” 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.

As they progress in their journey along the Path, aspirants pass through a series of “initiations” which mark the stages of their Pilgrimage.¹⁷ 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

¹⁷ 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.

“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-returner.” 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 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.¹⁸ 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

¹⁸ 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)

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 from the "Central Spiritual Sun," all adepts and Dhyan Chohans are divisible into seven classes, each of which is guided, controlled, and overshadowed 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 sometimes 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 pretty 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 Dhyani 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.

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?

GLOSSARY FOR CHAPTER 7

Mârga (*Sk.*). “The “Path”, The *Ashthânga mârga*, the “holy” or sacred path is the one that leads to Nirvâna.

Adept (*Lat.*). *Adeptus*, “He who has obtained.” In Occultism one who has reached the stage of Initiation, and become a Master in the science of Esoteric philosophy.

Mahâtma. Lit., “great soul”. An adept of the highest order. Exalted beings who, having attained to the mastery over their lower principles are thus living unimpeded by the “man of flesh”, and are in possession of knowledge and power commensurate with the stage they have reached in their spiritual evolution. Called in Pali Rahats and Arhats.

Chohan (*Tib.*) “Lord” or “Master” ; a chief; thus Dhyan-Chohan would answer to “Chief of the Dhyanis”, or celestial Lights—which in English would be translated Archangels.

Mahâ Chohan (*Sk.*). The chief of a spiritual Hierarchy, or of a school of Occultism; the head of the trans-Himalayan mystics.

Avatâra (*Sk.*) Divine incarnation. The descent of a god or some exalted Being, who has progressed beyond the necessity of Rebirths, into the body of a simple mortal. Krishna was an avatar of Vishnu. The Dalai Lama is regarded as an avatar of Avalokiteswara, and the Teschu Lama as one of Amitâbha. There are two kinds

of avatars: those born from woman, and the parentless, the *anupapâdaka*.

Guru (*Sk.*) Spiritual Teacher; a master in metaphysical and ethical doctrines; used also for a teacher of any science.

Guru Deva (*Sk.*) Lit., “divine Master”.

Chelâ (*Sk.*) A disciple, the pupil of a Guru or Sage, the follower of some adept of a school of philosophy (*lit.*, child).

Initiate. From the Latin *Initiatus*. The designation of anyone who was received into and had revealed to him the mysteries and secrets of either Masonry or Occultism. In times of antiquity, those who had been initiated into the arcane knowledge taught by the Hierophants of the Mysteries; and in our modern days those who have been initiated by the adepts of mystic lore into the mysterious knowledge, which, notwithstanding the lapse of ages, has yet a few real votaries on earth.

Initiation. From the same root as the Latin *initia*, which means the basic or first principles of any Science. The practice of initiation or admission into the sacred Mysteries, taught by the Hierophants and learned priests of the Temples, is one of the most ancient customs. This was practised in every old national religion. In Europe it was abolished with the fall of the last pagan temple. There exists at present but one kind of initiation known to the public, namely that into the Masonic rites. Masonry, however, has no more secrets

to give out or conceal. In the palmy days of old, the Mysteries, according to the greatest Greek and Roman philosophers, were the most sacred of all solemnities as well as the most beneficent, and greatly promoted virtue. The Mysteries represented the passage from mortal life into finite death, and the experiences of the disembodied Spirit and Soul in the world of subjectivity. In our own day, as the secret is lost, the candidate passes through sundry meaningless ceremonies and is initiated into the solar allegory of Hiram Abiff, the "Widow's Son".

Three Degrees (of Initiation). Every nation had its exoteric and esoteric religion, the one for the masses, the other for the learned and elect. For example, the Hindus had three degrees with several sub- degrees. The Egyptians had also three preliminary degrees, personified under the "three guardians of the fire " in the Mysteries. The Chinese had their most ancient *Triad* Society: and the Tibetans have to this day their "triple step " ; which was symbolized in the *Vedas* by the three strides of Vishnu. Everywhere antiquity shows an unbounded reverence for the Triad and Triangle—the first geometrical figure. The old Babylonians had their three stages of initiation into the priesthood (which was then esoteric knowledge); the Jews, the Kabbalists and mystics borrowed them from the Chaldees, and the Christian Church from the Jews. " There are Two", says Rabbi Simon ben Jochai, "in conjunction with One; hence they are Three, and if they are Three, then they are One."

Chréstos (*Gr.*) The early Gnostic form of Christ. It was used in the fifth century B.C. by Æschylus, Herodotus, and others....The earliest Christian writer, Justin Martyr, in his first *Apology* calls his co-religionists Chréstians. "It is only through ignorance that men call themselves Christians instead of Chréstians," says Lactantius (lib. iv., cap. vii.). The terms Christ and Christians, spelt originally Chrést and Chréstians, were borrowed from the Temple vocabulary of the Pagans. Chréstos meant in that vocabulary a disciple on probation, a candidate for hierophantship. When he had attained to this through initiation, long trials, and suffering, and had been "anointed" (i.e., "rubbed with oil", as were Initiates and even idols of the gods, as the last touch of ritualistic observance), his name was changed into Christos, the "purified", in esoteric or mystery language. In mystic symbology, indeed, *Christés*, or *Christos*, meant that the "Way", the Path, was already trodden and the goal reached ; when the fruits of the arduous labour, uniting the personality of evanescent clay with the indestructible INDIVIDUALITY, transformed it thereby into the immortal EGO. "At the end of the Way stands the *Chréstes*", the *Purifier*, and the union once accomplished, the *Chrestos*, the "man of sorrow", became *Christos* himself. Paul, the Initiate, knew this, and meant this precisely, when he is made to say, in bad translation : "I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you" (Gal. iv.19), the true rendering of which is . . . "until ye form the Christos within yourselves" ... Every good individual, therefore, may

find Christ in his "inner man" as Paul expresses it (Ephes. iii. 16,17), whether he be Jew, Mussulman, Hindu, or Christian.

Srotâpatti (*Sk*) Lit., "he who has entered the stream", *i.e.*, the stream or path that leads to Nirvâna, or figuratively, to the Nirvânic Ocean. The same as *Sowanee*.

Sakradagamin (*Sk*). Lit., "he who will receive birth (only) once more" before Nirvâna is reached by him; he who has entered the second of the four paths which lead to Nirvana and has almost reached perfection.

Anâgâmin (*Sk*). *Anagam*. One who is no longer to be reborn into the world of desire. One stage before becoming Arhat and ready for Nirvâna. The *third* of the four grades of holiness on the way to final Initiation.

Arahat (*Sk*). Also pronounced and written Arhat, Arhan, Rahat, &c., "the worthy one", lit., "deserving divine honours". This was the name first given to the Jain and subsequently to the Buddhist holy men initiated into the esoteric mysteries. The Arhat is one who has entered the best and highest path, and is thus emancipated from rebirth.

Ârya (*Sk*.) Lit., "the holy"; originally the title of Rishis, those who had mastered the "Âryasatyâni" (q.v.) and entered the Âryanimârگا path to Nirvâna or Moksha, the great "four-fold" path. But now the name has become the epithet of a race, and our Orientalists, depriving the Hindu Brahmans of their birth-right, have made Aryans of all Europeans. In esotericism, as

the four paths, or stages, can be entered only owing to great spiritual development and "growth in holiness", they are called the "four fruits". The degrees of Arhatship, called respectively Srotâpatti, Sakridâgamin, Anâgâmin, and Arhat, or the four classes of Âryas, correspond to these four paths and truths.

Nirvâna (Sk.). According to the Orientalists, the entire "blowing out", like the flame of a candle, the utter extinction of existence. But in the esoteric explanations it is the state of absolute existence and absolute consciousness, into which the Ego of a man who has reached the highest degree of perfection and holiness during life goes, after the body dies, and occasionally, as in the case of Gautama Buddha and others, during life.

Nirvânî (Sk.). One who has attained Nirvana—an emancipated soul. That Nirvâna means nothing of the kind asserted by Orientalists every scholar who has visited China, India and Japan is well aware. It is "escape from misery" but only from that of matter, freedom from *Klêsha*, or *Kâma*, and the complete extinction of animal desires. If we are told that *Abidharma* defines Nirvâna "as a state of absolute annihilation", we concur, adding to the last word the qualification "of everything connected with matter or the physical world", and this simply because the latter (as also all in it) is illusion, *mâyâ*. Sâkyâ-mûni Buddha said in the last moments of his life that "the spiritual body is immortal" (See *Sans. Chin. Dict.*). As Mr. Eitel,

the scholarly Sinologist, explains it: "The popular exoteric systems agree in defining Nirvâna *negatively* as a state of absolute exemption from the circle of transmigration; as a state of entire freedom from all forms of existence; to begin with, freedom from all passion and exertion; a state of indifference to all sensibility" and he might have added "death of all compassion for the world of suffering". And this is why the Bodhisattvas who prefer the Nirmânakâya to the Dharmakâya vesture, stand higher in the popular estimation than the Nirvânîs. But the same scholar adds that: "Positively (and esoterically) they define Nirvâna as the highest state of spiritual bliss, as absolute immortality through absorption of the soul (spirit rather) into itself, but *preserving individuality* so that, e.g., Buddhas, after entering Nirvâna, may reappear on earth" —i.e., in the future Manvantara.

Moksha (*Sk.*). "Liberation." The same as Nirvâna; a post mortem state of rest and bliss of the "Soul-Pilgrim".

Jivanmukta (*Sk.*). An adept or yogi who has reached the ultimate state of holiness, and separated himself from matter; a Mahatma, or *Nirvânee*, a "dweller in bliss" and emancipation. Virtually one who has reached Nirvâna during life.

Pratyêka Buddha (*Sk.*). The Pratyêka Buddha is a degree...in which a Yogi—"without teacher and without saving others"—by the mere force of will and technical observances attains to a kind of nominal Buddhahip individually; doing no good to anyone,

but working selfishly for his own salvation and himself alone. The Pratyêkas are respected outwardly but are despised inwardly by those of keen or spiritual appreciation. A Pratyêka is generally compared to a "Khadga" or solitary rhinoceros and called *Ekashringa Rishi*, a selfish solitary Rishi (or saint). "As crossing Sansâra ('the ocean of birth and death' or the series of incarnations), suppressing errors, and yet not attaining to absolute perfection, the Pratyêka Buddha is compared with a horse which crosses a river swimming, without touching the ground." (*Sanskrit-Chinese Dict.*) He is far below a true "Buddha of Compassion". He strives only for the reaching of Nirvâna.

Bodhisattva (*Sk.*). Lit., "he, whose essence (*sattva*) has become intelligence (*bodhi*)"; those who need but one more incarnation to become perfect Buddhas, i.e., to be entitled to Nirvâna. This, as applied to *Manushi* (terrestrial) Buddhas. In the metaphysical sense, *Bodhisattva* is a title given to the sons of the celestial *Dhyâni* Buddhas.

Buddha (*Sk.*). Lit., "The Enlightened". The highest degree of knowledge. To become a Buddha one has to break through the bondage of sense and personality; to acquire a complete perception of the REAL SELF and learn not to separate it from all otherselves; to learn by experience the utter unreality of all phenomena of the visible Kosmos foremost of all; to reach a complete detachment from all that is evanescent and finite, and

live while yet on Earth in the immortal and the everlasting alone, in a supreme state of holiness.

Trikâya (*Sk.*). Three Buddhic planes of consciousness represented figuratively in Buddhist asceticism as a robes or vestures of luminous Spirituality. These vestures or robes are: (1) Nirmanakâya (2) Sambhogakâya (3) and Dharmakâya the last being the highest and most sublimated of all, as it places the ascetic on the threshold of Nirvâna. (See the *Voice of the Silence* for the true *esoteric* meaning.)

Dharmakâya (*Sk.*). The "Truth Body". The third, or highest of the *Trikâya* (Three Bodies), developed by every "Buddha.

Sambhogakâya (*Sk.*). The "Body of Enjoyment". The second of the three "Vestures" of glory, or bodies, obtained by ascetics on the "Path". (See *Voice of the Silence*, Glossary iii)..

Nirmânakâya (*Sk.*). The "Body of Emanation". Something entirely different in esoteric philosophy from the popular meaning attached to it. Occultism says:that Nirmânakâya, although meaning literally a transformed "body", is a state. The form is that of the adept or yogi who enters, or chooses, that *post mortem* condition in preference to the Dharmakâya or *absolute* Nirvânic state. He does this because the latter *kâya* separates him for ever from the world of form, conferring upon him a state of *selfish* bliss, in which no other living being can participate, the adept being thus precluded from the possibility of helping humanity, or

even *devas*. As a Nirmânakâya, however, the man leaves behind him only his physical body, and retains every other “principle” save the Kamic—for he has crushed this out for ever from his nature, during life, and it can never resurrect in his post mortem state. Thus, instead of going into selfish bliss, he chooses a life of self-sacrifice, an existence which ends only with the life-cycle, in order to be enabled to help mankind in an invisible yet most effective manner. (See *The Voice of the Silence*, third treatise, “The Seven Portals”.) Thus a Nirmânakâya is not, as popularly believed, the body “in which a Buddha or a Bodhisattva appears on earth”, but verily one, who whether a *Chutuktu* or a *Khubilkhan*, an adept or a yogi during life, has since become a member of that invisible Host which ever protects and watches over Humanity within Karmic limits. Mistaken often for a “Spirit”, a Deva, God himself, &c., a Nirmânakâya is ever a protecting, compassionate, verily a *guardian* angel, to him who becomes worthy of his help. Whatever objection may be brought forward against this doctrine; however much it is denied, because, forsooth, it has never been hitherto made public in Europe and therefore since it is unknown to Orientalists, it must needs be “a myth of modern invention”—no one will be bold enough to say that this idea of helping suffering mankind at the price of one’s own almost interminable self-sacrifice, is not one of the grandest and noblest that was ever evolved from human brain.

Guardian Wall. A suggestive name given to the host of translated adepts (Narjols) or the Saints collectively, who are supposed to watch over, help and protect Humanity. This is the so-called “Nirmanâkâya” doctrine in Northern mystic Buddhism. (See *Voice of the Silence*, Part III.)

Sapta Tathâgata (*Sk.*). The chief seven *Nirmânakâyas* among the numberless ancient world-guardians. Their names are inscribed on a heptagonal pillar kept in a secret chamber in almost all Buddhist temples in China and Tibet.

Buddha Siddhârta (*Sk.*) The name given to Gautama, the Prince of Kapilavastu, at his birth. It is an abbreviation of *sarvârthasiddha* and means, the “realization of all desires”. Gautama, which means, on earth (*gâu*) the most victorious (*tama*) “was the sacerdotal name of the Sâkyâ family, the kingly patronymic of the dynasty to which the father of Gautama, the King Suddhodhana of Kapilavastu, belonged. Kapilavastu was an ancient city, the birth-place of the Great Reformer and was destroyed during his life time. In the title *Sâkyamuni*, the last component, *muni*, is rendered as meaning one mighty in charity, isolation and silence”, and the former Sâkyâ is the family name. Every Orientalist or Pundit knows by heart the story of Gautama, the Buddha, the most perfect of mortal men that the world has ever seen, but none of them seem to suspect the esoteric meaning underlying his prenatal biography, i.e., the significance of the popular story. The *Lalitavistûra* tells the tale, but

abstains from hinting at the truth. The 5,000 *jâtakas*, or the events of former births (reincarnations) are taken literally instead of esoterically. Gautama, the Buddha, would not have been a mortal man, had he not passed through hundreds and thousands of births previous to his last. Yet the detailed account of these, and the statement that during them he worked his way up through every stage of transmigration from the lowest animate and inanimate atom and insect, up to the highest—or *man*, contains simply the well-known occult aphorism : “a stone becomes a plant, a plant an animal, and an animal a man”. Every human being who has ever existed, has passed through the same evolution. But the hidden symbolism in the sequence of these re-births (*jâtaka*) contains a perfect history of the evolution on this earth, *pre* and *post* human, and is a scientific exposition of natural facts. One truth not veiled but bare and open is found in their nomenclature, *viz.*, that as soon as Gautama had reached the human form he began exhibiting in every personality the utmost unselfishness, self-sacrifice and charity. Buddha Gautama, the fourth of the Sapta (Seven) Buddhas and Sapta Tathâgatas was born according to Chinese Chronology in 1024 B.C; but according to the Singhalese chronicles, on the 8th day of the second (or fourth) moon in the year 621 before our era. He fled from his father’s palace to become an ascetic on the night of the 8th day of the second moon, 597 BC., and having passed six years in ascetic meditation at Gaya, and perceiving that physical self-torture was useless to bring enlightenment, he decided

upon striking out a new path, until he reached the state of Bodhi. He became a full Buddha on the night of the 8th day of the twelfth moon, in the year 592, and finally entered Nirvâna in the year 543 according to Southern Buddhism. The Orientalists, however, have decided upon several other dates. All the rest is allegorical. He attained the state of Bodhisattva on earth when in the personality called Prabhâpala. Tushita stands for a place on this globe, not for a paradise in the invisible regions. The selection of the Sâkya family and his mother Mâyâ, as "the purest on earth," is in accordance with the model of the nativity of every Saviour, God or deified Reformer. The tale about his entering his mother's bosom in the shape of a white elephant is an allusion to his innate wisdom, the elephant of that colour being a symbol of every Bodhisattva. The statements that at Gautama's birth, the newly born babe walked *seven steps* in four directions, that an *Udumbara* flower bloomed in all its rare beauty and that the Nâga kings forthwith proceeded "*to baptise him*", are all so many allegories in the phraseology of the Initiates and well-understood by every Eastern Occultist. The whole events of his noble life are given in occult numbers, and every so-called *miraculous* event—so deplored by Orientalists as confusing the narrative and making it impossible to extricate truth from fiction—is simply the allegorical veiling of the truth, it is as comprehensible to an Occultist learned in symbolism, as it is difficult to understand for a European scholar ignorant of Occultism. Every detail of the narrative after his death and before cremation is

a chapter of *facts* written in a language which must be studied before it is understood, otherwise its dead letter will lead one into absurd contradictions. For instance, having reminded his disciples of the immortality of Dharmakâya Buddha is said to have passed into Samâdhi, and lost himself in *Niroâna*—*from which none can return.*, and yet, notwithstanding this, the Buddha is shown bursting open the lid of the coffin, and stepping out of it ; saluting with folded hands his mother Mâyâ who had suddenly appeared in the air, though she had died seven (days after his birth, &c., &c. As Buddha. was a Chakravartti (he who turns the wheel of the Law), his body at its *cremation* could not be consumed by common fire. What happens Suddenly a jet of flame *burst out of the Swastica on his breast*, and reduced his body to ashes. Space prevents giving more instances. As to his being one of the true and undeniable Saviours of the World, suffice it to say that the most rabid orthodox missionary, unless he is hopelessly insane, or has not the least regard even for historical truth, cannot find one smallest accusation against the life and personal character of Gautama, the "Buddha". Without any claim to divinity, allowing his followers to fall into atheism, rather than into the degrading superstition of deva or idol-worship, his walk in life is from the beginning to the end, holy and divine. During the years of his mission it is blameless and pure as that of a god—or as the latter should be. He is a perfect example of a divine, godly man. He reached Buddhahip — i.e., complete enlightenment — entirely by his own merit and owing to his own

individual exertions, no god being supposed to have any personal merit in the exercise of goodness and holiness. Esoteric teachings claim that he renounced Nirvâna and gave up the Dharmakâya vesture to remain a "Buddha of compassion" within the reach of the miseries of this world. And the religious philosophy he left to it has produced for over 2,000 years generations of good and unselfish men. His is the only *absolutely bloodless* religion among all the existing religions tolerant and liberal, teaching universal compassion and charity, love and self-sacrifice, poverty and contentment with one's lot, whatever it may be. No persecutions, and enforcement of faith by fire and sword, have ever disgraced it. No thunder-and-lightning-vomiting god has interfered with its chaste commandments; and if the simple, humane and philosophical code of daily life left to us by the greatest Man-Reformer ever known, should ever come to be adopted by mankind at large, then indeed an era of bliss and peace would dawn on Humanity.

Maitreya Buddha (*Sk.*). The same as the *Kalki Avatar* of Vishnu (the "White Horse" Avatar), and of Sosiosh and other Messiahs. The only difference lies in the dates of their appearances. Thus, while Vishnu is expected to appear on his white horse at the end of the present *Kali Yuga* age "for the final destruction of the wicked, the renovation of creation and the restoration of purity", Maitreya is expected earlier. Exoteric or popular teaching making slight variations on the esoteric doctrine states that Sakyamuni (Gautama Buddha)

visited him in Tushita (a celestial abode) and commissioned him to issue thence on earth as his successor at the expiration of five thousand years after his (Buddha's) death. This would be in less than 3,000 years hence. Esoteric philosophy teaches that the next Buddha will appear during the seventh (sub) race of this Round. The fact is that Maitreya was a follower of Buddha, a well-known Arhat, though not his direct disciple, and that he was the founder of an esoteric philosophical school. As shown by Eitel (*Sanskrit-Chinese Dict.*), "statues were erected in his honour as early as B.C. 350".

Kalki Avatar (*Sk.*). The "White Horse Avatar", which will be the last manvantaric incarnation of Vishnu, according to the Brahmins; of Maitreya Buddha, agreeably to Northern Buddhists; of Sosiosh, the last hero and Saviour of the Zoroastrians, as claimed by Parsis ; and of the "Faithful and True" on the white Horse (*Rev.* xix.,2). In his future epiphany or tenth *avatar*, the heavens will open and Vishnu will appear "seated on a milk-white steed, with a drawn sword blazing like a comet, for the final destruction of the wicked, the renovation of 'creation' and the 'restoration of purity'". (Compare *Revelation.*) This will take place at the end of the Kaliyuga 427,000 years hence. The latter end of every Yuga is called "the destruction of the world", as then the earth changes each time its outward form, submerging one set of continents and upheaving another set.

S'ambhala (*Sk*). A very mysterious locality on account of its future associations. A town or village mentioned in the *Purânas*, whence, it is prophesied, the Kalki Avatar will appear. The "Kalki" is Vishnu, *the Messiah on the White Horse* of the Brahmins; Maitreya Buddha of the Buddhists, Sosiosh of the Parsis, and Jesus of the Christians. All these messengers are to appear before the destruction of the world, says the one; before the end of Kali Yuga say the others. It is in S'ambhala that the future Messiah will be born. Some Orientalists make modern Murâdâbâd in Rohilkhand (N.W.P.) identical with S'ambhala, while Occultism places it in the Himalayas. It is pronounced *Shambhala*.

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

Isis Unveiled (1877)	Mahatma Letters Esoteric Buddhism (1880-83)	Secret Doctrine Key to Theosophy (1888 & 89)	H.P.B.'s Private "Papers" (1889-91)	Dialogues Between Two Editors (1888)
Spirit	Atma	Atma	Atma	Atma
Soul	Buddhi	Buddhi	Auric Egg ----- Buddhi	Causal Body
		Manas	Manas a) higher b) lower	
	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

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

CLASSIFICATION IN ESOTERIC BUDDHISM	VEDANTIC CLASSIFICATION	CLASSIFICATION IN TARAKA RAJAYOGA
1. Sthula Sarira	Annamaya kosa*	Sthulopadhi §
2. Prana †	Pranamaya kosa	
3. The Vehicle of Prana ‡		
4. Kama Rupa	Manomaya kosa	Sukshmapadhi
5. Mind a. Volitions and feelings, etc. b. Vignanam		
6. Spiritual Soul	Anandamaya kosa	
7. Atma	Atma	Karanopadhi 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 Buddhi Causal Body	Auric Envelope—karmic patterns, a mystery Buddhi—intuitive wisdom Higher Manas—intelligence, reincarnating Ego	6. Buddhi 5. Manas
Astral Soul or Sukshma Sarira or Mayavi Rupa	Mental Body Astral Body or Emotional Body	Lower Manas—intellect, terrestrial mind Kama—desires, passions, appetites	4. Kama Rupa
Astral Body	Ethereic Double	Linga Sarira— <small>body of sensation, body-prototype</small>	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 Dhyān 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)

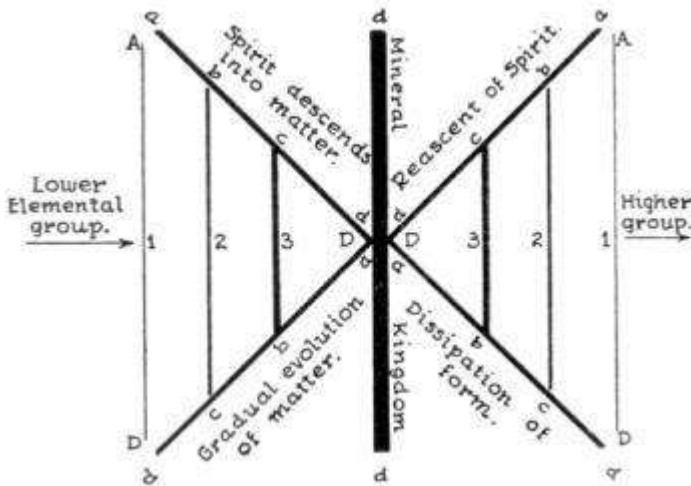
The reigning kings had finished their cycle on Earth and other worlds in the preceding Rounds. In the future manvantaras they will have risen to higher systems than our planetary world; and it is the Elect of our Humanity, the Pioneers on the hard and difficult road of progress, who will take the places 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
II. {	2. Animal	Human	Human	Human
	3. Plant	Animal	Human	Human
III. {	4. Mineral	Plant	Animal	Human
	5. Elemental III	Mineral	Plant	Animal
III. {	6. Elemental II	Elemental III	Mineral	Plant
	7. Elemental I	Elemental II	Elemental III	Mineral

† It will 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* as well as monads destined to become human at some point in the future.

A MASTER'S DIAGRAM
OF THE SEVEN KINGDOMS OF LIFE



“The line AD represents the gradual obscuration of spirit as it passes into concrete matter; the point D indicates the evolutionary position of the mineral

kingdom from its incipient (d) to its ultimate concretion (a); a, b, c, in the left-hand side of the figure are the three stages of elemental evolution; i.e., the three successive stages passed by the spiritual impulse (through the elementals—of which little is permitted to be said) before they are imprisoned into the most concrete form of matter; and c, b, a, in the right-hand side, are the three stages of organic life, vegetable, animal, human. What is total obscuration of spirit is complete perfection of its polar antithesis—matter; and this idea is conveyed in the lines AD and DA. The arrows show the line of travel of the evolutionary impulse in entering its vortex and expanding again into the subjectivity of the ABSOLUTE. The central thickest line dd is—the Mineral Kingdom.” (*Five Years of Theosophy*)

It follows that the monadic essence presently manifesting in the elemental kingdoms will, in future manvantaras, animate successively the minerals, plants, and animals until the individualized monads finally reach the human kingdom. And yet we are told that “the monad which becomes human is not the man” (S.D. I: 184). Humanity is only made complete when the progressed monads are united with the “fallen angels” who transmit the fire of self-consciousness.

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”

OCULT CORRESPONDENCES - E.S. Instructions

HUMAN CONSTITUENTS	PRESIDING PLANETS	DAYS OF WEEK	COLORS	METALS	TATTVAS	MUSICAL NOTES
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 ¹	Monday	Violet	Silver	Apas	Si
Sthula Sarira	Sun ²	Sunday	Orange	Gold	Prithivi	Re

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

Appendix IV

New Light on the “Path”

During the lifetime of H. P. Blavatsky, theosophical literature contained very few references to the “initiations” and the accompanying levels of spiritual development. Discussing the “paths to Nirvana”, HPB gave the following description in *The Secret Doctrine* (1888):

There are four grades of initiation mentioned in exoteric works, which are known respectively in Sanskrit as “Srotāpanna,” “Sakridāgāmin,” “Anāgāmin,” and “Arhat” — the four paths to Nirvana, in this, our fourth Round, bearing the same appellations. The Arhat, 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 to a higher Initiate. Three further higher grades have to be conquered by the Arhat who would reach the apex of the ladder of Arhatship.” (1)

This terminology is borrowed from Buddhism. These four stages are described in great detail in early Pali Buddhist literature, such as the Sutta Pitaka, where they are listed as Sotapatti (stream-enterer), Sakadagami (once returner), Anagami (no returner), and Arahat (worthy). It is explained that from the time one “enters the stream” till final liberation there remain only seven lives in the kamadhatu (world of desires). Since rebirth in one of the unfortunate realms

(hell beings, hungry ghosts, and animals) has been left behind by this point, these seven births will be among human beings, asuras, and desire realm gods. After eliminating the “fetters” of self-attachment, doubt, and superstition, the second stage is entered. During this stage, the fetters of sensual desire and ill-will are weakened but not completely destroyed. At the completion of this stage there remains only one life in the world of desire in which whatever remains of sensual desire and ill-will must be eliminated. After this has been accomplished and the full fruits of the Anagami stage have been attained, the candidate need no longer incarnate in the world of desire. If final liberation is not attained in the same lifetime, it can be attained in the world of form (rupa dhatu) or formlessness (arupa dhatu). In the next stage the candidate becomes an entry-level Arahant whose job now is to eliminate the five fetters connected with the higher levels of samsara. These include attachment to the worlds of form, attachment to formless life, conceit, restlessness, and ignorance. Completing this final task, the full-blown Arhat has now “no more to learn” (asekha) and is eligible for Liberation or Nibbana (Skt. Nirvana).

Recurring to this theme in a footnote to *The Voice of the Silence*, HPB provided the following additional information about the four great initiatory stages:

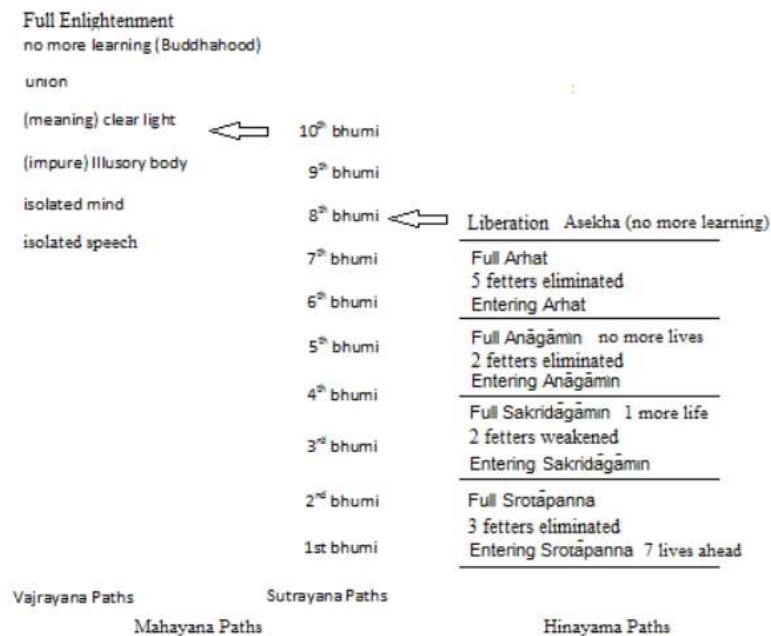
“Srotāpatti — (lit.) ‘he who has entered the stream’ that leads to the Nirvānic ocean. This name indicates the first Path. The name of the second is the Path of

Sakridāgāmin, 'he who will receive birth (only) once more.' The third is called Anāgāmin, 'he who will be reincarnated no more,' unless he so desires in order to help mankind. The fourth Path is known as that of Rahat or Arhat. This is the highest. An Arhat sees Nirvâna during his life. For him it is no post-mortem state, but Samâdhi, during which he experiences all Nirvânic bliss." (2)

Many Buddhist teachings that are known today were unavailable to Western scholars during the time that HPB was writing. A great deal of this information has come in the aftermath of the twentieth-century political crisis that resulted in a massive exodus of Tibetan Buddhist teachers from their quiet retreats beyond the Himalayas. Sharing their knowledge with Western disciples, scholars, and translators, these Tibetan lamas of all shades and varieties have removed a great deal of the mystery which once hid the teachings of exoteric and esoteric Buddhism from Western students. While HPB and her adept teachers presumably knew a great deal more than they revealed, their public presentation was restricted to the four levels we now know to have been only the earliest steps of the journey toward Full Enlightenment. They are, in fact, Hinayana Paths leading to the goal of Liberation from samsaric existence but not to the Complete Enlightenment exhibited by a Buddha. HPB said this in so many words but her meaning could not have not been understood till relatively recent times. To repeat part of the quote given earlier:

“The Arhat, 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 to a higher Initiate. Three further higher grades have to be conquered by the Arhat who would reach the apex of the ladder of Arhatship.”

How does this work exactly? The following diagram shows the vastly more complicated scheme that has been revealed to us today by Tibetan Lamas and Western translators of Tibetan writings:



Three lines of progress are shown in this diagram. The path shown on the right is the Hinayana path of Sravakas (Hearers) and Pratyeka Buddhas

(Solitary Realizers). The former develop following the teachings of fully-enlightened Buddhas while the latter follow a “do it yourself” path and attain liberation in dark periods when no Buddhas are present in the world. The Hinayana path leads to Liberation or Nirvana. The path shown in the central column is the path of Bodhisattvas. Bodhisattvas seek to attain full enlightenment in order to be able to rescue sentient beings from the sufferings of samsara. Bodhisattvas of the Sutrayana train for “three countless aeons” before reaching the Tenth Bodhisattva Bhumi or level. At this point, they must switch over to the third or Vajrayana (Tantra or Secret Mantra) path in order to reach the final goal. Trainees of the Vajrayana path are also Bodhisattvas but their practice is even more demanding than that of the Sutrayana practitioner and alone leads to the highest goal of Complete Enlightenment.

After “entering the stream”, trainees on the Hinayana path are free at any time in their remaining incarnations to transfer to the path of the Bodhisattvas should their motivation expand from individual liberation to full enlightenment for the sake of all beings. Even at the stage of a Sravaka or Pratyeka Buddha Arhat they can switch over to the Bodhisattva path, joining in at the level of the Eighth Bodhisattva Bhumi. Similarly, Bodhisattvas of the Sutrayana can switch over at any point to the path of Secret Mantra in order to accelerate their progress toward the final goal. This is not done out of personal ambition but in order

to more effectively serve humanity. Bodhisattvas of the tenth and final level enter the Vajrayana path at a level immediately preceding the stage called “meaning clear light” in the mainstream Highest Yoga Tantras. From this point they complete their progress towards full enlightenment (3). Reaching the stage of “no more learning” (Asekha), fully-enlightened Buddhas are called Arhats but this designation represents a completely different and much higher attainment than the Hinayana stage bearing a similar name. We can now see that this is what HPB meant by “the apex of the ladder of Arhatship”.

In light of the information that has come to light in recent years, we may conclude that HPB passed on to us a concise and remarkably accurate description of the Hinayana and Mahayana paths leading toward Buddhahood. The former has as its goal the liberation from the sufferings of samsara:

“Calm and unmoved the Pilgrim glideth up the stream that to Nirvana leads. He knoweth that the more his feet shall bleed, the whiter will himself be washed. He knoweth well that after seven short and fleeting births Nirvana will be his.” (4)

The latter has the goal of full enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings:

“The Secret Way leads also to Parinirvanic bliss - but at the close of Kalpas without number; Nirvanas gained and

lost from boundless pity and compassion for the world of deluded mortals." (5)

The aspirant is asked to choose between these two paths but there can be no doubt as to which path represents the highest calling:

"Sweet are the fruits of Rest and Liberation for the sake of Self; but sweeter still the fruits of long and bitter duty. Aye, Renunciation for the sake of others, of suffering fellow men" (6)

Beyond the Sutrayana form of Mahayana is the even more secret path of Tantra which leads to the final goal of Full Enlightenment. We can now see that this is what was alluded to in *The Voice of the Silence*:

"Wouldst thou become a yogi of 'Time's Circle'?
Then, O Lanoo:

Believe thou not that sitting in dark forests, in proud seclusion & apart from men; believe thou not that life on roots and plants, that thirst assuaged with snow from the great Range — believe thou not, O Devotee, that this will lead thee to the goal of final liberation.

Think not that breaking bone, that rending flesh and muscle, unites thee to thy 'silent Self'. Think not, that when the sins of thy gross form are conquered, O Victim of thy Shadows, thy duty is accomplished by nature and by man."
(7)

"Time's Circle" refers quite unambiguously to the Kalachakra Tantra, a sophisticated system of

Buddhist theory and practice which has been introduced to the world at large by the Fourteenth Dalai Lama and other Tibetan lamas in a series of well-attended public initiations conducted over the last several decades. Participants in these events are free to observe as spectators or to actually take the initiation in order to participate in the practice or to gain merit for future lives. Other tantric empowerments (Yamantaka, Chakrasamvara, Guhyasamaja, etc.) are not generally presented as public events. Some theosophists have taken tantric initiation but many have not, being frightened by the fearsome oaths (not unlike those of freemasonry) and overtly sexual references. As part of tantric practice is to learn to use pleasure and desire in the path rather than repressing or pretending that it does not exist, this may seem to go against the grain of traditional theosophical teaching which, for the most part, has stressed asceticism. In *The Voice of the Silence*, however, the shortcomings of asceticism are quite clearly addressed in the verses cited above.

Despite the breadth of information that was made available through the writings of HPB, it is undeniable that a great deal was left unsaid. There is no better example than the stages of the path and the mysteries of initiation.

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4. Blavatsky, H.P. *Voice*, p. 75.
5. Ibid p. 46.
6. Ibid 46.
7. Ibid 32.

Appendix V

Epitome of Theosophy

by William Q. Judge

Theosophy, the Wisdom-Religion, has existed from immemorial time. It offers us a theory of nature and of life which is founded upon knowledge acquired by the Sages of the past, more especially those of the East; and its higher students claim that this knowledge is not imagined or inferred, but that it is a knowledge of facts seen and known by those who are willing to comply with the conditions requisite for seeing and knowing.

Theosophy, meaning knowledge of or about God (not in the sense of a personal anthropomorphic God, but in that of divine "godly" wisdom), and the term "God" being universally accepted as including the whole of both the known and the unknown, it follows that "Theosophy" must imply wisdom respecting the absolute; and, since the absolute is without beginning and eternal, this wisdom must have existed always. Hence Theosophy is sometimes called the Wisdom-Religion, because from immemorial time it has had knowledge of all the laws governing the spiritual, the moral, and the material.

The theory of nature and of life which it offers is not one that was at first speculatively laid down and then proved by adjusting facts or conclusions to fit it; but is

an explanation of existence, cosmic and individual, derived from knowledge reached by those who have acquired the power to see behind the curtain that hides the operations of nature from the ordinary mind. Such Beings are called Sages, using the term in its highest sense. Of late they have been called Mahatmas and Adepts. In ancient times they were known as the Rishis and Maha-Rishis – the last being a word that means Great Rishis.

It is not claimed that these exalted beings, or Sages, have existed only in the East. They are known to have lived in all parts of the globe, in obedience to the cyclic laws referred to below. But as far as concerns the present development of the human race on this planet, they now are to be found in the East, although the fact may be that some of them had, in remote times, retreated from even the American shores.

There being of necessity various grades among the students of this Wisdom-Religion, it stands to reason that those belonging to the lower degrees are able to give out only so much of the knowledge as is the appanage of the grade they have reached, and depend, to some extent, for further information upon students who are higher yet. It is these higher students for whom the claim is asserted that their knowledge is not mere inference, but that it concerns realities seen and known by them. While some of them are connected with the Theosophical Society, they are yet above it. The power to see and absolutely know such laws is surrounded by natural inherent regulations which

must be complied with as conditions precedent; and it is, therefore, not possible to respond to the demand of the worldly man for an immediate statement of this wisdom, insomuch as he could not comprehend it until those conditions are fulfilled. As this knowledge deals with laws and states of matter, and of consciousness undreamed of by the "practical" Western world, it can only be grasped, piece by piece, as the student pushes forward the demolition of his preconceived notions, that are due either to inadequate or to erroneous theories. It is claimed by these higher students that, in the Occident especially, a false method of reasoning has for many centuries prevailed, resulting in a universal habit of mind which causes men to look upon many effects as causes, and to regard that which is real as the unreal, putting meanwhile the unreal in the place of the real. As a minor example, the phenomena of mesmerism and clairvoyance have, until lately, been denied by Western science, yet there have always been numerous persons who know for themselves, by incontrovertible introspective evidence, the truth of these phenomena, and, in some instances, understand their cause and rationale.

The following are some of the fundamental propositions of Theosophy:

The spirit in man is the only real and permanent part of his being; the rest of his nature being variously compounded. And since decay is incident to all composite things, everything in man but his spirit is impermanent.

Further, the universe being one thing and not diverse, and everything within it being connected with the whole and with every other thing therein, of which upon the upper plane (below referred to) there is a perfect knowledge, no act or thought occurs without each portion of the great whole perceiving and noting it. Hence all are inseparably bound together by the tie of Brotherhood.

This first fundamental proposition of Theosophy postulates that the universe is not an aggregation of diverse unities but that it is one whole. This whole is what is denominated "Deity" by Western Philosophers, and "Para-Brahma" by the Hindu Vedantins. It may be called the Unmanifested, containing within itself the potency of every form of manifestation, together with the laws governing those manifestations. Further, it is taught that there is no creation of worlds in the theological sense; but that their appearance is due strictly to evolution. When the time comes for the Unmanifested to manifest as an objective Universe, which it does periodically, it emanates a Power or "The First Cause" so called because it itself is the rootless root of that Cause, and called in the East the "Causeless Cause." The first Cause we may call Brahma, or Ormazd, or Osiris, or by any name we please. The projection into time of the influence or so-called "breath of Brahma" causes all the worlds and the beings upon them to gradually appear. They remain in manifestation just as long as that influence continues to proceed forth in evolution. After long aeons the

outbreathing, evolutionary influence slackens, and the universe begins to go into obscurity, or Pralaya, until, the "breath" being fully indrawn, no objects remain, because nothing is but Brahma. Care must be taken by the student to make a distinction between Brahma (the impersonal ParaBrahma) and Brahma the manifested Logos. A discussion of the means used by this power in acting would be out of place in this Epitome, but of those means Theosophy also treats.

This breathing-forth is known as a Manvantara, or the Manifestation of the world between two Manus (from Manu, and Antara "between") and the completion of the inbreathing brings with it Pralaya, or destruction. It is from these truths that the erroneous doctrines of "creation" and the "last judgment" have sprung. Such Manvantaras and Pralayas have eternally occurred, and will continue to take place periodically and forever.

For the purpose of a Manvantara two so-called eternal principles are postulated, that is, Purusha and Prakriti (or spirit and matter), because both are ever present and conjoined in each manifestation. Those terms are used here because no equivalent for them exists in English. Purusha is called "spirit," and Prakriti "matter," but this Purusha is not the unmanifested, nor is Prakriti matter as known to science; the Aryan Sages therefore declare that there is a higher spirit still, called Purushottama. The reason for this is that at the night of Brahma, or the so-called indrawing of his breath, both Purusha and Prakriti are absorbed in the

Unmanifested; a conception which is the same as the idea underlying the Biblical expression – "remaining in the bosom of the Father."

This brings us to the doctrine of Universal Evolution as expounded by the Sages of the Wisdom-Religion. The Spirit, or Purusha, they say, proceeds from Brahma through the various forms of matter evolved at the same time, beginning in the world of the spiritual from the highest and in the material world from the lowest form. The lowest form is one unknown as yet to modern science. Thus, therefore, the mineral, vegetable and animal forms each imprison a spark of the Divine, a portion of the indivisible Purusha.

These sparks struggle to "return to the Father," or in other words, to secure self-consciousness and at last come into the highest form, on Earth, that of man, where alone self-consciousness is possible to them. The period, calculated in human time, during which this evolution goes on embraces millions of ages. Each spark of divinity has, therefore, millions of ages in which to accomplish its mission – that of obtaining complete self-consciousness while in the form of man. But by this is not meant that the mere act of coming into human form of itself confers self-consciousness upon this divine spark. That great work may be accomplished during the Manvantara in which a Divine spark reaches the human form, or it may not; all depends upon the individual's own will and efforts. Each particular spirit thus goes through the Manvantara, or enters into manifestation for its own

enrichment and for that of the Whole. Mahatmas and Rishis are thus gradually evolved during a Manvantara, and become, after its expiration, planetary spirits, who guide the evolutions of other future planets. The planetary spirits of our globe are those who in previous Manvantaras – or days of Brahma – made the efforts, and became in the course of that long period Mahatmas.

Each Manvantara is for the same end and purpose, so that the Mahatmas who have now attained those heights, or those who may become such in the succeeding years of the present Manvantara, will probably be the planetary spirits of the next Manvantara for this or other planets. This system is thus seen to be based upon the identity of Spiritual Being, and, under the name of "Universal Brotherhood," constitutes the basic idea of the Theosophical Society, whose object is the realization of that Brotherhood among men.

The Sages say that this Purusha is the basis of all manifested objects. Without it nothing could exist or cohere. It interpenetrates everything everywhere. It is the reality of which, or upon which, those things called real by us are mere images. As Purusha reaches to and embraces all beings, they are all connected together; and in or on the plane where that Purusha is, there is a perfect consciousness of every act, thought, object, and circumstance, whether supposed to occur there, or on this plane, or any other. For below the spirit and above the intellect is a plane of consciousness in which

experiences are noted, commonly called man's "spiritual nature"; this is frequently said to be as susceptible of culture as his body or his intellect.

This upper plane is the real register of all sensations and experiences, although there are other registering planes. It is sometimes called the "subconscious mind." Theosophy, however, holds that it is a misuse of terms to say that the spiritual nature can be cultivated. The real object to be kept in view is to so open up or make porous the lower nature that the spiritual nature may shine through it and become the guide and ruler. It is only "cultivated" in the sense of having a vehicle prepared for its use, into which it may descend. In other words, it is held that the real man, who is the higher self – being the spark of the Divine before alluded to – overshadows the visible being, which has the possibility of becoming united to that spark. Thus it is said that the higher Spirit is not in the man, but above him. It is always peaceful, unconcerned, blissful, and full of absolute knowledge. It continually partakes of the Divine state, being continually that state itself, "conjoined with the Gods, it feeds upon Ambrosia." The object of the student is to let the light of that spirit shine through the lower coverings.

This "spiritual culture" is only attainable as the grosser interests, passions, and demands of the flesh are subordinated to the interests, aspirations and needs of the higher nature; and this is a matter of both system and established law.

This spirit can only become the ruler when the firm intellectual acknowledgment or admission is first made that IT alone is. And, as stated above, it being not only the person concerned but also the whole, all selfishness must be eliminated from the lower nature before its divine state can be reached. So long as the smallest personal or selfish desire even for spiritual attainment for our own sake remains, so long is the desired end put off. Hence the above term "demands of the flesh" really covers also demands that are not of the flesh, and its proper rendering would be "desires of the personal nature, including those of the individual soul."

When systematically trained in accordance with the aforesaid system and law, men attain to clear insight into the immaterial, spiritual world, and their interior faculties apprehend truth as immediately and readily as physical faculties grasp the things of sense, or mental faculties those of reason. Or, in the words used by some of them, "They are able to look directly upon ideas"; and hence their testimony to such truth is as trustworthy as is that of scientists or philosophers to truth in their respective fields.

In the course of this spiritual training such men acquire perception of, and control over, various forces in Nature unknown to other men, and thus are able to perform works usually called "miraculous," though really but the result of larger knowledge of natural law. What these powers are may be found in Patanjali's "Yoga Philosophy."

Their testimony as to super-sensuous truth, verified by their possession of such powers, challenges candid examination from every religious mind.

Turning now to the system expounded by these sages, we find, in the first place, an account of cosmogony, the past and future of this earth and other planets, the evolution of life through elemental, mineral, vegetable, animal and human forms, as they are called.

These "passive life elementals" are unknown to modern science, though sometimes approached by it as a subtle material agent in the production of life, whereas they are a form of life itself.

Each Kalpa, or grand period, is divided into four ages or yugas, each lasting many thousands of years, and each one being marked by a predominant characteristic. These are the Satya-Yuga (or age of truth), the Treta-Yuga, the Dvapara-Yuga, and our present Kali-Yuga (or age of darkness), which began five thousand years back. The word "darkness" here refers to spiritual and not material darkness. In this age, however, all causes bring about their effects much more rapidly than in any other age – a fact due to the intensified momentum of "evil," as the course of its cycle is about rounding towards that of a new cycle of truth. Thus a sincere lover of the race can accomplish more in three incarnations during Kali-Yuga, than he could in a much greater number in any other age. The darkness of this age is not absolute, but is greater than that of other ages; its main tendency being towards

materiality, while having some mitigation in occasional ethical or scientific advance conducive to the well-being of the race, by the removal of immediate causes of crime or disease.

Our Earth is one of a chain of seven planets, it alone being on the visible plane, while the six others are on different planes, and therefore invisible. (The other planets of our solar system belong each to a chain of seven.) And the life-wave passes from the higher to the lower in the chain until it reaches our earth, and then ascends and passes to the three others on the opposite arc, and thus seven times. The evolution of forms is coincident with this progress, the tide of life bearing with it the mineral and vegetable forms, until each globe in turn is ready to receive the human life wave. Of these globes our Earth is the fourth.

Humanity passes from globe to globe in a series of Rounds, first circling about each globe, and reincarnating upon it a fixed number of times. Concerning the human evolution on the concealed planets or globes little is permitted to be said. We have to concern ourselves with our Earth alone. The latter, when the wave of humanity has reached it for the last time (in this, our Fourth Round), began to evolve man, subdividing him into races. Each of these races when it has, through evolution, reached the period known as "the moment of choice" and decided its future destiny as an individual race, begins to disappear. The races are separated, moreover, from each other by catastrophes of nature, such as the subsidence of

continents and great natural convulsions. Coincidentally with the development of races the development of specialized senses takes place; thus our fifth race has so far developed five senses.

The Sages further tell us that the affairs of this world and its people are subject to cyclic laws, and during any one cycle the rate or quality of progress appertaining to a different cycle is not possible. These cyclic laws operate in each age. As the ages grow darker the same laws prevail, only the cycles are shorter; that is, they are the same length in the absolute sense, but go over the given limit in a shorter period of time. These laws impose restrictions on the progress of the race. In a cycle, where all is ascending and descending, the Adepts must wait until the time comes before they can aid the race to ascend. They cannot, and must not, interfere with Karmic law. Thus they begin to work actively again in the spiritual sense, when the cycle is known by them to be approaching its turning point.

At the same time these cycles have no hard lines or points of departure or inception, inasmuch as one may be ending or drawing to a close for some time after another has already begun. They thus overlap and shade into one another, as day does into night; and it is only when the one has completely ended and the other has really begun by bringing out its blossoms, that we can say we are in a new cycle. It may be illustrated by comparing two adjacent cycles to two interlaced circles, where the circumference of one

touches the center of the other, so that the moment where one ended and the other began would be at the point where the circumferences intersected each other. Or by imagining a man as representing, in the act of walking, the progress of the cycles; his rate of advancement can only be obtained by taking the distance covered by his paces, the points at the middle of each pace, between the feet, being the beginning of cycles and their ending.

The cyclic progress is assisted, or the deterioration further permitted, in this way; at a time when the cycle is ascending, developed and progressed Beings, known in Sanskrit by the term "Jnanis," descend to this earth from other spheres where the cycle is going down, in order that they may also help the spiritual progress of this globe. In like manner they leave this sphere when our cycle approaches darkness. These Jnanis must not, however, be confounded with the Mahatmas and Adepts mentioned above. The right aim of true Theosophists should, therefore, be so to live that their influence may be conducive for the dispelling of darkness to the end that such Jnanis may turn again towards this sphere.

Theosophy also teaches the existence of a universal diffused and highly ethereal medium, which has been called the "Astral Light" and "Akasa." It is the repository of all past, present, and future events, and in it are recorded the effects of spiritual causes, and of all acts and thoughts from the direction of either spirit

or matter. It may be called the Book of the Recording Angel.

Akasa, however, is a misnomer when it is confused with Ether or the astral light of the Kabalists. Akasa is the noumenon of the phenomenal Ether or astral light proper, for Akasa is infinite, impartite, intangible, its only production being Sound. (Akasa in the mysticism of the Esoteric Philosophy is, properly speaking, the female "Holy Ghost"; "Sound" or speech being the Logos – the manifested Verbum of the unmanifested Mother. See Sankhyasara [by Vijnana Bhikshu], Preface, p. 33, et seq.)

And this astral light is material and not spirit. It is, in fact, the lower principle of that cosmic body of which Akasa is the highest. It has the power of retaining all images. This includes a statement that each thought as well as word and act makes an image there. These images may be said to have two lives. First. Their own as an image. Second. The impress left by them in the matrix of the astral light. In the upper realm of this light there is no such thing as space or time in the human sense. All future events are the thoughts and acts of men; these are producers in advance of the picture of the event which is to occur. Ordinary men continually, recklessly, and wickedly, are making these events sure to come to pass, but the Sages, Mahatmas, and the Adepts of the good law, make only such pictures as are in accordance with Divine law, because they control the production of their thought. In the astral light are all the

differentiated sounds as well. The elementals are energetic centers in it. The shades of departed human beings and animals are also there. Hence, any seer or entranced person can see in it all that anyone has done or said, as well as that which has happened to anyone with whom he is connected. Hence, also, the identity of deceased persons – who are supposed to report specially out of this plane – is not to be concluded from the giving of forgotten or unknown words, facts, or ideas. Out of this plane of matter can be taken the pictures of all who have ever lived, and then reflected on a suitable magneto-electrical surface, so as to seem like the apparition of the deceased, producing all the sensations of weight, hardness, and extension.

Through the means of the Astral Light and the help of Elementals, the various material elements may be drawn down and precipitated from the atmosphere upon either a plane surface or in the form of a solid object; this precipitation may be made permanent, or it may be of such a light cohesive power as soon to fade away. But the help of the elementals can only be obtained by a strong will added to a complete knowledge of the laws which govern the being of the elementals. It is useless to give further details on this point; first, because the untrained student cannot understand; and second, the complete explanation is not permitted, were it even possible in this space.

The world of the elementals is an important factor in our world and in the course of the student. Each thought as it is evolved by a man coalesces instantly

with an elemental, and is then beyond the man's power.

It can easily be seen that this process is going on every instant. Therefore, each thought exists as an entity. Its length of life depends on two things: (a) The original force of the person's will and thought; (b) The power of the elemental which coalesced with it, the latter being determined by the class to which the elemental belongs. This is the case with good and bad thoughts alike, and as the will beneath the generality of wicked thoughts is usually powerful, we can see that the result is very important, because the elemental has no conscience and obtains its constitution and direction from the thought it may from time to time carry.

Each human being has his own elementals that partake of his nature and his thoughts. If you fix your thoughts upon a person in anger, or in critical, uncharitable judgment, you attract to yourself a number of those elementals that belong to, generate, and are generated by this particular fault or failing, and they precipitate themselves upon you. Hence, through the injustice of your merely human condemnation, which cannot know the source and causes of the action of another, you at once become a sharer of his fault or failing by your own act, and the spirit expelled returns "with seven devils worse than himself."

This is the origin of the popular saying that "curses, like chickens, come home to roost," and has its root in the laws governing magnetic affinity.

In the Kali-Yuga we are hypnotized by the effect of the immense body of images in the Astral Light, compounded of all the deeds, thoughts, and so forth of our ancestors, whose lives tended in a material direction. These images influence the inner man – who is conscious of them – by suggestion. In a brighter age the influence of such images would be towards Truth. The effect of the Astral Light, as thus molded and painted by us, will remain so long as we continue to place those images there, and it thus becomes our judge and our executioner. Every universal law thus contains within itself the means for its own accomplishment and the punishment for its violation, and requires no further authority to postulate it or to carry out its decrees.

The Astral Light by its inherent action both evolves and destroys forms. It is the universal register. Its chief office is that of a vehicle for the operation of the laws of Karma, or the progress of the principle of life, and it is thus in a deep spiritual sense a medium or "mediator" between man and his Deity – his higher spirit.

Theosophy also tells of the origin, history, development and destiny of mankind.

Upon the subject of Man it teaches:

First. That each spirit is a manifestation of the One Spirit, and thus a part of all. It passes through a series of experiences in incarnation, and is destined to ultimate reunion with the Divine.

Second. That this incarnation is not single but repeated, each individuality becoming re-embodied during numerous existences in successive races and planets of our chain, and accumulating the experiences of each incarnation towards its perfection.

Third. That between adjacent incarnations, after grosser elements are first purged away, comes a period of comparative rest and refreshment, called Devachan – the soul being therein prepared for its next advent into material life.

The constitution of man is subdivided in a septenary manner, the main divisions being those of body, soul and spirit. These divisions and their relative development govern his subjective condition after death. The real division cannot be understood, and must for a time remain esoteric, because it requires certain senses not usually developed for its understanding. If the present seven-fold division, as given by Theosophical writers is adhered to strictly and without any conditional statement, it will give rise to controversy or error. For instance, Spirit is not a seventh principle. It is the synthesis, or the whole, and is equally present in the other six. The present various divisions can only be used as a general working

hypothesis, to be developed and corrected as students advance and themselves develop.

The state of spiritual but comparative rest known as Devachan is not an eternal one, and so is not the same as the eternal heaven of Christianity. Nor does "hell" correspond to the state known to Theosophical writers as Avichi.

All such painful states are transitory and purificatory states. When those are passed the individual goes into Devachan.

"Hell" and Avichi are thus not the same. Avichi is the same as the "second death," as it is in fact annihilation that only comes to the "black Magician" or spiritually wicked, as will be seen further on.

The nature of each incarnation depends upon the balance as struck of the merit and demerit of the previous life or lives – upon the way in which the man has lived and thought; and this law is inflexible and wholly just.

"Karma" – a term signifying two things, the law of ethical causation (Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap); and the balance or excess of merit or demerit in any individual, determines also the main experiences of joy and sorrow in each incarnation, so that what we call "luck" is in reality "desert" – desert acquired in past existence.

Karma is not all exhausted in a single life, nor is a person necessarily in this life experiencing the effect of

all his previous Karma; for some may be held back by various causes. The principle cause is the failure of the Ego to acquire a body which will furnish the instrument or apparatus in and by which the meditation or thoughts of previous lives can have their effect and be ripened. Hence it is held that there is a mysterious power in the man's thoughts during a life, sure to bring about its results in either an immediately succeeding life or in one many lives distant; that is, in whatever life the Ego obtains a body capable of being the focus, apparatus, or instrument for the ripening of past Karma. There is also a swaying or diverging power in Karma in its effects upon the soul, for a certain course of life – or thought – will influence the soul in that direction for sometimes three lives, before the beneficial or bad effect of any other sort of Karma can be felt. Nor does it follow that every minute portion of Karma must be felt in the same detail as when produced, for several sorts of Karma may come to a head together at one point in the life, and, by their combined effect, produce a result which, while, as a whole, accurately representing all the elements in it, still is a different Karma from each single component part. This may be known as the ification of the postulated effect of the classes of Karma involved.

The process of evolution up to reunion with the Divine is and includes successive elevation from rank to rank of power and usefulness. The most exalted beings still in the flesh are known as Sages, Rishis, Brothers, Masters. Their great function being the

preservation at all times, and when cyclic laws permit, the extension of spiritual knowledge and influence.

When union with the Divine is effected, all the events and experiences of each incarnation are known.

As to the process of spiritual development, Theosophy teaches:

First. That the essence of the process lies in the securing of supremacy, to the highest, the spiritual, element of man's nature.

Second. That this is attained along four lines, among others, –

(a) The entire eradication of selfishness in all forms, and the cultivation of broad, generous sympathy in, and effort for the good of others.

(b) The absolute cultivation of the inner, spiritual man by meditation, by reaching to and communion with the Divine, and by exercise of the kind described by Patanjali, i.e., incessant striving to an ideal end.

(c) The control of fleshly appetites and desires, all lower, material interests being deliberately subordinated to the behests of the spirit.

(d) The careful performance of every duty belonging to one's station in life, without desire for reward, leaving results for Divine law.

Third. That while the above is incumbent on and practicable by all religiously disposed men,

a yet higher plane of spiritual attainment is conditioned upon a specific course of training, physical, intellectual and spiritual, by which the internal faculties are first aroused and then developed.

Fourth. That an extension of this process is reached in Adeptship, Mahatmaship, or the states of Rishis, Sages and Dhyān-Chohans, which are all exalted stages, attained by laborious self-discipline and hardship, protracted through possibly many incarnations, and with many degrees of initiation and preferment, beyond which are yet other stages ever approaching the Divine.

As to the rationale of spiritual development it asserts:

First. That the process takes place entirely within the individual himself, the motive, the effort, and the result proceeding from his own inner nature, along the lines of self-evolution.

Second. That, however personal and interior, this process is not unaided, being possible, in fact, only through close communion with the supreme source of all strength.

As to the degree of advancement in incarnations it holds:

First. That even a mere intellectual acquaintance with Theosophic truth has great value in fitting the individual for a step upwards in his next

earth-life, as it gives an impulse in that direction.

Second. That still more is gained by a career of duty, piety and beneficence.

Third. That a still greater advance is attained by the attentive and devoted use of the means to spiritual culture heretofore stated.

Fourth. That every race and individual of it reaches in evolution a period known as "the moment of choice," when they decide for themselves their future destiny by a deliberate and conscious choice between eternal life and death, and that this right of choice is the peculiar appanage of the free soul. It cannot be exercised until the man has realized the soul within him, and until that soul has attained some measure of self-consciousness in the body.

The moment of choice is not a fixed period of time; it is made up of all moments. It cannot come unless all the previous lives have led up to it. For the race as a whole it has not yet come. Any individual can hasten the advent of this period for himself under the previously stated law of the ripening of Karma. Should he then fail to choose right he is not wholly condemned, for the economy of nature provides that he shall again and again have the opportunity of choice when the moment arrives for the whole race. After this period the race, having blossomed, tends towards its dissolution. A few individuals of it will have

outripped its progress and attained Adeptship or Mahatmaship. The main body, who have chosen aright, but who have not attained salvation, pass into the subjective condition, there to await the influx of the human life wave into the next globe, which they are the first souls to people; the deliberate choosers of evil, whose lives are passed in great spiritual wickedness (for evil done for the sheer love of evil per se), sever the connection with the Divine Spirit, or the Monad, which forever abandons the human Ego. Such Egos pass into the misery of the eighth sphere, as far as we understand, there to remain until the separation between what they had thus cultivated and the personal Isvara or divine spark is complete. But this tenet has never been explained to us by the Masters, who have always refused to answer and to explain it conclusively. At the next Manvantara that Divine Spark will probably begin again the long evolutionary journey, being cast into the stream of life at the source and passing upward again through all the lower forms.

So long as the connection with the Divine Monad is not severed, this annihilation of personality cannot take place. Something of that personality will always remain attached to the immortal Ego. Even after such severance the human being may live on, a man among men – a soulless being. This disappointment, so to call it, of the Divine Spark by depriving it of its chosen vehicle constitutes the "sin against the Holy Ghost," which its very nature forbade it to pardon, because it cannot continue an association with principles which

have become degraded and vitiated in the absolute sense, so that they no longer respond to cyclic or evolutionary impulses, but, weighted by their own nature, sink to the lowest depths of matter. The connection, once wholly broken, cannot in the nature of Being be resumed. But innumerable opportunities for return offer themselves throughout the dissolving process, which lasts thousands of years.

There is also a fate that comes to even Adepts of the Good Law which is somewhat similar to a loss of "heaven" after its enjoyment for incalculable periods of time. When the Adept has reached a certain very high point in his evolution he may, by a mere wish, become what the Hindus call a "Deva" – or lesser god.

If he does this, then, although he will enjoy the bliss and power of that state for a vast length of time, he will not at the next Pralaya partake of the conscious life "in the bosom of the Father," but has to pass down into matter at the next new "creation," performing certain functions that could not now be made clear, and has to come up again through the elemental world; but this fate is not like that of the Black Magician who falls into Avichi. And again between the two he can choose the middle state and become a Nirmanakaya – one who gives up the bliss of Nirvana and remains in conscious existence outside of his body after its death in order to help Humanity. This is the greatest sacrifice he can do for mankind. By advancement from one degree of interest and comparative attainment to another as above stated, the student hastens the advent of the

moment of choice, after which his rate of progress is greatly intensified.

It may be added that Theosophy is the only system of religion and philosophy which gives satisfactory explanation of such problems as these:

First. The object, use, and inhabitation of other planets than this earth, which planets serve to complete and prolong the evolutionary course, and to fill the required measure of the universal experience of souls.

Second. The geological cataclysms of earth; the frequent absence of intermediate types in its fauna; the occurrence of architectural and other relics of races now lost, and as to which ordinary science has nothing but vain conjecture; the nature of extinct civilizations and the causes of their extinction; the persistence of savagery and the unequal development of existing civilizations; the differences, physical and internal, between the various races of men; the line of future development.

Third. The contrasts and unisons of the world's faiths, and the common foundation underlying them all.

Fourth. The existence of evil, of suffering, and of sorrow – a hopeless puzzle to the mere philanthropist or theologian.

Fifth. The inequalities in social condition and privilege; the sharp contrasts between wealth and poverty, intelligence and stupidity, culture and ignorance, virtue and vileness; the appearance of men of genius in families destitute of it, as well as other facts in conflict with the law of heredity; the frequent cases of unfitness of environment around individuals, so sore as to embitter disposition, hamper aspiration, and paralyze endeavor; the violent antithesis between character and condition; the occurrence of accident, misfortune and untimely death – all of them problems solvable only by either the conventional theory of Divine caprice or the Theosophic doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation.

Sixth. The possession by individuals of psychic powers – clairvoyance, clairaudience, etc., as well as the phenomena of psychometry and statuvolism.

Seventh. The true nature of genuine phenomena in spiritualism, and the proper antidote to superstition and to exaggerated expectation.

Eighth. The failure of conventional religions to greatly extend their areas, reform abuses, reorganize society, expand the idea of brotherhood, abate discontent, diminish crime, and elevate humanity; and an apparent inadequacy to realize in individual lives the ideal they professedly uphold.

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.

H. P. Blavatsky

Isis Unveiled
The Secret Doctrine
The Key to Theosophy
The Voice of the Silence
Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge
A Theosophical Glossary
The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett
The Esoteric Papers of Madame Blavatsky
The Inner Group Teachings of H. P. Blavatsky
The Secret Doctrine Dialogues
Collected Writings, 15 volumes

Mohini Chatterjee, editor

Five Years of Theosophy

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

W. Q. Judge

The Ocean of Theosophy
Letters That Have Helped Me
Practical Occultism
Echoes of the Orient, 4 volumes

Anna Bonus Kingsford & Edward Maitland

The Perfect Way or The Finding of Christ

Mahatmas Koot Hoomi & Morya

The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett
Letters from the Masters of Wisdom, 2 volumes

Walter R. Old

What Is Theosophy?

Subba Row

T. Subba Row: Collected Writings

A. P. Sinnett

The Occult World

Esoteric Buddhism

Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky

Theosophical Journals

The Theosophist

Lucifer

The Path

Two Chelas

Man: Fragments of a Forgotten History

Two Students

Theosophical Gleanings

Claude Falls Wright

Modern Theosophy

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