

The Role of Alan Leo and Sepharial in the Development of Esoteric Astrology (Part I)

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Abstract

The names of late 19th–early 20th century British Theosophists and astrologers Alan Leo and Sepharial are known to students of Alice Bailey for their frequent mention in Bailey’s *Esoteric Astrology*. This study explains why these two figures merit such references and demonstrates that of the two, Leo cultivated a much more intensively Theosophical focus and in so doing, may very well have paved the way for the eventual articulation of the esoteric astrological doctrine by the Tibetan Master Djwhal Khul. Specific elements of Alan Leo’s cosmology and his astrological system are compared and contrasted to that of Bailey, and Leo’s lasting mark on astrology as the infusion of Theosophical concepts and the notion of free will into astrological literature is explored.

Background

Familiar to many students of the Alice Bailey writings are the names of Alan Leo and Sepharial. Leo was mentioned seven times in Alice Bailey’s *Esoteric Astrology*,¹ in each case alongside and in contrast to an occultist who used the pen name of Sepharial. An understandable first reaction when twenty-first century readers encounter the names of Leo and Sepharial might be summed up in the question, “Who are these people and why are they mentioned here?” The answer forms the subject matter of this study and situates the works of these two British astrologers of the late 1800s and early 1900s within the context of the evolving Ageless Wisdom literature.

Readers of the Bailey material may with good reason be puzzled as to why these two particular astrologers out of all the astrologers in the world have been singled out for mention. However, a rational explanation can be offered

for the inclusion of these two astrologers and none other in the Tibetan’s discussion of esoteric astrological technique. Some historical context is needed, though, to set the stage for understanding why this is so. This historical context arises from the sequential nature with which the Ageless Wisdom is in process of being revealed.

As Djwhal Khul, the Tibetan Master, has pointed out, our Planetary Hierarchy is in process of imparting to Humanity portions of the initiatory wisdom with which it has been invested. Though it could be argued that all the religions and scientific advances of the world each and collectively constitute a release of Hierarchical wisdom into the world, more recently there have been two distinct efforts of the Hierarchy to reach Humanity with the true esoteric teaching. These two efforts were embodied, as the Tibetan has stated, in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky and Alice A. Bailey, respectively, with a third such effort slated to appear early in the twenty-first century.²

That being the case, it is apparent that the release of Hierarchical teaching is a work in progress. Consequently, it might be understood that the revelation of the Ageless Wisdom is a continuous stream looking for an appropriate course in which to run. In other words, the source is plentiful, but that fact can only be revealed when a suitable channel opens the

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way for the flow of information. Nonetheless, in the background Hierarchy ever holds the thoughtform of the teaching in its consciousness, thus rendering it continuously available.

As a consequence, spiritually attuned and altruistic minds may telepathically register various parts of that thoughtform at any time.

Thus, even though there have been but two formal revelations leading to published literature, communication between Hierarchy and advanced minds takes place all the time.

Pieces of the Ageless Wisdom teaching may in this way reach suitably attuned minds. Furthermore, it is even possible that Hierarchy has tried to reach particular individuals with aspects of the teaching in hopes of bringing such ideas before the public at times other than the two highly successful efforts about which the Tibetan has spoken.

Either of these may very well have been the case in regard to British Theosophist and astrologer Alan Leo, who did in fact write and publish a work entitled *Esoteric Astrology* some twenty-six years before the Tibetan began his dictations to Alice Bailey on that very topic. Leo's volume was published in 1913,³ while Alice Bailey began her work under the Tibetan's impression in 1939.⁴ Of note is that fact that Leo's volume contained a number of general concepts as well as specific notions which are very similar to if not identical to portions of the system eventually revealed much more completely in the later volume of the same name by Alice Bailey; representative examples will be examined.

The Historical Context of Leo and Sepharial

Like Bailey, Leo was a Theosophist.⁵ In fact, Leo was a decidedly prominent British Theosophist in the post-Blavatsky era, traveling with Theosophical Society president Annie Besant in India, joining the party of dedicated Theosophists which ushered the now infamous Jiddu Krishnamurti on his first trip from India to England to be introduced as the putative "New World Teacher," and providing the motive force behind the establishment of the Astrological Lodge of the Theosophical Society

in England.⁶ In addition, Leo was also a widely known astrologer of great public appeal, much sought by consumers of astrological guidance in his day.⁷ As a result of all this, it is fair to say that the name of Alan Leo was written large in the minds of Theosophists on both sides of the Atlantic in the early part of the twentieth century.

And it was just this group, the world Theosophists of the early twentieth century, to whom the Tibetan addressed himself, especially in his earliest dictations given to Alice Bailey. Evidence that this is so abounds. Perhaps the most immediate and convincing is found in the works of Alice Bailey herself, the first ones of which may be read as nothing short of a continued discussion on themes found in Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*.⁸ Terms and concepts from Blavatsky's work were used without introduction or definition, very much as if it were assumed that anyone reading the Bailey material would of necessity have previously read the Blavatsky material.⁹ And this may well have been so in that day and age, for right at the time the Tibetan was issuing his first dictations to Alice Bailey, Bailey was involved in teaching *Secret Doctrine* classes to a large group of Theosophists in the New York area.¹⁰ Bailey herself had not long before been deeply involved in the American branch of the Theosophical Society in California.

The atmosphere in which the Tibetan found Alice Bailey was thus profoundly Theosophical, and it was into this atmosphere that the second literature of revelation initially was cast. So basic was this fact to the time and spirit of Alice Bailey's early writings that when *The Beacon* magazine was founded by Alice and Foster Bailey in 1922, it was subtitled *A Periodical Intended for Theosophists*.¹¹ B. P. Wadia of the world Theosophical headquarters in India expressed enthusiasm about the first few chapters of *Initiation, Human and Solar*, and in fact printed these in the society's international magazine, *The Theosophist*.¹² Further evidence that the Bailey work was born amidst a Theosophical atmosphere and environment can be seen in the enigmatic symbol stamped on the cover of all the Bailey books—a triangle containing the interlaced

letters L, U, X, spelling LUX, or Latin for light, a reference to the Lucifer tradition as discussed in *The Secret Doctrine*,¹³ which tradition itself forms the notion from which the name Lucis Trust was formed.

Thus, it is easy to see that the audience for the new dictations arriving through Alice Bailey was in the earliest days primarily constituted of well-read and informed Theosophists. As the Bailey writings gained acceptance and popularity over the following three decades, this situation changed substantively, but it is likely that the fact of the original Theosophical context never left the Tibetan's mind.

So, when the Tibetan engaged on the topic of esoteric astrology in the late 1930s, it was only natural that he should bear in mind and seek to address questions that could be counted on to surface in the minds of those familiar with the post-Blavatsky Theosophical milieu. And that group was keenly aware of two outspoken and highly visible British astrologers by the names of Alan Leo and Sefpharial. It was only in keeping that the Theosophically-minded

esoteric students of the world should want to know how the work of these two colorful early twentieth century Theosophists stacked up against this new esoteric astrology now appearing under the name of Alice A. Bailey. Apparently anticipating this interest, the Tibetan simply spoke directly to the issue by comparing and contrasting certain features of the new esoteric astrological dispensation with positions taken by Leo and Sefpharial on similar matters.

Some background information on Leo and Sefpharial may be relevant here. These two British astrologers were both born in the 1860s under different given names than they ulti-

mately used professionally. Leo was born in London on August 7, 1860 as William Frederick Allen; Sefpharial in Birmingham on March 20, 1864 as Walter Richard Old (later calling himself W. Gorn Old).¹⁴ In a well-established custom amongst astrologers, both changed their names to appellations linked with astrological tradition, the one to allude to angelic intelligence (Sefpharial), the other to the Sun sign under which he was born (Leo).

It was the younger man, Sefpharial, who came to Theosophy first. In fact, Sefpharial was a member of London Theosophical circles when H. P. Blavatsky was yet living, and became one of the few students privileged to be counted in her inner circle.¹⁵

Sefpharial also served as a vice-president of the Blavatsky Lodge in London and even lived at the same residence with Blavatsky from 1889 until the great occultist's death in early May of 1891.¹⁶

Sefpharial and Leo met at a London astrological gathering in 1889, and it was from that platform that Sefpharial introduced Leo to Theosophical meetings in the summer of

the same year. Leo took to the Ageless Wisdom teaching enthusiastically, formally joining the Theosophical Society in May of 1890 and remaining devoted to its philosophy for the rest of his life.¹⁷ Sefpharial, on the other hand, became disenchanted with the Theosophical Society after the death of the flamboyant and charismatic Blavatsky.¹⁸ This fundamental difference between the two men was evidenced in their subsequent astrological writings; for whereas Leo proudly proclaimed his Theosophical orientation, Sefpharial never became the spokesperson for an esoterically-slanted and Theosophically flavored astrological doctrine such as that eventually articulated by Leo.

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Even so, Sepharial exerted considerable influence upon the astrological and occult scene of his day, authoring over forty books,¹⁹ many of which demonstrate a distinct genius for astrologically, numerologically, and kaballistically based predictive techniques for winning at games of chance and for predicting life events. As an astrologer, Sepharial was technically oriented, with a good grasp of the history of astrology, the evolution of its analytic and predictive techniques, and an interest in adducing mathematical proof that future events can be known. Among Sepharial's works are studies on transits and an eclectic treatise on various astrological topics called *The Science of Foreknowledge*. In addition, Sepharial established three astrological organizations over the period of his life, though none of these lasted very long. His influence upon English and world astrology remained strong in the late 1930s when the Tibetan began his dictations to Alice Bailey of what would be the later *Esoteric Astrology*. In fact, Sepharial's *Manual of Astrology* was a standard astrological instructional text recognized throughout the English-speaking astrological world from 1900 through approximately 1940.²⁰

Alan Leo, by contrast, was as flamingly Theosophical in some of his writings as Sepharial was determinedly worldly and pragmatic in his. Leo wrote numerous studies for the general astrological audience, but the main volume of relevance to the present discussion is his volume entitled *Esoteric Astrology*, published in 1913 as volume number seven of his *Astrology for All* series.²¹

That Leo's *Esoteric Astrology* was greatly influenced by Theosophical teachings is in no way difficult to discern. For example, in the preface Leo wrote, "There is but one material substance in the universe, primordial or root matter,"²² a Blavatskyesque formulation if ever there was one, given her famous dictum that matter is spirit at its lowest vibration, and spirit matter at its highest, plus her repeated discussions of *mulaprakriti* (or universal root substance) to be found throughout *The Secret Doctrine*. In this, Leo's Theosophical coloring was already on display.

Then, as further declamation of his Theosophical leanings, he selected excerpts from Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* as headers to introduce several chapters. These include citations from Blavatsky's work on the triplicity of spirit, soul, and matter, and the one life pervading them all;²³ eventual universal dissolution;²⁴ the gods of classical antiquity as figures representing Time and Eternity;²⁵ the relevance of the constellations and their influences on the evolution of the soul;²⁶ and the Sun, Moon and planets as connected with the mysteries of adeptship and initiation.²⁷

In addition, the text of Leo's *Esoteric Astrology* is peppered with terms and concepts originally introduced in *The Secret Doctrine*. For example, with no particular explanation as to why, Leo invoked the esoteric model of the solar system as given in Theosophical literature in his *Esoteric Astrology*, referring without preliminary definition to the seven Planetary Logoi. These Logoi he characterized as did the Theosophical tradition, as Beings each manifesting through a chain of seven globes²⁸ (rather than through a scheme of seven chains as would later be stated in the Bailey works), which is in decided contrast to the model of the solar system embraced by mainstream astrologers of Leo's time. Of course, the reason he did so was to advance the Theosophical teaching by expanding it into and integrating it with the field of astrology. In so doing, he was in no way reluctant to simply state the Theosophical position as fact, the more to firmly establish himself as a voice for a new, Theosophically inspired version of astrology.

As further proof of Leo's immersion in the Theosophical doctrine, it should be pointed out that he demonstrated obvious familiarity with and referred to the Ray Lords and hence the seven rays,²⁹ the Spirit of the Earth,³⁰ deva lives,³¹ the alternation of *pralaya* and *manvantara*,³² the position of our globe as fourth,³³ and the triune composition of Deity as Will, Wisdom, and Activity,³⁴ all Theosophical concepts in nature, and equally representative of what the Tibetan would later teach via Alice Bailey. But to continue with the recitation of Leo's telling marks as a Theosophical thinker, it should be mentioned that he even referred to

the eminent nineteenth and twentieth century Theosophist, T. Subba Row of India,³⁵ the arbiter of so many Theosophical debates. It is through Theosophical literature and contacts and only that literature and ambience that Leo could have arrived at this vocabulary.

In sum, it can be said that the atmosphere of Alan Leo's astrological thinking was rather thoroughly permeated with the esotericism of H. P. Blavatsky and the accepted doctrines of the Theosophical Society. The same could have been said of Alice A. Bailey's general worldview on the eve of her work with the Tibetan on behalf of Hierarchy. It might even be tendered that the Theosophical Society functioned as a hothouse for the cultivation of promising Hierarchical channels at that time. Alice Bailey herself stated that it was uniquely her Theosophical background which prepared her mind for telepathic linkage with the Tibetan, and which paved the way for articulation of the concepts which it was his intention to bring forward to the greater public. Alan Leo may have been in somewhat the same position, and as the nature of his astrological system might be shown to suggest, Leo just may have been the early and perhaps first recipient of at least some of the information which would eventually appear in the Tibetan's revelation of the esoteric astrological system via Alice Bailey.

A number of general concepts found in Leo's *Esoteric Astrology* seem to anticipate or at least agree remarkably with positions the Tibetan would take in Bailey's later volume of the same title. Given their importance, a detailed examination of these similarities follows. After that, a number of specific elements of Leo's system will be explored, again with reference to features held in common with the material presented by Djwhal Khul through Alice Bailey.

General Philosophy of Alan Leo's *Esoteric Astrology* and Similarities to the Esoteric Occultism of the Tibetan

Just as the Tibetan would also do publicly through Bailey some years later, Leo posited

an esoteric astrological philosophy and system which differed greatly from the then known exoteric or mainstream astrology.³⁶ Part of the difference, Leo asserted, lay in the necessary inclusion of reincarnation and karma as essential facts of existence and evolution,³⁷ the embrace of which were not yet practiced by the general astrological field of his day. In fact, so adamant was Leo on this point that he admonished the reader that no philosophy lacking the components of reincarnation and karma could fully account for the variation in life circumstances to be seen amongst members of Humanity. Leo stated boldly that his formulation of astrology plus the teachings of reincarnation and karma were "given to represent...the true Astrology for the New Era that is now dawning upon the world."³⁸ That new era being the Age of Aquarius, Leo's statement appears to have sounded very much the same note as the Tibetan's many statements to that effect regarding his presentation of the new astrology of the rays, discipleship, and initiation as given later through Alice Bailey. Both presentations proclaimed themselves as astrological dispensations for the New Age.

Yet another factor of similarity between Leo's presentation and that of Alice Bailey's is a fundamental obeisance eastward in acknowledging the source of inspiration and tutelage. Leo himself claimed to have been immersed in this new version of astrology in India. This fact immediately brings up the question in the mind of trained astrologers as to whether or not Leo had embraced siderealist Hindu astrology. As even a brief examination of Leo's *Esoteric Astrology* reveals, Leo integrated into his system only small portions of Hindu astrology, while retaining the basic framework of western tropical astrology, the zodiac for which is structured on the natural facts of the equinoxes and solstices, in contrast to the sidereal zodiac, which is based on other measurements.

Nonetheless, at the head end of his work on what he called esoteric astrology, Leo bowed eastward. In his own words, "...on my recent visit to India I was enabled to learn from unquestionable sources that these teachings [of reincarnation and karma—MTR] were part of

the ancient mysteries of astrology.”³⁹ Exactly by what or whom Leo was contacted and instructed in these matters while in India, he did not say, which informational lacuna leaves open the distinct possibility that Leo may have been instructed by any of the Masters of the Wisdom who have such ease of passage in India. At any rate, Leo claimed his esoteric astrological flame was lit in that great cradle of spiritual tradition, while Alice Bailey is known to have received her torch from Tibet. The presence of near-Himalayan esotericism is thus inasmuch claimed for both—hinted at in Leo, outright proclaimed in Bailey.

In keeping with the eastward glance, Leo named the *Pranava Vada* as one of the specific sources from which some of his ideas had arisen.⁴⁰ A classic of Hindu esoteric literature much revered by Theosophists, The *Pranava Vada* was also mentioned in Bailey’s *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*,⁴¹ a fact which obviously serves further to underscore the similarity of philosophical outlooks to be found in Leo and Bailey.

Beyond these similar bases of thought, there exists further compelling evidence that Leo may well have been on the same wavelength as the Tibetan some years before Bailey was given the official signal. This evidence takes form as general esoteric principles formulated by Leo in ways and even in language much the same as would be used in the Bailey presentation. For example, Leo firmly advised that study of astrology should proceed from the basic premise that one life pervades all forms, and that all lives find place within greater lives,⁴² a formulation very much like that which the Tibetan would eventually articulate in *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* and *Esoteric Astrology*.

Said Leo taking off from that point, “We may define Esoteric Astrology as that side of the

subject which views all stellar phenomena from the standpoint of unity: whilst Exoteric Astrology beings its study from the side of diversity and separateness....”⁴³ As can be seen, this comment of Leo’s demonstrates both his emphasis upon unity as the fundamental context for all things and his essential agreement with the Tibetan’s later critique of modern astrology, which field both Leo and the Tibetan took to task for its emphasis upon the fates and fortunes of individual persons rather than upon the greater spiritual lives in which those units find place. Leo’s position is in fact closely reminiscent of the Tibetan’s dictum that study

of things cosmological and astrological should ever proceed from the universal (the realm of unity) to particulars (the realm of multiplicity). Though his words are just a little different, the idea is strikingly the same.

Like the Tibetan, Leo held that the divine creative process requires a ternary or triplicity to get rolling,⁴⁴ which triplicity he characterized as the Rays of Divine Will, Wisdom, and Activity, with the third or Activity Ray

comprehending within itself the four minor rays of aspect,⁴⁵ precisely as the Tibetan would say in *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*.⁴⁶ Also like the Tibetan, Leo associated the three primal emanations of Deity with three types of motion, though Leo called them rotary, translatory, and vibratory,⁴⁷ differing slightly from the Tibetan’s characterization of them as rotary, orbital, and spiral cyclic.⁴⁸ Leo, good Theosophist that he was, went on to relate the three primary emanations to the three *gunas* as well, though in a slightly different application than that used later by the Tibetan. However, Leo and the Tibetan were of one mind concerning the nature of the First, Second, and

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Third Logoi or Aspects as emanations from *Parabrahm*, with Leo characterizing the Three primary Logoi respectively as unity, consciousness, and matter and its organization,⁴⁹ exactly as would the Tibetan throughout the Bailey writings.

This triplicity, Leo maintained, gives rise to the septenary,⁵⁰ just as was later elucidated by Bailey. The septenary played as important a role in Leo's cosmology as it did in that of the Tibetan's, for Leo recognized seven planes of existence, each plane subdivided into seven subdivisions or subplanes.⁵¹ Leo even denominated the subplanes in the same fashion as the Tibetan would in the Bailey writings, with the highest subplane on any given plane called the atomic, next down being the sub-atomic, then the super-etheric, the etheric, gaseous, liquid, and solid.⁵² Obviously and importantly for interpretation of astrological symbolism, Leo equated the astral plane with the water element,⁵³ as would the Tibetan in numerous passages throughout Bailey's *Esoteric Astrology*.

Leo also recognized at least a portion of what might now be called the esoteric model of the solar system, together with the primacy of the Solar Logos within it.⁵⁴ It would also appear that Leo anticipated the teaching upon the relationships of Solar Logoi one to another which was to be revealed more fully in *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* and *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle*, for Leo understood that our Solar Logos is in conscious union, which is to say communication, with the vaster universe beyond.⁵⁵ This vaster universe is of course constituted of orders upon orders of Solar Logoi, individually and in ever-expanding groups, as the scale of logoiic organization is ascended. So in a roundabout way, Leo implied that our Solar Logos is in telepathic relationship with others of its kind, just as the Tibetan would spell out in his later works.

Leo certainly acknowledged that there is more to the structure of the solar system than is presented by the mere physical body of the Sun and visible planets, asserting just as did the Tibetan that the Solar Logos manifests triply and that the number of planets to be seen in the solar system depends upon the point in time at

which it is viewed. However, Leo followed the Theosophical model of the solar system and held that though indeed the solar system is constituted of the Solar Logos as the central life manifesting through seven energy centers, each energy center is made of just one planetary chain (or seven globes).⁵⁶ Elsewhere Leo referred to seven individual planets as being the centers of the Solar Logos,⁵⁷ which notion falls even shorter of the Tibetan's later formulation⁵⁸ that schemes fulfill this function, but it remains consistent with the central and important contention that the Solar Being functions through seven energy centers.

Leo seems to have recognized the principle of systemic kundalini as well: that is, the force which vitalizes each of the centers in the body of the Solar Being. For he stated that the Solar Being is the source of all life currents in the system,⁵⁹ and that it supports a "...circulation of physical and other forces and of vitality...constantly going on between the seven globes...the point of greatest activity...centred sometimes upon one globe and sometimes upon another, according to the stage of evolution reached."⁶⁰ Except for the difference in the number of total globes attributed to the solar system, here in essence is the same point made repeatedly by the Tibetan concerning the ordered circulation of systemic kundalini in *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*.

Leo's point of view was like that of the Tibetan's in that he, too, specified deva life as one of the essential factors in the distribution of energies and forces in the solar system. Leo attributed to deva life the same functions as did the Tibetan; for in describing the seven cosmic planes, Leo stated that each plane is in fact the body of great Deva Lords,⁶¹ just as did the Tibetan. And he characterized deva lives in general as the builders of form,⁶² as also would the Tibetan later.⁶³

The Law of Correspondence, a key interpretive tool according to the Tibetan, was likewise in evidence in Leo's *Esoteric Astrology*, where he indicated the importance of links between the chain, globes, and rays of the same number, and even suggested that in some cases, the microcosm can be the clue to the macrocosm,⁶⁴ just as did the Tibetan later through Alice Bai-

ley.⁶⁵ Leo likewise called upon the Law of Correspondences to deduce that the three major aspects are reflected in the lowest three planes, with the mental plane expressing Active Intelligence, the astral or emotional plane mirroring Wisdom, and the physical plane expressing Will.⁶⁶ This reverse order or mirroring effect, which matched the highest with the lowest, is also a feature of the Tibetan's discussions of the planes in some passages.⁶⁷ It is an unusual application of the Law of Correspondence, and as such, the more strongly suggests that Leo was attuned to certain subtleties of the thoughtform containing the particulars of the Ageless Wisdom.

At any rate, Alan Leo certainly knew of and embraced the teaching on the seven emanations of Deity, acknowledging specifically the seven rays when he wrote, "...seven great rays...are constantly streaming through the seven planetary spheres of influence."⁶⁸ These seven rays Leo identified with what he understood by the term Planetary Spirits or Logoi,⁶⁹ though his Logoi manifested through fewer globes than did those of the later teaching.

In a way, Leo also recognized the Lords of the Rays, explaining "...[it is] not the physical planets themselves that affect mankind, but the supreme Intelligences who use the planetary bodies as their physical vehicles...."⁷⁰ These supreme Intelligences filled a specific role in Leo's esoteric model of the solar system, one that will be familiar to the mindful student of the esoteric astrological doctrine. It is the same role imputed to the Planetary Logoi by the Tibetan throughout *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*; for Leo asserted that the "planetary intelligences" carry out the will of the Solar Logos,⁷¹ just as the Tibetan repeatedly stated it is the function of the Planetary Logoi to do.

Further, it was Leo's contention that each planet is charged with mastering the evolution of one of the seven principles,⁷² which is exactly what the Tibetan said about the schemes. Thus, though in Leo's mind it was individual planets that represented the "Supreme Intelligences," the Ray Lords, or Planetary Logoi, it was the schemes which fulfilled that role in the more fully developed system ultimately revealed through Bailey.

In any case, the important point is that in both Leo and Bailey, the Seven Supreme Intelligences represent the rays, have as their duties the working out of the Will of the Solar Logos, and provide the ground for perfecting of one of the seven principles. These essential notions are found in both Leo and Bailey.

So also is the idea that each of these seven centers has a particular group of advanced beings associated with it. For Leo, it was a "great Spiritual Hierarchy" which found its home in each of the seven (for him, planets);⁷³ for the Tibetan, it was the cosmic instructors in the eight Planetary Schools, each found in a planetary scheme associated with our solar system.⁷⁴ Thus, though the details differ between the Leo presentation and that of Bailey, certain common features and key ideas nevertheless stand out in regard to advanced beings associated with the various centers of the Solar Logos, and this is the main point to be gathered here. Both presentations envisioned the force centers of the Solar Logos as homes to advanced beings capable of leading evolution forward.

Leo's thoughts on the medium through which the various bodies in space communicate and through which astrological energies flow was like that of the Tibetan's as well. Leo held that space is constituted of etheric matter and that this etheric matter is the medium of communication amongst the planets and between the planets and the Sun,⁷⁵ a favorite theme of the Tibetan's from *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* and *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle*.

Matters closer to home were also conceptualized by Leo in a fashion very similar to what the Tibetan would later propose through Bailey. Importantly, Leo made a hard-and-fast distinction between the more durable portion of the self, which he called "the individuality," and the ephemeral portion of the self, which he called "the personality," with the personality constituting, as he put it, a "small ray of the Individuality."⁷⁶ Here in only very slightly different terms is the Tibetan's soul and personality model, with the personality being but a small fragmentary expression of the soul and its ray. In fact, entirely in line with what the Tibetan would later reveal in *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* concerning the creation of the

soul or causal body from the monadic essence, Leo wrote of the “individuality” (his word for soul), “Through the agency of ...[the] Seven Divine Rays man creates his causal body, colored primarily by its ‘Father in Heaven,’ (or Monad) and from which a ray is cast into the physical body at birth to be the personality.”⁷⁷

That Leo was aware not only of soul or egoic rays but also of groups of souls constituted on the basis of ray affinity is a certainty as well, for Leo penned, “...at the head of the group of individuals belonging to each ray there stands a Master....”⁷⁸ Bailey students would say that at the head of the souls on each ray stands a

Master of that ray vibration, but the idea is remarkably the same, minor variations in terminology notwithstanding. Both presentations tender the idea of soul or egoic groupings established along the lines of ray vibration. As for evolution beyond the soul ray, it seems that Leo’s insight penetrated there as well. For Leo even seems to have anticipated the momentous occurrence of transfer from the egoic onto the monadic ray and the consequent dissipation of the causal body as detailed by the Tibetan.⁷⁹

Thus, Leo’s model of the esoteric human constitution accounted very neatly for the Tibetan’s standard triplicity of monad, soul, and personality. Further, the more intricate esoteric structure of all forms suffered no neglect from Leo either, for he even acknowledged the existence of the critically important “permanent atoms.” Nuclei of forces and tendencies within each of the seven principles, according to the Tibetan, the permanent atoms were referred to as such by Leo and described as “karmic seeds,” or repositories containing all the vibrations and characteristics accumulated

during past incarnations—the essential residue of the various vehicles and sheaths of manifestation and containing condensed qualities of expression, these to be re-manifested in some subsequent embodiment.⁸⁰ And precisely as the Tibetan would affirm some years later, Leo identified the permanent atoms as the key mechanism for the discharge of planetary or astrological influence into the form nature.⁸¹ As is thus apparent, Leo had the essential esoteric model of the solar system and the human being in his sights more or less as it would later be discussed more fully and methodically by the Tibetan in the Bailey material.

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Another Tibetan-esque item caught in the crosshairs of Leo’s mental scope concerns what might be called a critique of the then-popular astrology. Leo’s central problem with the field as it was in his day sounds remarkably like the Tibetan’s main criticism of modern astrology when Bailey’s *Esoteric Astrology* was dictated nearly thirty years later.

Both Leo and the Tibetan noticed a serious collective

psycho-spiritual problem in the making, caused by the intense focus upon individual fate and fortune, as undertaken by mainstream or exoteric astrology of the early twentieth century. Here is what Alan Leo had to say on the matter. “If he [a seeker] gains knowledge of Astrology and become fascinated by the wonders of his horoscope, he holds it as a fetish; it is *his* horoscope, and at once he separates himself from all the rest of humanity by hugging to himself the joys of the good aspects and planetary positions, and pitying himself for the bad ones.”⁸² Compare this to the Tibetan in Bailey’s *Esoteric Astrology*: “At present, the

position of the average believer in astrology is that he is an individual of importance..., that he is living on an important planet,...and that, through astrology, he can discover his destiny....This makes him feel himself to be a factor of isolated importance."⁸³

Leo decried separatism; the Tibetan, isolation. Thus, an attitude of separation and isolation of the individual from the greater life in which it dwells struck both Leo and the Tibetan as the main problem with the orientation of the popular astrologies of their respective moments, and in this, they are yet again on very much the same wavelength regarding important matters. Again similarly, Leo proposed as an antidote an esoteric astrology posited on cosmic unity, and the Tibetan would do much the same through Bailey, urging greater attention be given to the sources of astrological energies and less to the microcosmic lives merely receptive to them at a much lower level.

Perhaps anticipating the Tibetan's point that all astrological energies transmit the Divine Will, Leo held out the possibility of union with the Divine Will as a logical consequence of a rightly directed esoteric astrology.⁸⁴ And what is the best way to approach union with the Divine Will? According to Leo, it is through the cultivation of what he called "pure reason,"⁸⁵ a term later used by the Tibetan as an equivalent for *buddhi*, the very principle the perfection of which the Bailey teaching would pinpoint as the particular intended destiny for this planet.⁸⁶

Pure reason, Leo maintained, would cure the distortions created by viewing life and matters through the "fluidic emotional body," an obvious reference to the astral body and its legendary abilities to twist appearances according to the likes and dislikes of the viewer. Here spoke an esoteric psychologist after the Tibetan's own heart, for this is a central theme that the Tibetan himself would return to time and again in the Bailey material, ever urging the calming of the astral currents through the practice of universal love, knowledge of the Plan, and the divine discriminating conscience: all attributes of *buddhi*. Once again, it is apparent that Leo and the Tibetan were looking at the same design in their comments on the

proper nature of an esoteric astrology. That the one preceded the other suggests no shameless borrowing on the part of Alice Bailey, but rather an inspiration common to both.

[Part II of this two-part article will appear in the Fall 2005 issue.]

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- 1 Alice A. Bailey. *Esoteric Astrology*. Lucis, 1951, pp. 106, 132, 192, 251, 284, 311, 369.
 - 2 Alice A. Bailey. *The Rays and the Initiations*. Lucis, 1960, p. 255.
 - 3 Patrick Curry. *A Confusion of Prophets*. Collins and Brown, 1992, p. 145.
 - 4 James Stephenson. *Prophecy on Trial*. Trans-Himalaya, 1983, p. 23.
 - 5 James H. Holden. *A History of Horoscopic Astrology*. American Federation of Astrologers, 1996, pp. 194-195.
 - 6 Curry. *A Confusion of Prophets*, pp. 141, 151.
 - 7 *Ibid.*, particularly, pp. 137 - 138.
 - 8 Helena P. Blavatsky. *The Secret Doctrine*. Theosophical University Press, 1888/1977.
 - 9 Just one amongst many telling examples is found in Alice A. Bailey. *Letters on Occult Meditation*. Lucis, 1922 (written in 1920). On p. 223 of *Letters*, there appears the term, "Day Be With Us," without definition or further explanation. The phrase "Day-Be-With-Us" was used in *The Secret Doctrine* to signify the conclusion of a *manvantara*, or period of a solar system, as verified by Geoffrey Barboraka. *The Divine Plan*. Theosophical Publishing House, 1964, p. 151. Without knowledge of prior usage, readers would have found "Day Be With Us" a relatively meaningless term.
 - 10 Alice A. Bailey. *The Unfinished Autobiography*. 1951, pp. 189 - 191.
 - 11 John Cobb. "The New Emerging from the Old." School for Esoteric Studies, p.2.
 - 12 Bailey. *The Unfinished Autobiography*, p. 167; John Sinclair. *The Alice Bailey Inheritance*. Publisher, date, p. 20.
 - 13 See: Blavatsky. *The Secret Doctrine*, v. 1, pp. 70 - 71.
 - 14 Curry. *A Confusion of Prophets*, pp. 123, 125, 126. Leo's birth time may have been 6:10 AM or 5:49 AM, as Curry reports on pp. 123, 180; Sepharial is reputed to have been

- born at approximately 1:30 AM, as Curry records on pp. 125, 126.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 125.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 125, 126, 127.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 126.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 135.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 127; Holden. *A History of Horoscopic Astrology*, p. 196.
- ²⁰ Curry. *A Confusion of Prophets*, p. 127; Holden. *A History of Horoscopic Astrology*, p. 196.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 145.
- ²² Alan Leo. *Esoteric Astrology*. Destiny Books, 1913/1983, p. xvii.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, p. 75.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 85.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 93.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 63.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 131.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 8 – 18, 125.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 64.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. xvi.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 123.
- ³² *Ibid.*, pp. 47 – 48.
- ³³ *Ibid.*
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 65.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 90.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 67.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.vii.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. vii.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. vii.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 55.
- ⁴¹ Alice A. Bailey. *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*. Lucis, 1925, p. 425.
- ⁴² Leo. *Esoteric Astrology*, p. 68.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. xiv.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 139.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- ⁴⁶ Bailey. *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, p. 336.
- ⁴⁷ Leo. *Esoteric Astrology*, p. xvii.
- ⁴⁸ The three types of motion discussed by the Tibetan are: (a) rotary motion, or the rotation of any sphere around its own axis, (b) orbital motion, such as the orbit of a planet around the Sun, or the orbit of the Sun around the galactic center, and (c) spiral motion, produced when a body *in orbit around its center* is simultaneously propelled forward in space along a line of travel perpendicular or angled to its plane of orbit. These points were developed from pp. 41, 42, 1034, of Bailey's *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*.
- ⁴⁹ Leo. *Esoteric Astrology*, pp. 11 – 12.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. xvii, 18.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.* p. 17.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 17.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.* p. 18.
- ⁵⁴ The following is a summary of Leo's view from *Esoteric Astrology*, pp. xiv, 11, 12, 16, 19.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 15.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 2, 127.
- ⁵⁸ It should be noted that in the earliest dictations to Alice Bailey, the Tibetan himself seems to have alluded to a solar system composed of seven chains, rather than one composed of seven schemes. For example, see p. 264 of *Letters on Occult Meditation*, dictated in 1920, according to James Stephenson in *Prophecy on Trial*, p. 23. Subsequently, the esoteric model of the solar system built on seven schemes of seven chains apiece came through much more clearly in *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, though even in that work there are to be found certain passages which muddy the matter. At any rate, it seems that the decision to reveal more fully the entire esoteric model of the solar system must have been made between the dictation of *Letters* (1920) and *Cosmic Fire* (1921–1924, again according to Stephenson). This would suggest that the earliest point at which the Tibetan was fully permitted and committed to divulging the more complete information would have been late 1920 or early 1921, which would have been some seven to eight years after the completion of Leo's *Esoteric Astrology*. Thus, had Leo enjoyed the distinct privilege of telepathic contact with the thoughtform of the new esoteric astrology, he would only have been permitted to have cognized and communicated the teaching on the esoteric model of the solar system as it had been cleared for revelation in his day – with the energy centers of the Solar Logos composed of chains and not schemes.
- ⁵⁹ Leo. *Esoteric Astrology*, p.16.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. xiv, 125.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 124.

⁶³ For example, see Bailey. *Letters on Occult Meditation*, p. 179.

⁶⁴ Leo. *Esoteric Astrology*, p. 16.

⁶⁵ Bailey. *Esoteric Astrology*, p. 415.

⁶⁶ Leo. *Esoteric Astrology*, p. 70.

⁶⁷ For example, see Bailey. *Letters on Occult Meditation*, p. 285.

⁶⁸ Leo. *Esoteric Astrology*, p. 122.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 13.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 100.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁷⁴ Bailey. *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, p. 1175, 1177-1179. Why there were eight and not seven Planetary Schools is a complexity related to the enumeration of the schemes. *Cosmic Fire* gives nine schemes on p. 373, naming these the Uranus, Neptune, Saturn, Jupiter, Venus, Vulcan, Mars, Mercury, and Earth schemes (which are, of course, not to be confused with the eponymous planets). But eight Planetary Schools are listed on pages 1177-1179: Uranus, Neptune, Jupiter, Venus, Vulcan, Mars, Mercury, and Earth schools. Thus, there is either no school associated with the Saturn vibration, or an omission has occurred here. And which of these eight or nine should be the essential seven is not stated.

Further, that the Planetary Schools are associated with schemes and not individual planets is difficult to discern, though arguably the case. Chief among the arguments that the Planetary Schools are found located in schemes and not planets is the following, from *Cosmic Fire*, p. 1175. "Each scheme exists in order to teach a specific aspect of consciousness, and each planetary school or Hierarchy subjects its pupils to this law, only in manners diverse. These planetary schools are necessarily governed by certain factors of which the two most important are the peculiar karma of the planetary Logos concerned, and His particular Ray." The first sentence presents the schools in the context of what the schemes do, and the second sentence states outright that the most important governing factor over each school is the Planetary Logos

with which it is associated. Though neither sentence states flatly that the Schools are found in the schemes and not just on individual planets, it makes greater sense that if the primary influencing factor for each is a Planetary Logos, then the context in which each exists is the life of that Logos, not merely the life of one forty-ninth of Its expression.

In sum, even though there seem to be oddities in trying to match up the names and number of the schemes with those of the Planetary Schools as given by the Tibetan, for the most part, there is a meaningful and comprehensible correlation.

⁷⁵ Leo. *Esoteric Astrology*, pp. xvi, 2, 17.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 64 - 65.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 34, 35, 98.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 290.

⁸³ Bailey. *Esoteric Astrology*, pp. 5 - 6.

⁸⁴ Leo. *Esoteric Astrology*, p. 6.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

⁸⁶ See M. Temple Richmond. "Affirming Planetary Purpose." *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Spring 2005, pp 13-23, for full explication of this theme.