

Zodiac and Ray Cycles in Esoteric Astrology: The Beginning of the Age of Aquarius

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Summary

This article aims to establish the date for the true astronomical beginning of the Age of Aquarius, based mainly upon the writings of the Master Djwhal Khul through his amanuensis, Alice A. Bailey. It was born from many dialogues within the esoteric community, some of which revolved around an “unpublished letter” from the Master D.K. that indirectly gave the date in question. Nevertheless, the author has endeavoured to prove the 2117 date by other means, several of which lay in Bailey’s *published* writings. This article seeks to work from the greater view to the particular, reminding us that the Science of Cycles is extremely complex and intricate, giving pause for thought about the illusory nature of time.

Introduction

“One of the secrets of initiation is concerned with the apprehension of cycles, and with their duration ... before a man is considered a true occultist.”¹ This is a quote with which many students of cycles and Esoteric Astrology may resonate, particularly from the viewpoint of the complexity and sheer number of cycles. Time is an illusion—there is no beginning or end. Yet the science of cycles assists us in understanding the unfoldment of consciousness, the evolution of races and civilisations; ultimately comprehension of the Eternal Now.

There are ray, planetary and zodiac cycles, all of which have various contexts within the greater “yugas” or wheels; or according to the rays of soul groupings, races, subraces and branch races. No wonder that even the Master Koot Hoomi once stated, “I had to study for fifteen years before I came to the doctrines of cycles and had to learn simpler things at first.”²

The exact time for the beginning of the Age of Aquarius has been debated amongst astrologers for years. For students of *Esoteric Astrology* (the Science of the Seven Rays), discrimination must be applied between *zodiac cycles* and *ray cycles*.

From the greatest manvantaras to the lesser daily round, the mystery of cycles has pre-occupied this author for some time. I am reminded of the illusory nature of this sacred science and the limited personal veil through which I perceive time. Any attempt at penetrating its arcana solely through my concrete mind is always soundly repelled by a veil of protection that surrounds it. This method is applied to several other areas of the Ageless Wisdom to “safeguard them from the profane;” the “profane” being simply the degree of my unregenerated substance—or ignorance.

None of us is free from illusion, glamour and maya, nor do we possess the clear vision of the Master who has been liberated from these trammels. The tendency for the western esoteric student with well a equipped concrete mind, is toward a linear and literal perception of time. Ultimately the buddhic intuition is the only factor that can be invoked to accurately (and safely) perceive the true nature of time and its cyclic unfoldment; many of us still work at their comprehension via a combination

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of the concrete mind and the developing bud-
dhic faculty.

The Greater Wheel of Aquarius

Working as ever from the greater to the particular, let us examine a passage which points to two Aquarian cycles:

This is, therefore, the most amazing period in the history of humanity. Added to this, it must be borne in mind that we are entering another greater round of the Zodiac, and this coincides with the lesser zodiacal activity because *Aquarius governs the greater immediate cycle of 25,000 years and is also the sign into which the sun is now moving for a period of 2300 years*—a most amazing happening and full of import in our planetary history.³

The Sun is entering Aquarius on a greater and a lesser cycle: 25,000 upon the greater wheel and 2,300 upon the lesser wheel. (More on this lesser wheel later.) Having been informed that a greater cycle exists (this applies to all signs), other passages about any astrological age in the Tibetan's books must be examined by the careful student for ambiguity or hints—as to whether they refer to a greater cycle. The greater wheel of 25,000 years is also part of a 250,000 year cycle:

The great sweep of the sun around the greater zodiac (a period of 250,000 years, or a complete round) came to an end when the sun entered Pisces over two thousand years ago. This process of passing out of, or entering into, a particular sign and cyclic influence covers a period of five thousand years where this greater round or cycle is concerned. This period of five thousand years covers the complete cycle of transition until complete freedom to function under the inspiration of the new sign is accomplished. We are, therefore, not yet free from incidental turmoil.⁴

In other words, the two lesser cycles of Pisces and Aquarius constitute approximately the 5,000 year cuspal period of the greater 25,000 year cycle. Let us examine another passage which refers to the Sun in Aquarius:

that revealing light only finds Location when the seventh Ray of Ceremonial Order is active and in process of manifestation in the three worlds, and necessarily, therefore, upon the seventh plane, the physical plane. Such a manifestation inevitably takes place in moments of planetary crisis, *when the seventh ray is active and when the Sun is in Aquarius*. Such a combination of relationships *is being established now, for the seventh ray is rapidly coming into manifestation and the Sun is in Aquarius*, for the Aquarian Age is just beginning. The Objective of this combination (which has occurred six times during the period of *the fifth root-race*) is to bring about illumination and the establishment of order upon the Earth.⁵

This passage has been taken literally by some to mean that the “Sun is in Aquarius” for the 2,160 year lesser cycle—when it more likely refers to the greater 25,000 year cycle. Why else would the Master D.K. have made the indirect reference to the time-span of the Fifth Root-race? Students of Esoteric History should note that the duration of the Fifth Root-race is at least 1,000,000 years,⁶ referring only to its physical appearance, not to its nascent emergence closer to four million years ago.⁷ Either figures of one or four million could be computed to have had this combination of sign and ray cycle occurring six times.

If the small wheel is calculated, Aquarius comes around full circle every precession cycle of 25,920 years—for a period of 2,160 years. One type of ray-seven cycle is 2,500 years⁸ and it is said to be never out of incarnation for more than 1,500 years.⁹ It is probable therefore, that its cycle would coincide with that of the lesser Aquarian wheel every 25,920 years. Multiplying this precession figure by six yields only 155,520 years—well short of the duration of 1,000,000 years for the Fifth Root-race.

If the greater wheel is considered, even with a coinciding *greater* seventh ray cycle of 7,000 years,¹⁰ then Aquarius comes around every $250,000 \times 6 = 1,500,000$ years, much closer to both the shorter and longer durations of the Fifth Root-race mentioned earlier.

It is now the seventh time that this combination of the seventh ray and the greater Aquarian cycle has occurred in the history of the Fifth Rootrace. There is something momentous about the 7×7 that relates to the $7 \times 7 = 49$ ashrams—that may accelerate their externalisation process during this next cycle. The seventh ray is certainly about the precipitation of the Plan upon the physical plane. (Note all the “p”s in this sentence have a numerical value of seven.)

Another point to reflect upon is the passage, “the seventh ray is rapidly coming into manifestation.” A greater seventh ray cycle started in 1675¹¹ (related specifically to the Piscean Age) and whether it is a cycle of 700, 2,500 or 7,000 years, it certainly has gained momentum over the past few hundred years. There was a seventh ray sub-cycle (as part of the greater sixth ray cycle) that started in 1860¹² during the time of the great reformer Abraham Lincoln; and there may well have been another seventh ray cycle that commenced around 1945 (which will be discussed shortly):

There are vaster cycles, of 2500 years, of 7,000 years, of 9,000 years, of 15,000 years, and many others which only advanced initiates know of or can follow; these can break in upon any of the lesser impulses, and can be seen appearing, unexpectedly, as far as average man's knowledge is concerned, and yet they are but the returning impulses set in cyclic motion perhaps thousands of years ago.¹³

The Lesser Wheel of Aquarius: Distinguishing Zodiac Cycle from Ray Cycle

Following is another passage that could be interpreted as a greater cycle but more likely refers to the *lesser* cycle, as it is encompassed by the ray cycle within which it unfolds:

In June, 1945, at the time of the full moon (so significant a day in the spiritual experience of the Christ), *He definitely and consciously took over His duties and responsibilities as the Teacher and Leader during the Aquarian solar cycle.* He is the first of the great world Teachers to cover two zo-

diacal cycles—the Piscean and the Aquarian.¹⁴

As an aside, when Djwhal Khul refers to the full moon of June he usually means the full moon period of Gemini as this is Christ's own unique festival accompanied by powerful second ray of love-wisdom forces.

However in June 1945 it was the Cancer full moon which fell in June (the Gemini lunation was in May that year), and Cancer may certainly be appropriate in terms of the birthing upon the physical plane of Christ's mission. Indeed, Neptune (as the soul ruler of Cancer) is one of the names that Christ is known by in the West.¹⁵ Yet it may well be academic as to whether it is the Gemini or Cancer full moon. The Master D.K. follows up with another passage a little further on:

At the centre of this Triangle the Christ took His stand; from that point His Aquarian work began, and it will continue for two thousand five hundred years. Thus He inaugurated the new era and, upon the inner spiritual planes, the new world religion began to take form.¹⁶

Note that the period mentioned is 2,500 years not 2,160 years, the usual cycle for a zodiac sign's precession. Here, 2,500 refers to a seventh *ray cycle* which unfolds over this period and encompasses the *zodiacal cycle* of Aquarius on the lesser wheel of 2,160:

[T]he Lord of the seventh Ray plays a similar part. Herein lies the reason for *His inflowing force at this time*, for a profound movement is in order of accomplishment, and a *transference* is in progress which calls for His particular type of energy. A *transference* is being effected of certain groups of human and deva Monads out of the human kingdom into the fifth or spiritual kingdom. *During His cycle of close on two thousand five hundred years*, a specific number of men will pass on to the Path of Initiation, and take at least the first Initiation, thus transferring their centres of consciousness out of the purely human into the early stages of the spiritual.¹⁷

Hence if a 2,500 year cycle started in or around 1945, it *inaugurated* the Aquarian Age

whose zodiac cycle of 2,160 years unfolds within the duration of the ray cycle. This may well be the case as it is not entirely clear where else this 2,500 seventh ray cycle could have begun or what “close on 2,500 years” means.

The seventh ray cycle that started in 1675 is “within the influence of the sign Pisces”¹⁸ and hence may not apply to the seventh ray cycle encompassing the sign Aquarius. Students need to bear the following in mind about ray cycles: “They enter into constructive activity; they pass through that particular cycle; they then pass out, or die to that activity, and are then “raised into heaven,” until such time as their cycle again comes round.”¹⁹

The figure of 2,500 may also refer to a cycle composed of several second ray cycles of 500 years²⁰ each; 2,500 is also half of a 5,000 year second ray cycle, if the figure of 500 years is extrapolated. Christ is the head of the second ray department hence the “new world religion” in the above passage may also relate to the start of a second ray cycle. The following passage points to a 2,500 year cycle of the second ray variety:

At the time of this Wesak Festival, [1941] I would call your attention to the fact that the annual return of the Buddha to bless His people everywhere and to convey the message of wisdom, light and love to humanity—coming as He does from the very *Heart of Deity* Itself—is the outer evidence and guarantee of inner divine guidance and revelation in this present world cycle of 2500 years.²¹

It is not entirely clear from this passage as to whether the cycle is starting or finishing but it may well be the latter as the Buddha came forth around 2,500 years ago. As the Christ is said to soon take over the responsibilities of the Buddha, their sharing a 5,000 year cycle of 2,500 years each may well be feasible.

Nevertheless, with the duration of 2,500 years, the seventh and second rays both share this time-span as part of their respective retinues of cyclic harmonics. This is a fascinating fact as the personality and soul rulers of Aquarius are Uranus and Jupiter. Jupiter has a 12 year cycle whilst Uranus is 84 years or 7 x 12: “You

would find it useful to make a study of the relation of the second ray to the seventh, for there is a close creative reaction or impulsive interplay between the two...”²²

The Lesser Wheel of Aquarius and 2,117²³

Let us re-examine an earlier passage: This is, therefore, the most amazing period in the history of humanity. Added to this, it must be borne in mind that we are entering another greater round of the Zodiac, and this coincides with the lesser zodiacal activity because *Aquarius governs the greater immediate cycle of 25,000 years and is also the sign into which the sun is now moving for a period of 2300 years*—a most amazing happening and full of import in our planetary history.²⁴

Note that 2,300 years is an unusual figure that is not mentioned anywhere else in Djwhal Khul’s or H. P. Blavatsky’s writings. Multiplying 2,300 x 12 = 27,600—far too long for the current *obliquity of the ecliptic*²⁵ and measurement of the current Great Year precession cycle of 25,920. The figure of 2,300 is most likely rounded off; it depicts the shorter time-span from the 1940’s, leading up to the period when the Sun astronomically precesses into Aquarius—*plus* the future 2,160 year cycle. (2,300 - 2,160 = 140 years.)

The latter part of *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy* was written around 1949, hence 140 years + 1949 = 2089. Figure 1 including the parallel 2117 date may illustrate.

In other words, from 1949, the figure of 2,300 years veils or approximates the true astronomical beginning of the Aquarian Age on the lesser wheel of 2,160 years. This is corroborated by the reading of the words, “Aquarius ... is also the sign into which the sun is now moving for a period of 2,300 years.” As in an earlier passage, this can be read ambiguously. The import of the meaning can be seen as the Sun moving toward the true astronomical beginning of the Aquarian Age over the next 140 years or thereabouts.

usual mode of procedure, so at this time a similar process is taking place in humanity as a whole. Humanity is endeavouring to reverse its position upon the wheel and to travel anti-clockwise. This leads to definite changes and is responsible for much of the present chaos, turmoil and confusion. If you add to this the shift which is taking place in the earth's axis (indicated by the widespread climatic changes and earthquakes among other things) you have a situation which must cause much confusion to astrologers everywhere.

It might be said, therefore, that both points of view are correct and can be so interpreted; it will be found, however, in due time that the teaching which I have given is relatively more correct. I say relatively, as the changes being undergone are so stupendous that it will be wise to preserve a fluid attitude *as regards interpretation*.

I would remind you also that it is still a question unanswered as to whether we are as yet really entered into the sign Aquarius; *it is more probable that we are simply nearing it with great rapidity* and so becoming increasingly responsive to its influences and less responsive to those of Pisces. I would suggest that *another 177 years must go by before we enter into what you have called the last decan of Aquarius* but which might, from a certain point of view be the first decan. Is it difficult for you to grasp the fact that esoterically speaking—the wheel turns both ways at once and will register its mode of turning according to the state of consciousness of the individual unit.²⁶

Hence, $1940 + 177 = 2117$, yields the date for the astronomical beginning of Aquarius. As one who has studied Djwhal Khul's works for many years, this passage certainly carries his "note." One can recognise the vernacular he uses plus his careful, cautionary, specific wording, syntax and description. (See Appendix for more details about the source of this passage.) When considering the earlier passage regarding the 2,300 year figure yielding an approximate Aquarian cycle beginning of 2089, then 2117 is only another 28 years and

specifically compliments this former statement.

The Aquarian Cycle Has Not Astronomically Begun: Part I

When discerning students consider *all of* the Master D.K.'s seemingly conflicting statements about the Aquarian Age, they may find that he is obliquely referring in several passages to the greater wheel of Aquarius, not just the one most obvious statement where he discusses the synchronisation of both wheels.²⁷ The following passage is a definite statement regarding the fact that we have not yet astronomically entered the Aquarian cycle:

The coming in of the Aquarian Age, Christ foresaw and reduced to pictorial form for us, thus preserving for us—down the centuries—a prophetic episode, the interpretation of which is possible of demonstration only in our time and age. *Astronomically, we are not yet functioning fully within the influence of Aquarius; we are only just emerging from the Piscean influence, and the full impact of the energies which Aquarius will set loose has not yet been felt. Nevertheless, each year carries us closer to the centre of power, the major effect of which will be to induce recognition of man's essential unity, of the processes of sharing and of cooperation and of the emergence of that new world religion whose keynote will be universality and initiation. If the word "initiation" signifies the processes of "entering into," then it is indeed true today that humanity is undergoing a true initiation as it enters into the new age of Aquarius; it will then be subjected to those energies and forces which will break down the barriers of separation, and which will blend and fuse the consciousness of all men into that unity which is distinctive of the Christ consciousness.*²⁸

This is quite plainly stated—we have not entered the lesser cycle of Aquarius, we are "not yet functioning fully within the influence of Aquarius;" we are "entering into," and have not passed fully through the "gate" of Aquar-

ius. Is Djwhal Khul talking about the greater Aquarian wheel in this passage? No, because he is referring to the astronomy associated with the precession of the lesser wheel, as well as Christ's unique role over two astrological ages. Herein follows the 1945 statement again:

In June, 1945, at the time of the full moon (so significant a day in the spiritual experience of the Christ), *He definitely and consciously took over His duties and responsibilities as the Teacher and Leader during the Aquarian solar cycle.* He is the first of the great world Teachers to cover two zodiacal cycles—the Piscean and the Aquarian.²⁹

There may be pause for thought here regarding the Christ and his relationship to the greater wheel of 250,000 years, said to be related to the cycle of the human Monad.³⁰ As a high Initiate, His jurisdiction covers the greater cycle of human-monad-blossoms who grace his garden, or ashram. This fact may relate to the earlier statement about the Lord of the Seventh Ray: “A transference is being effected of certain groups of human and deva Monads out of the human kingdom into the fifth or spiritual kingdom.” In another passage the Master D.K. plainly states that the Aquarian Age has not yet started:

The passing of our Sun out of the sign Pisces into the sign Aquarius is another of the conditions bringing about the present confusion. This confusion of forces in the solar system is notably affecting our planet. In the process of passing from sign to sign, as for instance *transitting out of Pisces into Aquarius as is now the case, the period covered is approximately five hundred years.*³¹

It seems that the Cancer full moon period in June 1945 was an important marker for the seventh-ray cycle to take hold, this sign being a conduit for both the third and seventh rays. Hence the birthing of peace (presided over by the Prince of Peace), the United Nations and the Great Invocation, all most Aquarian initiatives.

Christ can draw upon the energies which are defined by the phrase “life more abundantly,” because they will set loose (in the Aquarian Age) in a new and dynamic man-

ner the new energies needed in order to bring about restoration and resurrection. This new energy is the “implementing force of universality;” it concerns the future. This inflow of Aquarian energy is one of the factors which will enable the Christ to complete His task as world Saviour and world Teacher. It was to the definite performance of His duties as Distributor, Nourisher and Dispenser that He pledged Himself in June, 1945, and entered upon His responsibilities as the Forerunner and the Teacher of the Aquarian Age.³²

Note the earlier part of this passage is in the *future tense*: “will set loose in the Aquarian Age.” The latter words are most telling: Christ was *pledging* (committing himself) to the immediate task at hand as a *forerunner* of the age. (The definition of forerunner: a predecessor, one who foreruns; a herald or harbinger.) In other words one who comes *before* the age, though who will of course preside over that age. In other words, Christ pledged himself as the forerunner of the Aquarian Age, whilst at its *portal* in 1945.

The Aquarian Cycle Has Not Astronomically Begun: Part II

Miscellaneous Statements

1. The release of the energy of the atom is definitely the inauguration of the New Age.³³

This statement is not supportive of a specific *astronomical precession* into Aquarius; it actually refers to the *New Age*, a generic term for the new era into which we are entering. There is no reference here to the astronomical precession of the Sun into Aquarius. There is however no question that the release of the energy of the atom is a harbinger of technologies to come in the Aquarian Age; it also points to a little-realised association of the first ray/will aspect/Great Bear with Aquarius.³⁴

Hence 1945 is not the beginning of the Age of Aquarius, astronomically; it would be too neat a date or coincidence right at the end of the war; 1945 still very much the era of the Pi-

scean Age, especially with the strong presence of esoteric ruler Pluto the Destroyer, discovered between the two world wars. Pluto culminated/eliminated the 1945 conflict with the destructive power of the atomic bombs in Japan. This does not mean that the Piscean Age ended abruptly and the Aquarian Age began astronomically and exactly by precession—that would be an untenable proposition. Pluto now continues its powerful transformative work “wrapping up” the last vestiges of the Piscean Age.

Astrologers often link Uranus the ruler of Aquarius, with uranium and atomic power and this is certainly true, particularly with regard to the new technologies that will be created in this age. Yet the atomic bomb and contemporary nuclear development is only the first crude foreshadowing of what will come, for instance, nuclear fusion as opposed to nuclear fission.

2. The animal kingdom does not react strongly to the 7th ray.

The human kingdom does, but the 7th ray will have three effects in relation to the two kingdoms and their interplay:

- a. It will refine the animal bodies.
- b. It will bring about a closer relation between men and animals.
- c. It will cause a great destruction of the present animal forms.³⁵

This passage has been regarded by some students as an indication that the Aquarian Age commenced in 1945 because of the destruction of millions of (human) animal forms in WWII and the widespread disappearance of animal species upon the planet since that time. This type of reasoning confuses the two separate cycles of the zodiac signs and the rays. The quote above clearly states that it is the *seventh ray* that will bring about the destruction of animal forms, not the forces of Aquarius *per se*. The ray and zodiac cycles work with each other but do not have exact synchronisations simply because they are of varying durations.

3. In this transition period through which the world is now passing [written in the 1940s] and in this interlude between two activities—that of the Piscean Age which is passing and that of Aquarius which is com-

ing in—Libra will eventually rule, and the end of this century will see the influence of Libra steadily coming into pronounced control and into a position of power in the planetary horoscope. There is, therefore, no need for real anxiety.³⁶

4. Only the dawn is with us as yet—the dawn of the Aquarian Age.³⁷

The “dawn” is the light that precedes the “day” of Aquarius. This twilight period is the cusp of the ages over which Libra rules at present.

5. [I]n this present cycle (the ante-chamber of the New Age)...³⁸

Twilight is synonymous with “antechamber,” “a chamber or an apartment through which access is had to a principal apartment;”³⁹ the “principle apartment” being the Age of Aquarius. *Esoteric Astrology* was written in the 1940s; hence “this present cycle” refers to that period as the “antechamber,” not the Age of Aquarius *per se*.

6. The teaching planned by the Hierarchy to precede and condition the New Age, the Aquarian Age, falls into three categories: Preparatory, given 1875–1890...written down by H.P.B..

Intermediate, given 1919–1949...written down by A.A.B.

Revelatory, emerging after 1975...to be given on a worldwide scale via the radio.⁴⁰

Note the word “precede.” *The Rays and the Initiations* was one of the last books published by the Master D.K. (1960) and was probably written in the 1940s. Even after 1975 the nature of the ‘teaching planned by the Hierarchy’ would still “precede and condition ... the Aquarian Age.”

The Age of Pisces Starts 43 BC?

Another argument in favour of the Aquarian Age starting in 2,117 is to subtract 2,160 years, giving the date of 43 BC. This is a much closer date for the arrival of the Piscean avatar who appeared during the latter years of his disciple Jesus, around 27-30 AD—some 70 years later. If 2,160 is subtracted

from the 1945 date, the figure of 215 BC is obtained, much further away and perhaps less relevant. Even though the process of destruction of the old Age of Aries started with Alexander the Great around 300 BC, Julius Caesar's destruction of the Alexandrian Library in 48 BC seemed to be the final nail in the coffin of that previous age and very close to the 43 BC date.

Some Discrepancies with 43 BC

"The great sweep of the sun around the greater zodiac (a period of 250,000 years, or a complete round) came to an end when the *sun entered Pisces over two thousand years ago.*"⁴¹ This section of *Esoteric Astrology* was written during World War II, because on the same page Djwhal Khul mentions "the present world crisis—though precipitated by human error and sinfulness, by past Karma ..." Let us suppose the date is 1940; subtracting 2,000 years from this figure yields 60 BC. Yet D.K. states that the sun entered Pisces *over 2,000 years ago*, theoretically pushing back the date for its commencement to 160 years beyond 60 BC, i.e. 220 BC. This latter date does not seem to square as well with events around 43 BC, creating too early a time for the start of the Piscean Age.

How much "over 2,000 years" is it then? Or is this statement a deliberate blind? Another answer may well be that the Sun entered Pisces in the greater zodiac just as it has recently entered Aquarius on the greater wheel, the difference being that the former is the "ordinary wheel," whilst the latter is the "reversed wheel." If the same reversal process is true for the lesser wheels then it well may be for the greater. This situation may well reflect the fact that Humanity currently has an opportunity to reverse the wheel *en masse*.

Another passage that mentions "over 2000 years ago" was also written around 1940 and harkens back to the same 60 BC date: "Such an one was the Christ; He was twice an Avatar because He not only struck the keynote of the new age (*over two thousand years ago*) ..." ⁴²

Again, the term "new age" is used generically for the new era, yet perhaps Christ struck the keynote before the exact precession of the Sun

into Pisces; just as in 1945 he undertook his responsibilities for the new cycle that had not quite precessed astronomically into Aquarius.

500-Year Cusp of the Piscean and Aquarian Ages

*In the process of passing from sign to sign, as for instance transitting out of Pisces into Aquarius as is now the case, the period covered is approximately five hundred years.*⁴³ Arguments based upon the beginning of the Aquarian cycle quite often come down to when the cuspal period started and when it will finish. One could say that the great efflorescence of the arts in Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries signaled the start of the cuspal period and this is supported by the following:

This tendency to aspiration and to service is right and good and should be seen as forming part of the coming universal consciousness and equipment of the race as a whole. It is steadily coming to the surface owing to the growing strength of the Aquarian influence which (from about the year A.D. 1640) has been gaining in potency and is producing two effects: it is breaking down the crystallised old forms of the Piscean age, and is stimulating the creative faculties, as they express themselves in group concepts, and group plans.⁴⁴ (Author's italics)

This is a most significant statement and one could infer from the phrasing, "growing strength" and "gaining in potency" that the cycle may have started a little earlier, perhaps around or on 1625, which coincidentally saw the beginning of the exit of the sixth-ray force.⁴⁵ To continue: 1625 + 500 = 2125, only eight years from 2117, bearing in mind that the 500-year cuspal cycle is not going to be exact. The following section is related to this one as it refers to the same passage "about the year A.D. 1640."

Venus Cycles and the Aquarian Age

The fifth ray of science is the only one that passes through Aquarius and its ruler is Venus. Dates for the pairings of the various Venus conjunctions correlate with the pro-

posed 2117 date. Appropriately for fifth-ray symbolism, these conjunctions trace out over a period of time a five-pointed star (Venus fifth ray) in the heavens. An astrologer describes these conjunctions in relation to the Aquarian cycle:

If we take the example of the transition into the age of Aquarius we can calculate from the passage of the year 1631 until the fifth passage occurring as a pair in either the year 2117 or 2125. This gives us a transition from first passage till the dual fifth passage of either 486 years or 494 years: in other words quite close to the 500 year approximation. The transitional Venus passages for the beginning of the Aquarian age:

- 1st passage: 1631 & 1639
- 2nd passage: 1761 & 1769
- 3rd passage: 1874 & 1882
- 4th passage: 2004 & 2012
- 5th passage: 2117 & 2125 (thus covering a transitional period of 494 years)

*These are the five focal passages for the transitional period from Pisces to Aquarius.*⁴⁶

This commentator further elaborates:

The close-to-500 year transitional period between the age of Pisces and the age of Aquarius began in earnest. This coincided with the fact that, in the years 1631 and 1639, on December 7 and December 4 respectively, the first transitional pair of Venus passages occurred, signaling the transition into Aquarius. The latter Venus passage on December 4, 1639 indicated the definite entry into the transitional period from the age of Pisces to the age of Aquarius. The date of December 4, 1939, is certainly to be defined as “about the year 1640.”⁴⁷

The reader will note that the period of 494 years is close to the 500 years of a second-ray cycle. Of course Venus as the goddess of love is related to the second ray of love-wisdom; the fifth ray which Venus rules has a special relationship to the second ray; 500 years is a fifth of the 2,500 year seventh-ray cycle etc.

Hence it may be seen from the foregoing that:

1. There are lesser and greater zodiac cycles and two Aquarian cycles are now current.
2. There are approximate but not exact synchronising cycles of rays and zodiac signs.
3. The zodiac cycle is encompassed by the greater ray cycle.
4. There are several durations of cycles for the seventh ray (and all other rays).
5. Various cycles work with one another, such as the second and seventh rays.
6. Two major cycles of the seventh ray? One each for Pisces and Aquarius.
7. Seventh ray and Aquarian cycles coincide for the 7th time in the history of 5th Root-race.
8. The start of the Aquarian Age is as much determined by the start of the Piscean Age.
9. The Aquarian Age has not astronomically begun.
10. The date of 2117 seems most likely in light of all the factors considered.

In summary, the reader should bear in mind that for “astro-ray-ologers,” accurate timing for contemporary cycles is essential; from a present point of accuracy they can then ascertain precisely when past or future cycles have started or finished; this provides a better degree of accuracy in prediction and for exploring elapsed time in history; it helps to map the unfoldment of human consciousness and how it has responded (or will respond) to the various ray and zodiac cycles.

This deeper esoteric knowledge will place humanity in a position of self-determination and empowerment, assisting conscious choices and decisions—that will lead eventually to a more rapid liberation of the race as a whole; this is the promise of the Aquarian cycle into which we are moving—and invoking

the masses of men in all lands will be enabled to register consciously the “birth of the Christ” in the heart... the first initiation. It will not, in the future, be the experience of the occasional disciple but the general experience of countless thousands towards the close of the Aquarian Age. The purifying waters of the Baptism Initiation (the second initiation) will submerge hundreds of aspi-

rants in many lands, and these two initiations (which are preparatory to true service, and the third initiation of the Transfiguration) will set the seal on Christ's mission as the Agent of the great spiritual Triangle which He represents.⁴⁸

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- ¹ *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, Alice A. Bailey. p. 792. Lucis Publishing Company, New York, 1925.
- ² *The Mahatma Letters*, A.P. Sinnett. Letter #90. Theosophical Classics CD ROM.
- ³ *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, Alice A. Bailey. p. 567. Lucis Pub. Co., New York, 1957.
- ⁴ *Esoteric Astrology*, Alice A. Bailey. p. 409. Lucis Publishing Company, New York, 1951.
- ⁵ *Discipleship in the New Age II*, Alice A. Bailey. p. 425. Lucis Publishing Co., New York, 1955.
- ⁶ *The Secret Doctrine II, H.P. Blavatsky*. p. 435. Theosophical Classics CD ROM.
- ⁷ *Hidden History of Humanity*, Phillip Lindsay. Apollo Publishing, 2006.
- ⁸ *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, Bailey. p. 446.
- ⁹ *Esoteric Psychology I*, Alice A. Bailey. p. 86. Lucis Publishing Company, New York, 1936.
- ¹⁰ *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, Bailey. p. 1039.
- ¹¹ *Esoteric Psychology I*, Alice A. Bailey. p. 26. Lucis Publishing Company, New York, 1936.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, p. 165.
- ¹³ *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, Bailey. p. 1039.
- ¹⁴ *The Reappearance of the Christ*, Alice A. Bailey. p. 82. Lucis Pub. Co., New York, 1948.
- ¹⁵ *Esoteric Astrology*, Bailey. p. 220.
- ¹⁶ *The Reappearance of the Christ*, Bailey. p. 83.
- ¹⁷ *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, Bailey. p. 446.
- ¹⁸ *Esoteric Psychology I*, Bailey. p. 26.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 266.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 349.
- ²¹ *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, Bailey. p. 287.
- ²² *Discipleship in the New Age II*, Bailey. p. 582.
- ²³ See Appendix.
- ²⁴ *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, Bailey. p. 567.
- ²⁵ The angle between the plane of the earth's orbit and that of the earth's equator, equal to about 23°27".
- ²⁶ Letter from the Master Djwhal Khul answering the querent 'R.A.', February 1940. See Appendix for a more detailed explanation.
- ²⁷ *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, Bailey. p. 567.
- ²⁸ *The Reappearance of the Christ*, Bailey. p. 82.

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- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 82.
- ³⁰ *Esoteric Astrology*, Bailey. p. 410.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*
- ³² *The Reappearance of the Christ*, Bailey. p. 86.
- ³³ *Problems of Humanity*, Alice A. Bailey. p. 81. Lucis Publishing Company, New York, 1964.
- ³⁴ *Esoteric Astrology*, Bailey. p. 349.
- ³⁵ *Esoteric Psychology I*, Bailey. p. 415.
- ³⁶ *Esoteric Astrology*, Bailey. p. 238.
- ³⁷ *The Rays and the Initiations*, Alice A. Bailey. p. 234. Lucis Publishing Co., New York, 1960.
- ³⁸ *Esoteric Astrology*, Bailey. p. 285.
- ³⁹ *Macquarie Dictionary CD ROM*.
- ⁴⁰ *The Rays and the Initiations*, Bailey. p. 255.
- ⁴¹ *Esoteric Astrology*, Bailey. p. 409.
- ⁴² *The Reappearance of the Christ*, Bailey. p. 9.
- ⁴³ *Esoteric Astrology*, Bailey. pp. 409-10.
- ⁴⁴ *A Treatise on White Magic*, Alice A. Bailey. Lucis Publishing Co., New York, 1934, p. 419.
- ⁴⁵ *Esoteric Psychology I*, Bailey. p. 26.
- ⁴⁶ Email from esoteric astrologer Niklas Nihlen in a discussion group.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁸ *The Reappearance of the Christ*, Bailey. p. 87.

Appendix: Correspondence about the "2117" letter.

Dear Phillip:

You asked for further clarification pertaining to the authenticity and context of that statement which alludes to the "2117" date for a paper that you are writing, and which I included in my letter of September 2005. Of course, I am happy to oblige.

The Instructions on Esoteric Astrology were first issued in a sequential monthly Series of Instructions (over several years) to students in the Disciple's Degree of the Arcane School. As was His custom, D.K. invited the recipients of these papers to forward questions to Him via A.A.B. Incidentally, He did this with other Instructions covering different topics. Hence, we have in *Esoteric Healing* a whole section entitled, "Some Questions Answered." From other sections of questions and answers on other topics, however, some of His answers found their way into the published versions (without the question) and some did not. I guess it all depended on whether or not His answers could be inserted into and maintain the flow of the main text, according to the view of the editors and publishers.

At the end of the main text in some of these monthly Astrology Instructions there are sections of

questions and answers, the *answers* of course being His. It was His way of gauging what was going on in the minds of the recipients and what type of response there was to what He was imparting. I found that particular question and answer in such a section at the end of the monthly Instructions dated February 1940, the main text being on the astrological sign, "Cancer." I then simply did the math. All of D.K.'s papers of Instructions are dated according to the month and year of their first distribution, for, as you know, He always sought to preserve Hierarchical integrity pertaining to such dispensations. Some of the questions were signed with the initials of the inquirer, some were not and were left blank. This particular question was signed, "R. Assagioli." However, it should be realised that this instruction or "answer to the question" was definitely *not* in a "private letter" to Dr. Assagioli. The fact that should be realised is that it was included in the Astrological Instructions sent to *all* the students in the Disciples Degree who had requested them at that time.

Thus it is that this simple recognition should drive through any further controversial questions pertaining to the authenticity of this "answer to the question" which included the hint towards 2117. Since this "answer to the question" was included in D.K.'s original monthly Instructions on Astrology (which has subsequently been published in full) and as a part of those Instructions, then one might as well consider it as really being an intrinsic part of those original Instructions. If one is going to dispute that little passage then one might as well dispute D.K.'s entire treatise on *Esoteric Astrology*.

This particular question and answer is one of the very few upon which D.K. elaborated and endeavoured to give more, albeit, including a most interesting and vital piece of information that, for some reason, never found its way into the published version. I do not know why, for He obviously never meant it to be a big secret because it had been given to *all* the students in the Disciples Degree. Perhaps it was simply a bit of an "odd-ball" because it did not particularly fit neatly into the flow of any of the main text, and perhaps when Regina Keller was later editing the manuscripts for publication she simply did not know where to place it or it might have just been an oversight.

Sincerely,
Keith Bailey