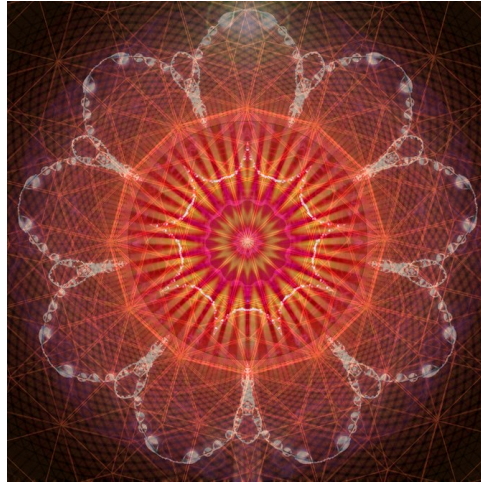


Fall 2019, Volume 15, Number 2



# *The Esoteric Quarterly*

*An independent publication dedicated to the trans-disciplinary investigation of the esoteric spiritual tradition.*

---

**Esoteric philosophy and its applications  
to individual and group service and  
the expansion of human consciousness.**



Washington, D.C., USA.

[www.esotericquarterly.com](http://www.esotericquarterly.com)

e-mail: [editor@esotericquarterly.com](mailto:editor@esotericquarterly.com)



## *The Esoteric Quarterly*

*The Esoteric Quarterly* is an online, peer-reviewed, international journal, published by The Esoteric Quarterly Inc., a non-profit corporation based in Washington, D.C. It is registered as an online journal with the National Serials Data Program of the Library of Congress. International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) 1551-3874.

Further information about *The Esoteric Quarterly*, including guidelines for the submission of articles and review procedures, can be found at <http://www.esotericquarterly.com>. All correspondence should be addressed to [editor@esotericquarterly.com](mailto:editor@esotericquarterly.com)

---

### **Editorial Board**

Editor-in-Chief: Donna M. Brown (United States)

Editor Emeritus: John F. Nash (United States)

Alison Deadman (United States)

José Becerra (United States & Puerto Rico)

Celeste Jamerson (United States)

Vijay Srinath Kanchi (India)

Katherine O'Brien (New Zealand)

Miguel Malagreca (Italy)

Michael J. Stacy (United States)

James Moffatt (Canada)

Irina Kuzminsky (Australia)

### **Facebook Administrator**

Miguel Malagreca (Italy)

---

Copyright © *The Esoteric Quarterly*, 2019.

All rights reserved.

Copies of the complete journal or articles contained therein may be made for personal use on condition that copyright statements are included. Commercial use or redistribution without the permission of *The Esoteric Quarterly* is strictly prohibited. Note: The copyright for volumes 1 thru 8, remain with the *School for Esoteric Studies*.

# *The Esoteric Quarterly*

## Contents

### Volume 15, Number 2. Fall 2019

#### FEATURES

Editorial	4
Publication Policies	5
Poems of the Quarter	6
“Unrelenting Freedom Carves My Soul,” and “Teach Us How to Speak Justice,” by Christian Saade	
Picture of the Quarter	7
“Cosmic Embrace” by Melina Del Mar	
Quotes of the Quarter	8
Advertising	10

#### ESOTERIC ASTROLOGICAL COMMENTARY

The Stars Alcyone and Aldebaran in the Constellation of Taurus, by Maureen Temple Richmond	13
--	----

#### ARTICLES

The Creative Hierarchies, by John F. Nash	27
The Rediscovery of Byzantine Orthodox Mysticism: An Introduction to the Medieval Hesychasts’ Theory of Humanity’s Deification, by Nikolas Laos	47
The Fifth Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease, by Zachary F. Lansdowne	59

#### BOOK REVIEW

An Introduction to Agni Yoga, by Vincente Beltrán Anaglada	85
Living on the Inner Edge: A Practical Esoteric Tale, by Cyrus Ryan	87



The mission of the *Esoteric Quarterly* is to provide a forum for the exploration of esoteric philosophy and its applications. Full-length articles and student papers are solicited pertaining to both eastern and western esoteric traditions. We also encourage feedback from readers. Comments of general interest will be published as Letters to the Editor. All communications should be sent to: [editor@esotericquarterly.com](mailto:editor@esotericquarterly.com).

## Esoteric Philosophy & Mystical Christian Theology

---

Three of the articles in this issue deal with one or more branches of esoteric philosophy as propounded by Djwhal Khul, through Alice A. Bailey. Two of these address aspects of esoteric astrology, or the science of relationships, which concerns itself with the conditioning and governing energies that play upon the entire field of space. The first explores the influence of certain fixed stars on human development. The second article draws attention to the great orders of Spiritual Beings upon whom the mystery of the universe is built. The third article in this category explores the psychological cause of dissonance and its healing via the Science of the Seven Rays. A fourth article challenges some of the misleading interpretations of the mystical quietist tradition and highlights the manner in which it can help one achieve inner illumination and liberation.

Maureen Richmond's ongoing series in *Esoteric Astrology* now focuses on two Alpha Stars—Alcyone and Aldebaran—in the constellation of Taurus. Combining pertinent extracts from the works of Alice A. Bailey and Helena Blavatsky, as well as astronomy, legend and myth, with her own insights, Richmond provides a revealing portrait of Alcyone's and Aldebaran's spiritual significance in radiating universal light and inspiration to Humanity. She also discusses the respective star groupings—the Pleiades and the greater and inclusive constellation of Taurus—in which they are found. Her article shows that “the characteristics associated with the stars Alcyone and Aldebaran are timeless, archetypal designs applicable to all human spiritual striving.”

John Nash explores the subject of the Twelve Creative Hierarchies, the mysterious entities responsible for building, creating and stimulating life in our solar system. Drawing upon the writings of Helena Blavatsky and Alice A. Bailey, Nash provides an overview of

the function of these Hierarchies and their synthetic cooperation with the governing constellations, the seven rays, the ruling planets, and their relationship to humanity. The hierarchical structure of these creative powers is explained along with the idea that “the consciousness of the Monads in any given Hierarchy are evolving individually and collectively toward the attainment of a particular Logoic goal.” Nash's contribution serves as a lucid guide for those wanting to understand more about the Creative Hierarchies' profound significance for humanity and all planes of existence.

Next, Nicolas Laos elucidates the philosophical and spiritual visions of Medieval Hesychasm and its theory of humanity's deification in the Eastern Christian tradition. The article delineates an interpretation of hesychasm based on the meaning of the Greek words “nepsis,” meaning wakefulness or an alert and stable mind, and “heresy” derived from *herō*, meaning to receive, to grasp or conquer. It contrasts knowledge that can be understood in a natural language from that of the inner, mystical approach. An historical account of hesychastic acceptance along with its Platonic and Hermetic influences is included along with a synopsis of the hesychastic system of spiritual practices. Also included are an Orthodox understanding of God's hypostatic existence as well as a distinction between “energies” and “essence” and “intellect” and “mind.”

Zackary Lansdowne contributes the seventh and final article in his series on the seven psychological causes of inharmony and disease. In this article, Lansdowne analyzes Alice A. Bailey's cryptic stanza for the Fifth Ray of Concrete Knowledge and Science. The primary imperfection of fifth-ray energy is its cleavage-making characteristic. The verses of the stanza depict the accrual of “many cleavages: projection, emotional isolation,

shutting out the higher illumination, cleavage within an individual, cleavage between an individual and a group, separative scientific dogma, and barriers to love and joy.” However, these same characteristics, as the author points out, are later turned to advantage as the fifth ray individual directs his or her attention to the science of the soul and becomes receptive to illumination.

Christian Saade contributes our *Poems of the Quarter*. Saade is an author, poet, and psychological and spiritual teacher, with degrees in counseling, economics, religion and history. After serving as a therapist in private practice, he spent the next 20 years training therapists and coaches in the method he developed called “Authentic Individuality and Global Solidarity.” His 14 years’ experience working for peace and humanitarian activities during the Lebanese war taught him to approach tragedy through service and the heart. Saade is the director of “The Olive Branch Center” along with his wife: [www.theolivebranchcenter.net](http://www.theolivebranchcenter.net). He is the author of *Second Wave Spirituality*, and *Prayers from the Heart*. Saade has collaborated with Andrew Harvey on *Evolutionary Love Relationship* and two CD sets: *An Evolutionary Vision of Relationships*, and *Sacred Activism and the Epic Spirituality of Love*.

Our *Picture of the Quarter* is from the Chilean artist, Melina Del Mar. Del Mar comes from a long lineage of important South American artists. After many years under their tutelage Melina, she left her homeland for Rome to study the works of the renaissance masters. Her work with South American Shamans, her studies with Asian and Indian Mystics, Yogic Masters and her everyday experiences living side by side with the indigenous people of these ancient lands form the rich tapestry of inspiration in Melina’s life. Her paintings have been exhibited around the world. For additional information visit: <https://melinadelmarart.wordpress.com/>.

This issue also offers reviews for two new books. The first is a review for *An Introduction to Agni Yoga*, by Vincente Beltrán Anaglada. This noteworthy book, beautifully translated from the original Spanish by José Becerra, is a

must read for any serious esoteric student. The second review is for *Living on the Inner Edge: A Practical Esoteric Tale*, by Cyrus Ryan. Ryan’s book is a spiritual memoir about his 30-year journey into the world of experimental Group Work and his efforts to synthesize the essence of various Esoteric Traditions.

Donna M. Brown  
Editor-in-Chief

### **Publication Policies**

Articles are selected for publication in the *Esoteric Quarterly* because we believe they represent a sincere search for truth, support the service mission to which we aspire, and/or contribute to the expansion of human consciousness.

Publication of an article does not necessarily imply that the Editorial Board agrees with the views expressed. Nor do we have the means to verify all facts stated in published articles.

We encourage critical thinking and analysis from a wide range of perspectives and traditions. We discourage dogmatism or any view that characterizes any tradition as having greater truth than a competing system.

Neither will we allow our journal to be used as a platform for attacks on individuals, groups, institutions, or nations. This policy applies to articles and features as well as to letters to the editor. In turn, we understand that the author of an article may not necessarily agree with the views, attitudes, or values expressed by a referenced source. Indeed, serious scholarship sometimes requires reference to work that an author finds abhorrent. We will not reject an article for publication simply on the grounds that it contains a reference to an objectionable source.

An issue of concern in all online journals is potential volatility of content. Conceivably, articles could be modified after the publication date because authors changed their minds about what had been written. Accordingly, we wish to make our policy clear: We reserve the right to correct minor typographical errors, but we will not make any substantive alteration to an article after it “goes to press.”

## Poems of the Quarter

---

by Chris Saade

### *Unrelenting Freedom Carves My Soul*

You, Life mysterious and abundant,  
are the unbending urge for freedom within me—  
to be free, to live free,  
to remain unshackled,  
unburdened from self-hate and self-doubt.

Free to become the body that I am.  
free to wear the spirit that bears my name,  
Free to walk proud,  
bowing my head to no dictates,  
other than the invitation to love.

My I, in my freedom,  
continue to love passionately,  
to seek justice for all,  
and to stand compassionately for justice.

Today, I offer my gratitude for the call to love's freedom.  
I praise the sacred freedom that is the essence of life,  
I praise the unrelenting freedom that carves my soul,  
repeatedly assigns dignity to my heart,  
and sheer beauty to my existence!

### *Teach us How to Speak Justice*

Oh you, who see beyond our seeing,  
Oh you, who are in love with our spirits,  
You, who are the signature of the timeless within our souls,  
Teach us how to love without limits.

Teach us how to speak justice with the passion of our longing  
and let a great strength be born in us from our sisters' and  
brothers' tears.

Let us always revere Your vision of justice  
and pray without ceasing.

For You are within us—the heart, the longing, and the prayer.  
You are the ineffable demands of love within and without.  
May we remain faithful to the limitless aspirations of Your  
sacred heart.



## Picture of the Quarter

---



Cosmic Embrace | Melina Del Mar | <https://melinadelmarart.wordpress.com/>

## Quotes of the Quarter

---

The One permeates every number. It is the measure common to all numbers. It contains all numbers united in itself but excludes any multiplicity. One is always the same and unchangeable, that is why it has itself as a product when multiplied by itself. Although without part, it is indivisible. However, by division it is divided not into parts but rather into new units. None of these units, however, is larger or smaller than the whole unit, and every smallest part of it is again itself in its wholeness.

Agrippa of Nettesheim, as quoted Annemarie Schimmel in *The Mystery of Numbers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 41.

A materialist is not very intelligent... the true reality remains hidden for him. Man's mind keeps him from seeing the essential, the living side, the Source of all things, the Primal Cause. Intellectuals are concerned with the objective side of life, and with matter, and they have no idea of the subjective side, which is life, or the living currents, forces, fluids, emanations, quintessences, heavenly entities, planetary geniuses, and all the hierarchy of angels throughout the universe... they sense none of that: the mind is destroyed by reality.

Omraam Mikhael Aivanhove, *The Spondor of Tipheret*, (Editions Prosveta: Fréjus, France, 1977), 190-191.

Reason is the opium of scholars who have lost touch with open-ended reality. The consequences of their tragic choice is dramatized in the legend of Faust, where the good doctor abandons the real world to better discover its secrets. He locks himself up in his studies, finds, absolutely nothing of value in the books he reads, and finally has to invoke Mephistopheles to recover his youth. But here youth is only a metaphor for the primordial state of being that has been lost and is not a reference to age.

Michael Besack, *The Journey is Parmenides' Poem* (Oakland, CA: Regent, 2005), 9-10.

People who define themselves as scientific, secular-liberal and open-minded are actually very narrow-minded in scope. Instead of seeing an infinite Intelligence manifest in the chemistry of life and in the miracle of human consciousness that chemistry supports, they choose to perceive chance and random processes. Having closed their mind to Godliness, they simply cannot fathom what spiritual and religious people are all about. Furthermore, because they think in materialistic terms, they close themselves off from seeing that which is beyond matter—or within it.

Chaim Kramer, *Anatomy of the Soul* (Jerusalem: Breslov Research Institute, 1988), 169.

The central underlying theme (is) the unbroken wholeness of the totality of existence as an undivided flowing movement without borders. ... in the implicate order the totality of existence is enfolded with each region of space (and time). So, whatever part, element, or aspect we may abstract in thought, this still enfolds the whole and is therefore intrinsically related to the totality from which it has been abstracted. Thus, wholeness permeates all that is discussed, from the very outset.

David Bohm, *Wholeness and the Implicate Order* (London: Ark Paperbacks, 1980), 172.

The supranatural change is a thing decreed and inevitable in the evolution of the earth-consciousness; for its upward ascent is not ended and mind is not its last summit. But that the change may arrive, take form and endure, there is needed the call from below with a will to recognize and not deny the Light when it comes, and there is needed the sanction of the Supreme from above. The



power that mediates between the sanction and the call is the presence and the power of the Divine Mother.

Sri Aurobindo, *The Mother* (Pondicherry, IN: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Trust, 1974), 61.

The one God cannot be acquired in a definite manner in an exclusive way. Only in the totality, out of historical depth, in the Encompassing of everything thinkable and everything that can be experienced, is the ascent possible to the One who is not less, not emptier, not more abstract than the world, but who encompasses the world in which everything, through the fact that it is in relation to Him, can be elevated to its highest potentialities.

Karl Jaspers, *Truth and Symbol* (New Haven, CT: Twayne Publishers, 1959), 78.

The whole world is the manifestation of that Being and Reality and is found in It, which has no beginning, end or middle, which is not born nor dies, into which change and transformation have no access.... Know that all these variegated creations and determined forms which come into sight, innumerable and without limit, are all just occasions for the appearance of the Essence and manifestations of Absolute Being.

Farīd al-Dīn ‘Attār, “The Dīvān,” as quoted by Shankar Nair, in *Universal Dimensions of Islam* (Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom, 2011), 128.

Speak to us of self-knowledge. And he (the Prophet) answered, saying: “Your hearts know in silence the secrets of the days and nights. But your ears thirst for the sound of your hearts knowledge. You would know in words what you have always known in thought. ...The Treasure of your infinite depths would be revealed to your eyes. But let there be no scales to weigh your unknown treasure;... For self is a sea boundless and

measureless.... The soul unfolds itself like a lotus of endless pearls.”

Kahil Gibran, *The Prophet* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf), 1986), 54-55

The whole cosmos is guided, controlled, and animated by an almost endless series of Hierarchies of sentient Beings, each having a mission to perform, and who—whether we give them one name or another and call them Dhyan-Chohans or Angels—they are “messengers” in the sense that they are the agents of Karmic and Cosmic Laws. They vary infinitely in their respective degrees of intelligence and consciousness...

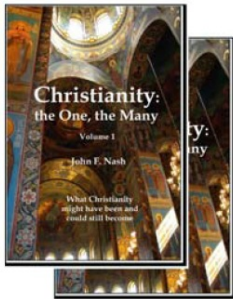
Helena Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. 1 (reprint; 1974; Pasadena, CA: Theosophical University Press, 1988), 274-275.

The heart of the usual Man, or the emotional-psychic root-being of the unawakened individual, is chronically disturbed, contracted upon itself, dissociated from the Universal-Life Principle that is its own Condition, Help, and Origin.... The Salvation of Man or Happiness of Man is in emotional conversion, or in the conversion of the heart from the automaticities of self-possession to the Conscious Realization of Ecstasy, or self-transcending Love-Communion with the Universal Principle of Being that is Life... We must surrender to Life in order to be full of Life.

Adi Da, *The Enlightenment of the Whole Body* (Lower Lake, CA: Dawn Horse Press, 1978), 13-15.

The present contains nothing more than the past, and what is found in the effect was already in the cause.

Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution* (New York: Camelot Press, 1911), 14.  
<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/26163/26163-h/26163-h.htm>.



**Christianity:  
The One, the Many**

*What Christianity  
might have been and  
could still become*

by *John F. Nash*  
Xlibris, 2007

**The rich history of Christianity  
and a bold vision of its future.**

"Encyclopedic in its coverage."  
"A masterpiece of research, insight and faith."  
"A must-read for believers and nonbelievers alike."  
"Now I know there's a place in Christianity for me."

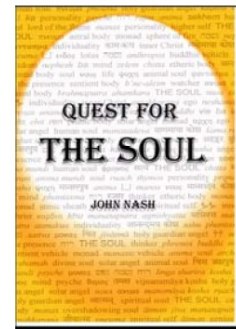
Two volume set.  
Paperback \$39.98, hardback \$59.98.

**For ordering information see:  
[www.uriel.com/bookstore](http://www.uriel.com/bookstore).**

**Quest for  
the Soul**

*The Age-Old Search  
for Our Inner  
Spiritual Nature*

by *John Nash*



"A masterpiece that weaves together the history of the soul through past ages up to the present time... This living history of the soul creates understanding and meaning of our purpose in life. Its kaleidoscopic view makes it essential reading for all students of human evolution. The book is a classic for all seeking closer relationship with the soul."

302 pages. Price \$18.75  
1stBooks Library, 2004.  
ISBN: 141403251X

**For ordering information see:  
[www.uriel.com/bookstore](http://www.uriel.com/bookstore).**

**Interested in deepening your spiritual practice?**

The School for Esoteric Studies provides structured esoteric discipleship training based on the Ageless Wisdom.

**Visit our website for:**

Alice Bailey talks, aids for meditation, our *eNews* quarterly newsletter, inspirational images and videos of key Ageless Wisdom concepts, White Papers on *Inclusive Social Action* and information about courses and applying to the School.

Students who have done advanced studies in the Ageless Wisdom are welcome to apply for our advanced coursework.

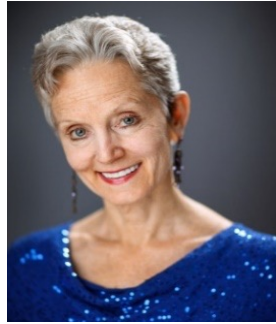
Courses available in English, Spanish, and Italian.



**School for Esoteric Studies**

Training in Purposeful Living Based on the Ageless Wisdom

**[www.esotericstudies.net](http://www.esotericstudies.net)**  



*Greetings to the Ageless Wisdom Community  
from Astrologer and Author Maureen Temple Richmond, M.A.*

**Author of *Sirius***

"An esoteric classic." ~ Donna M. Brown, editor of *Esoteric Quarterly*

"...a jewel of astrological literature, forged as an Interstellar Symphony,  
according to the highest academic standards. ~ Reinaldo Batista, Barcelona,  
Spain

**Astrological Consultant by Phone and Voice Recording**

"I testify to the impeccability of Maureen's esoteric astrological readings,  
having consulted her psychological depth and erudition since 2002." ~ R.  
Batista

"Maureen works from the higher mind." ~ Catherine Nuccio, Franklin, NC

**Publisher of Weekly Subscription Newsletter,  
*The Starfire Messenger***

"When I get the newsletter in my mailbox, I know what to expect from the  
coming week, which helps me to plan my time and activities better." ~ L.F.,  
Washington, D.C.

**Founder and Director of The Starfire School of Astrology**

"Maureen's distillations and interpretations of esoteric material rate as  
scholarly, yet are still easily comprehensible." ~ Ann Frazier West, Ed. D.,  
Nashville, TN

---

For all services, please contact Maureen Temple Richmond, M.A.  
starsong1208@gmail.com or (919) 308 - 9241.



*Dignity is an esoteric order for the defense of human dignity*  
[www.dignityorder.com/it/](http://www.dignityorder.com/it/)

# The Stars Alcyone and Aldebaran in the Constellation of Taurus

Maureen Temple Richmond

---

*The Star of Intelligence and of the Individual and The Eye of the Bull*

## Abstract

Located in the constellation of the Bull, the stars Alcyone and Aldebaran are often discussed in the esoteric astrology of Alice Bailey and hence merit study. Using relevant passages from Alice A. Bailey's *Esoteric Astrology*, supportive information from the Theosophical literature of H.P. Blavatsky, and relevant sources in astronomy and myth, this essay demonstrates that Alcyone and Aldebaran can be understood as intensified versions of the star groupings in which they are found. For Alcyone, this is the Pleiades; for Aldebaran, it is the greater and inclusive constellation of Taurus. Drawing on these placements and interpreting the myths and legends associated with these stars and constellations, the discussion uncovers the central themes of Alcyone and Aldebaran of importance to striving seekers, disciples, and initiates: the intelligence in matter, response of matter to changes of evolutionary periods, the submergence of old Atlantis, the crisis of individualization, the power of axial rotation as a segregative force, the nature of desire, the transcendence of desire, the destruction of personality obstacles, distribution sequences for the transmission of stellar energies, and transformation through the vision of synthesis. The essay concludes with the reminder that the published literature of Alice Bailey's esoteric astrological doctrine provides no mathematical or geometrical method for locating star energies at specific degrees of the zodiac in birth chart astrology, but rather calls the seeker to a recognition of encompassing issues and labors of universal relevance on the spiritual path.

## Introduction

Star life as sources of distinct evolutionary energies constitutes one of the unique factors of the metaphysical literature generated by Alice A. Bailey under the inspiration of the Tibetan Master, Djwhal Khul. In this literature, the Tibetan Master referred not only to entire constellations as sources of energies impelling spiritual evolution, but also to specific stars. Alcyone and Aldebaran are two such. Denominated by the Tibetan Master as the *Star of Intelligence and of the Individual* and the *Eye of the Bull* respectively, these two stars play a significant role in both the objective and subjective dimensions of manifestation, the first associated with tangible geological forces which act at the ends and beginnings of vast evolutionary periods as well as with the establishment of the sense of individuality, the second representative of fundamental subjective spiritual lessons concerning desire, its conquest through right detachment and the

---

## About the Author

**Maureen Temple Richmond** is a lifelong astrologer and esotericist known for her scholarly study titled *Sirius*, a comprehensive examination of the teaching on that great star as revealed in the works of Alice Bailey. Author of numerous essays, poetry, and fiction, Richmond holds a M.A. in English and Creative Writing from SNHU, and is currently working on a Ph.D. program in Heritage Studies at Arkansas State University where she now makes her home. A counseling astrologer, Richmond advises Anglophone clients around the world. She can be reached at: [starsong1208@gmail.com](mailto:starsong1208@gmail.com).



destruction of subjective impediments, and ultimately the victorious expression of the Divine Will. Significantly, the esoteric influence of these two stars is grounded in the issues and transformations associated with the constellation Taurus, the Bull. Hence, understanding the natures of these two stars rests on a journey which leads outward from and back again into the fundamental ground of the constellation Taurus. Ultimately, these two stars embody the universal perspective which is proper to the great solar beings which inhabit them. They radiate the universal light which streams down upon and into Humanity and Hierarchical disciples, providing inspiration for evolution and eventual initiation.

### **Alcyone**

Situated in the shoulder of the Bull constellation, Alcyone is *Eta Taurii*, the seventh brightest star in the constellation of Taurus, certainly not the brightest star in that constellation. That distinction goes to the star Aldebaran, discussed below. In this section however, the star of the moment is Alcyone, which indeed claims pride of position as the star of greatest magnitude (or brilliance) within the subgrouping of the Pleiades. This fact might well suggest that the nature of Alcyone is an intensified and concentrated version of all the themes associated with the Pleiades. These themes constellate around the theme of form and its production. Thus, Alcyone as the most noticeable star in the Pleiades might be expected to reproduce that theme in some form. In fact, it might legitimately be expected that Alcyone shall prove to be the very epitome of the themes and energies radiated generally by the entire Pleiades grouping, which itself is positioned in the constellation Taurus. Thus, the subject of inquiry here resembles a nested Russian doll: Taurus is the biggest doll, the Pleiades the next smaller, and finally tiny Alcyone. In this case, the interior smallest doll represents a great intensification of the general characteristics typical of its two greater contexts. Still, the nature of Alcyone is much of a mystery. The Tibetan Master mentions it often, however, so it's a topic worthy of study.

To zero in on the type of esoteric influence radiated by this star, a study of its name and mythic associations might be of help. The name of Alcyone apparently hails from the Greek words *alkyonein* and *alkyonion*, terms for a type of bird known as a kingfisher.<sup>1</sup> The kingfisher is important in this context because it makes a nest which was thought by the ancient Greek-speaking people to resemble a certain type of soft coral. Soft corals in general were called in Latin *alcyonium*, a word which also figures into the genesis of the name for the star, Alcyone.<sup>2</sup> Thus, it would seem that the word origin for the name of this star is linked in some way with the marine life form known as coral. An important question is here to be raised. Why would ancient sea-faring peoples have associated a star with the calciferous remains of underwater sea life? After all, the two are a bit disparately positioned, to say the least. The answer to this question will reveal important facts about the star under consideration, just as might be expected from the Tibetan's general dictum that more real occultism hides in the names of the stars than has previously been recognized.

As the reader may recall, the stars in the Pleiades grouping were referred to by famed nineteenth-century Theosophical occultist H.P. Blavatsky as *the Atlantides*.<sup>3</sup> Today we call these stars the Pleiades, but to Blavatsky, they were the Atlantides. The moment the esotericist hears the word Atlantides, the notion of the great Atlantean continent leaps to mind, and indeed, this connection is relevant. As it turns out, the term Atlantides comes from the fact that the seven stars of the Pleiades were considered in Greek myth to have been the daughters of Atlas. Hence, they can be referred to under a permutation of their father's name. But there is more to this patronymic name game than meets the eye. It takes but little imagination to see that the name Atlas is a great deal like the word Atlantic (as in Atlantic Ocean), or even Atlantis. Indeed, Blavatsky equates Atlas with just this, with the etymologically similar Atlantis in particular, and goes on to say that the seven daughters reputed to be the progeny of Atlas are in fact none other than the

seven subraces which ran their courses on the Atlantean continent.<sup>4</sup> In other words, the occult reading of the Atlantes is that they are so named because they constitute the seven races spawned by Atlas. Since the Atlantes equal the Pleiades, this means that the seven races which manifested during the Atlantean period are either symbolically or literally represented by the constellation today called the Pleiades.

Such a dramatic assertion is of course difficult to reconcile with the twenty-first century's astronomical concepts. According to Blavatsky, the knowledge had by contemporary astronomy about the Pleiades is but a weak and pale reflection of actual historic events, vaguely hinted at by the name and myths connected with these stars. "Astronomically," she stated, "the Atlantes have become the seven Pleiades...."<sup>5</sup> In this process, all has been forgotten about the seven races run on the continent of Atlantis, save a very tattered remnant in the form of exoteric stellar lore. Blavatsky's interpretation thus fills in missing information and suggests that the Pleiades are symbolically equivalent to old Atlantis, now long underwater. The mystery as to why ancient peoples connected the Pleiades to underwater life is thus solved. If Blavatsky's claim is accepted, then it can be reasoned that ancient peoples connected the Pleiades to underwater life because they knew that the Pleiades were linked to the submergence of the old Atlantean continent. It's a strange argument to the modern mind, akin not to scientific astronomy but rather to mythic thinking. Indeed, myth serves to substantiate this connection, for in ancient Greek myth, Alcyone as the brightest star of the Pleiadean cluster was held to have once been an "Atlantid nymph" who was mated to the Ocean as Poseidon or Neptune.<sup>6</sup>

In other words, Alcyone itself represents a nymph of the Atlantic Ocean. Even more simply stated, Alcyone and her sister Pleiades stand for old Atlantis. Consider now the role for the Pleiades claimed by Blavatsky. As stated earlier, Blavatsky held that forces from the Pleiades (together with that of other celestial factors) both determine the time and emanate the causative energies for the upliftment and subsidence of continents and land masses

at the appearance and disappearances of the various root races.<sup>7</sup> Since a change of root races (from the Fourth or Atlantean to the Fifth or Aryan) is exactly what occurred at the submergence of the Atlantean continent, the linkage of the Pleiades in general and Alcyone in particular with the site of such an occurrence near the close of the Fourth Race is entirely consistent. It is as if ancient peoples stated to posterity in their choice of a name for this star, "The influence of this star causes great lands to subside, and to join the underwater world where corals can be found." Hence, it might be concluded that the only slightly veiled reference to undersea life in the name of Alcyone does just what the Tibetan Master said it would, for it both conceals and reveals actual occult teaching.

However, there exists yet another explanation for the origin of the name, Alcyone, this one offered by Blavatsky in her *Theosophical Glossary*. Blavatsky indicated there that the word Alcyone is the same as the Greek word *halcyone*, which word is surely related to the English word halcyon, meaning calm or peaceful. According to Blavatsky's entry on Alcyone in the *Glossary*, Alcyone or Halcyone was not a daughter of Atlas, but rather of Aeolus, the god of wind. Halcyone was married to Ceyx, who met misfortune and drowned on the way to consult an oracle. Halcyone's grief was so great that she, too, cast herself into the sea, thus to be at one in death with her beloved. Then, Halcyone and Ceyx were both transformed by the gods into kingfisher birds, the female of which is known in legend for its purported habit of laying eggs on the surface of the sea to calm it during the critical period seven days before and seven days after the Winter Solstice.<sup>8</sup>

Oddly enough, this story of Alcyone leads directly to the sea, just as did the previously recounted version. And what is even more astounding, both versions involve kingfisher birds, for the first version of the Alcyone story connected this star with a soft coral resembling the nest of the kingfisher, and the second ends with two loved ones transformed post mortem into these special birds. In certain parts of the world, the kingfisher is called by the name

*halcyon*, and is held in reverence for its mythic ability to “calm the waters.” Might this possibly be a reference to the final calming of the waters after the fury of the Atlantean deluge had subsided, and smooth waters folded over what had been the frothing maelstrom of a land mass in process of implosion?

Whatever is the case, it is clear that the Pleiades in general and Alcyone in particular are in some way connected with the submergence of old Atlantis, parts of which land mass survive today in the United States, according to the Tibetan.<sup>9</sup> There a strong Pleiadean vibration might be expected, together with all that it connotes concerning the creation of material forms. The affluent and materialistically-oriented American culture—obsessed as it is with the manufacture, purchase, and possession of items—might well attest to this lingering Pleiadean influence, now exaggerated and focused in a tangible and concrete way.

After all, the Tibetan did call the Pleiades “the mothers of the seven aspects of form life.”<sup>10</sup> To this can now be added the fact that the star Alcyone in particular is implicated in the generation of material form,<sup>11</sup> just as is the Third Aspect. Of course, the Third Aspect is also known as the Third Ray, or the Ray of Active Intelligence, and it is this ray which is particularly linked with Alcyone, said by the Tibetan to be called *the star of intelligence* in Hierarchical parlance.<sup>12</sup> Active Intelligence was the dominant note in the previous solar system, during which Alcyone was extremely influential, according to the Tibetan. So very influential was Third Ray Alcyone, according to the Ageless Wisdom teaching, that it was from this very celestial body that the entire substance of our portion of the manifested universe was infused with manas, or the capability for intelligent response.<sup>13</sup>

**... the influence of Alcyone reaches equally into the depths of matter, the individual psyche, and the mainsprings of human group destiny. This is so because the Third Ray, which expresses through Alcyone, governs matter and the entire material manifestation of Deity's self-expression**

Thus, there emerges a picture of Alcyone as a potent agent for the distribution of the Ray of Active Intelligence, and this seems to have been the case not only in aeons past, but to be so in the present solar system as well. Here is one obvious reason why Alcyone is called *The Star of Intelligence*. It is because Alcyone embodies and distributes all that the Third Ray of Active Intelligence connotes. Prime amongst these characteristics is that of manas, or mind, which contains within itself all the necessary characteristics for the unfoldment of the four rays of attribute. Thus, intelligence in this sense represents a vast capacity for adaptation and meaningful variation.

It represents the fullness of Divine Mind diversifying itself into the full range of its possible permutations. This is the intelligence manifesting through Alcyone, a distributor of the Third Ray.

It was this same force which played an important part in the creation of the human kingdom at the crisis of individualization some eighteen and a half million years ago. According to the Tibetan, mind force came forth from Alcyone during the crisis of individualization<sup>14</sup> and joined in with other celestial influences to instigate the great happening of which present day human intelligence is the partial evidence. Alcyone, then, was one of the factors which brought mind to animal man and raised him to the status of the Fourth Kingdom. Apparently the Third Ray made a large contribution to this process.

Expressing through Alcyone, the Third Ray brings to bear yet another important effect discussed at length in Alice Bailey's *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*. In that work, Bailey explains that according to the esoteric occult teaching, it is the Third Ray which brings about the ability of any individual atom (whether chemical,

human, or cosmic) to distinguish itself from the surrounding environment by establishing its own unique properties via the effects of axial rotation. This being so, The Third Ray is therefore that power inherent in creation which separates the unit from the mass and allows the unit to set up its own characteristic life sphere and vibrational rate.

It is this power to which the Tibetan referred when he called Alcyone *the Star of the Individual*,<sup>15</sup> for Alcyone is a distributing agent of the Third Ray, which ray confers the power to establish segregated existence in a material sense. Undoubtedly, to call Alcyone the *Star of the Individual* is to suggest not only the obvious material sense in which this is the case, but also the ready implications in connection with the psychologically individualized human person, who senses difference from others and thus moves out of the mass into his or her own defined sphere of existence and character. It can be said, then, that the influence of the star Alcyone governs this phase of individuation in human evolution, providing power and energies for the creation and integration of the separative personality expression. This is in keeping with the nature of the Third Ray and its propensity for the creation of distinct identity in contrast to uniform, melded homogeneity. Axial rotation, then, is an important expression of the Third Aspect, responsible for the segregation of units into specific spheres of being, and typical of emanations from Alcyone.

Yet, axial rotation is characteristic of Alcyone's influence in yet another way. According to the Ageless Wisdom, Alcyone functions as some type of orbit point for an unspecified but large number of stars,<sup>16</sup> which collectively might be thought to rotate around an axis passing through that star. The idea that Alcyone might function in this way was once a widely entertained hypothesis,<sup>17</sup> but mainstream astronomy no longer accepts such a possibility.<sup>18</sup> However, the role of Alcyone in greater space may yet prove to be something more along the order of what the esoteric teaching suggests. The ancient wisdom of India calls Alcyone "Amba," or Mother,<sup>19</sup> linking Alcyone's nature with precisely those characteristics said the by Ageless Wisdom to inhere in the Pleiades in

general and Alcyone in particular. Perhaps this terminology is reflective of the fact that Alcyone does in fact function as a point of origin or a pivot point in a way not yet susceptible of verification by science.

Certainly, India makes obeisance to the spiritual centrality of Alcyone in more than one way. In the early literature of Hinduism, the star Alcyone was referred to as Arundhati, and was held to be the "wife" of Vashishta, the chief or leading star of the Seven Rishis (the Great Bear).<sup>20</sup> Arundhati and Vashishta thus constituting a stellar and somewhat ultimate archetype for the wedding of the opposites, these two stars were customarily worshipped by the newlywed Hindu couple upon first entering the newly established marital home.<sup>21</sup> Here is a picturesque exoteric demonstration of the general esoteric principle that the stars of the Pleiades are paired with the stars of the Great Bear in a polarity relationship of signal import. Of note is the fact that in this Hindu belief, Alcyone is paired with the chief star of the Seven Rishis, a positioning which might be interpreted as a hint suggesting an extraordinary role for Alcyone. From this linkage between Alcyone and on the Seven Rishis, it might be gathered that there is more concerning the potentially central cosmic position of Alcyone than has currently been discovered.

Just as Alcyone may exert a great influence over the life of space in a number of ways, this star is said by the Ageless Wisdom tradition to exercise an equally widespread influence upon our planet. Alcyone, said the Tibetan, holds sway over the entire collective of Humanity,<sup>22</sup> a contention mirrored by Blavatsky's earlier assertion that the Pleiades (in which Alcyone is found) are connected in occult science with the destinies of nations.<sup>23</sup> Certainly, this would be true given the powers levied by the Pleiades in general and Alcyone in particular over the geological foundations upon which the lands of nations rest. It also makes sense that Alcyone, the star of the individual, would govern Humanity, for Humanity seen from one angle is nothing but a collection of individuals.

As is apparent, the influence of Alcyone reaches equally into the depths of matter, the

individual psyche, and the mainsprings of human group destiny. This is so because the Third Ray, which expresses through Alcyone, governs matter and the entire material manifestation of Deity's self-expression. This is yet another reason why Alcyone is both the star of the individual and that of humanity, for both the individual and Humanity are manifestations of the Third Aspect, the personality facet of deity, that of outer appearance. This aspect of Deity appears as matter in time and space, demonstrating as diversity and particularity. Just as the First Aspect expresses as spirit, and the Second Aspect as soul, so the Third Aspect manifests the personality facet. It is this facet of divine expression to which the energies of Alcyone contribute.

Consequently, the influence of Alcyone enhances that Third Aspect urge (found within the stuff of creation, the individual and groups) to spin off from the greater mass and establish a unique character. It is this which causes the physical and psychological peregrinations of Humanity (including the mass movements of peoples over vast territories), as Humanity explores all the possible ramifications inherent in manas, or the prolific and diverse Third Ray power. It is also this Third Ray diversifying urge which causes the individual person to diverge from the herd and to explore the creation of his or her personal identity and point of view. All this is strongly tied to the influence of Alcyone, intimately involved with the making of the individual person and the explorations of potential by the Human Kingdom.

Interestingly, Alcyone is also linked to a zodiacal influence characteristically known for its ability to overcome excessive individuality and to promote group coherence. According to the Tibetan, Alcyone is especially linked to the constellation and sign of Aquarius,<sup>24</sup> which zodiacal influence is deeply involved with matters of groups and collectives, normally functioning to integrate the individual into an association with others of his or her kind. However, the influence of Aquarius is also known for its inclination toward the unique, the distinctive, and the independent—all constituting characteristics of the Third Aspect in

manifestation. Hence, it might properly be concluded that the energies and forces of Aquarius match up particularly well with that of Alcyone and its basic Third Ray vibration. This is likely the underlying reason for the close linkage between this constellation and star, Aquarius and Alcyone.<sup>25</sup>

Although the Tibetan did not say so, it is likely that Aquarius, Alcyone and Humanity constitute a triangle of energies and forces dealing with the resolution of tensions between individuality and group affiliation, ultimately fusing the drive for diversity (embodied in Alcyone) with the greater purposes at hand (embodied in Aquarius). Consequently, this triangle is likely a very potent psychospiritual influence upon the New Group of World Servers, who must straddle the line between Humanity and individualism on one hand, and the world of souls or group collaboration on the other.

Members of the New Group of World Servers, working as they do to knit together the fractious nature of Humanity with the inclusive nature of soul consciousness, may use the energies of the Aquarius-Alcyone-Humanity triangle to help humanity gain greater perspective and then to direct the immense creativity of the Third Aspect into channels consistent with the greater group good. The energies inherent in this triangle also likely provide the material vehicles and conditions for arrangements in space and time required by the unfolding Plan, with Aquarius providing the right mental orientation and Alcyone providing the material bases, both of these merging into expression through the field of human endeavor. Thus, the Aquarius-Alcyone-Humanity triangle likely makes itself felt. It is the flexibility inherent in the Third Ray, pouring through Alcyone, and the tolerance of uniqueness conferred by Aquarius which makes this possible, as the two working together serve to leaven Humanity's consciousness in the direction of a much wider world of possibilities. Perhaps it is in this way that the eldest of the Atlantides redeems her work in the previous solar system and simultaneously advances the onward march of evolution toward the goals of this system and the next.



## Aldebaran

Located not far from Alcyone, Aldebaran is yet another bright and highly noticeable star in the constellation of Taurus. In fact, Aldebaran is Alpha Taurii, the very brightest star in the constellation of Taurus.<sup>26</sup> Perceived by many ancient peoples as well as today's astronomers to be located right where an eye might be in the head of the Taurean Bull, Aldebaran is also called the *Eye of the Bull*, or sometimes the *Red Eye of the Bull* for the ruddy light it casts.<sup>27</sup> Its name comes from the Arabic, Al Debaran, which means *The Follower*, an allusion to the fact that the star Aldebaran rises just following the ascension of the Pleiades.<sup>28</sup> In fact, Aldebaran, Alcyone, and the Pleiades are all close neighbors in a fairly compact area of the sky.

Aldebaran holds an important place in the history of astrology and astronomy because it is one of four stars used by the ancient Mesopotamian and Persian sky watchers as reference points against which to measure the circle of the ecliptic. The four stars used in this manner were Aldebaran in the constellation of Taurus, Antares in the constellation of Scorpio, Regulus in the constellation of Leo, and Fomalhaut in the constellation of Aquarius.<sup>29</sup> These four points establish an almost precise square in the celestial sphere, allowing for the delineation of the 360 degree circle with considerable accuracy. Thus, these four stars were used as the original reckoning points for the structure of the zodiac, perhaps as early as 5000 years ago.<sup>30</sup>

Aldebaran as one of these has been called one of the *prime fiducials* (or main reckoning stars), considered by ancient astrology to mark the 15<sup>th</sup> degree of the sidereal constellation of Taurus. The other three stars also held the 15<sup>th</sup> degree position in their respective constellations, functioning as marking points upon which the remaining constellations were measured out in even 30 degree arcs<sup>31</sup> in much the same way as today's tropical signs are measured off in the ecliptic (though the tropical signs are figured from the equinoctial points

rather than from prominent stars). Aldebaran thus helped make astrological mapping possible.

The Tibetan never referred to Aldebaran by its modern quasi-Arabic name, speaking of this star only as the *Eye of the Bull*<sup>32</sup> and the *Golden Eye of Taurus*.<sup>33</sup> However, there can be no real doubt as to which star he meant, for his terminology closely matches the popular name of this star, which name was also used by the early dwellers of the very country from which hailed the Tibetan's amanuensis.<sup>34</sup> Given that Aldebaran is characterized by the Tibetan as the *Eye of the Bull*, or in other words, the *Eye of Taurus*,<sup>35</sup> is not likely that a full esoteric understanding of this star can be had apart from an understanding of the constellation in which this star exists.

The constellation Taurus exerts a complex influence, according to the Ageless Wisdom. At the most basic level, this constellation deals with the energies and forces like unto the animal for which it is named. Since the bull traditionally stands for brute strength, sexual prowess, and a fierce disposition when under threat, so this constellation deals with the energies that stoke the fires of the reproductive urge, the instinct to rebuke all intrusion, and the tendency to establish ownership. Plainly these tendencies play their appropriate and necessary roles, promoting the necessary population of the globe, bodily protection, and the continuity of physical existence.

Reproduction generally falls under the dominion of the sacral center, for this center governs sexuality. It is the transfer of forces from the sacral center to the throat center, however, which is the esoteric objective under the influence of Taurus.<sup>35</sup> Of course, this process of transfer requires time to complete, and in the early stages of Taurean influence, the concentration of forces remains in the lower (and not the higher) of the two centers concerned. Thus, at one level, Taurus symbolizes physical appetite and the force of carnal or material desire, a characteristic aptly portrayed by the virile and determined animal after which this constellation is drawn.

The sexual, self-protective, and possessive tendencies of bull-like psychology are only the most basic level of the Taurus influence, however. According to the Tibetan, under the influence of Taurus, the individual or group so affected also learns through repeated scenarios of mounting desire, its eventual gratification, consequent satiation, and eventual disinterest, that the most basic level of material craving represents no spiritual ultimate.<sup>36</sup> This process takes place slowly, over vast periods of time, spanning many incarnations.

Thus, according to the Tibetan, the influence of Taurus when working at the level of form (or personality) slowly and repeatedly brings about situations in which lessons can be learned concerning the nature of desire—the fact that it is ephemeral, repetitive, and if expressed in excessive degrees and wrong directions, can lead to a problematic identification with the sheaths of consciousness rather than with consciousness itself.<sup>37</sup> In sum, it might be said that the Taurus influence, when speaking to the awakening soul conscious individual, ultimately conveys the all-important soul lesson that detachment from form is a natural process, and that gradual relinquishment of the more primitive desires is a natural evolutionary movement.

However, the esoteric meaning of Taurean influence goes even beyond this, for the influence of Taurus in its refined form is also said to stand for those urges which function as a vehicle for the Will or Purpose of Deity,<sup>38</sup> for finally, when the individual or group functions at the monadic level, the influence of Taurus brings about a connection to the highest levels of Divine Will and Purpose.<sup>39</sup> As a result, it might be said that Taurus represents the force of material personal desire at one extreme, while it represents the intent of Deity in the overall evolutionary Plan on the other. Though it is indeed possible that the former serves the latter in many a case, there remains a divergence of quality in the apparent opposites represented by the influence of this constellation. For the striving individual seeker, perhaps it might be said that Taurus represents raw, unrestrained physical appetite and stubborn insistence upon individual demands on

one hand, as opposed to right aspiration and appropriate intention on the other. Taurus thus represents a wide spectrum of possibilities.

The influence of this constellation evokes such a divergent response because it is a repository of not only the Fourth Ray (or the Ray of Harmony via Conflict), which ray is usually associated with this constellation and sign, but also the First Ray, which ray is notorious for its tendency to bring out both the worst and the best in that which it contacts. According to the Tibetan, it is this potent ray of Will and Power which works through the constellation and sign of Taurus, and in so doing, evokes vastly diverging responses from Humanity.

Here is how the Tibetan characterized the two extremes of Taurean influence as it channels Ray One into our system and planet.<sup>40</sup>

On the downside, he said, this Ray One influence pouring through Taurus evokes from Humanity a bullish, headstrong insistence hell-bent upon following the way of aggression and greed, resulting in a blindered forward rush into materialistic systems of life, thought, and desire.<sup>41</sup> In this collective tendency can clearly be seen the instinctive belligerence of the Bull, surging forward to overcome any who might invade its territory. However, there is also a sense in which *the onward rush of the Bull* is a good and necessary factor, as it does also facilitate the accomplishment of the underlying goal of the evolutionary process.<sup>42</sup> All the same, there seems to be a large component of the Taurus influence which leads to pugnacious and even militant stances in parts of Humanity.

On the upside, said the Tibetan, Ray One working through Taurus stimulates in the advanced members of Humanity a very different set of impulses. When the energies of Ray One working through Taurus impact members of this group, instead of being roused to material and martial ambitions, they rise to a vision of far distant evolutionary possibilities, as though glimpsed through the very *Eye of the Bull* itself, and consequently undertake a determined and steady forward movement on the evolutionary path, in service to the Divine Plan, no matter what the immediate dangers and diffi-

culties might be.<sup>43</sup> Within this characterization of the refined Taurean influence is likely contained a broad hint in regard to the nature of Aldebaran, which as the brightest star in Taurus, is quite likely the apotheosis of the Taurus influence.

Of immediate interest to the esoteric astrologer is the link through which all this Ray One power gains entrance to Taurus. The Tibetan stated plainly that this Ray One influence acting in Taurus comes from the Great Bear, the agent of Divine Will and Power.<sup>44</sup> He went on to say that in recent times, and on account of evolutionary advancements, a new linkage has arisen between several astrological factors, including the Great Bear and Taurus. This linkage begins with the Great Bear, from which Ray One energies emanate, and flows through the large physical constellation and related zodiacal sign of Taurus. It then continues through the smaller and more focused Pleiades star cluster (being relayed by one of the Pleiades in particular), then the specific star Aldebaran, and finally the planet Pluto (which planet distributes the First Ray), to usher Ray One energies into our solar system.<sup>45</sup> It is likely that the Tibetan also intended the invisible planet Vulcan to be included in this distribution sequence, for he mentioned this body within the general context of the discussion on Ray One force as it pours through Taurus.<sup>46</sup> This would establish the entire Ray One distribution sequence as follows: Great Bear, Taurus, Pleiades, Aldebaran, Pluto/Vulcan. The Ray One energies thus channeled then surge through Shamballa, our planetary head center, and from thence right into our planetary life.<sup>47</sup>

The impact of Ray One energies coming through this linkage results in the evocation of not only all the problematic bull-headedness and territoriality evidenced by mass Humanity, but also the will to serve the Plan as demon-

strating in initiates, disciples, and aspirants.<sup>48</sup> As can be seen, again a great divergence of effect is to be noted, the opposite ends of which bracket the possibilities presented by the potent influence of the Taurean influence mixed with Ray One energies. Clearly, this mixture can equally throw into high gear the selfish and acquisitive instincts of unregenerate human nature on one hand, and the consecrated spiritual will of the most refined seeker on the other.<sup>49</sup>

That Aldebaran is involved in bringing all this psychospiritual influence into our system was stated forcefully

but symbolically by the Tibetan, who put it this way. "This Shamballa force...proceeds from far distant places, pouring through the eye of illumination into those spheres of influence upon...the Earth, impelling the Bull upon its onward rush."<sup>50</sup> Interpreted, this statement might be restated as the following: The Ray One energies which power Shamballa on our planet come from the far distant stars of the Great Bear. These Ray One energies ultimately pour through Aldebaran to reach our Earth, thus bringing the energies and tests of Taurus (in which constellation Aldebaran is located) fully into our region of experience.

Note here that all the additional factors in the previously described Ray One distribution sequence are not enumerated. However, they might be understood as implied, and it would thus appear that in this statement, the Tibetan simply emphasized the essential factors, referring under cover of symbolism to only the Great Bear and Aldebaran. In so doing, the Tibetan may have used Aldebaran as a representative of the entire constellation of Taurus and all that it connotes, for he stated that Ray One force "pours through the eye of illumination...impelling the Bull on its onward rush," which is as much to assert that the "eye of illumination" in some way facilitates the expres-

*... Aldebaran embodies in a concentrated form the entire evolutionary lesson coded in the constellation and sign of Taurus.... It might even be said that the influence of Aldebaran itself brings about the re-orientation of force necessary to move from control by the separative will to cooperation with the Cosmic Will.*

sion of energies from Taurus, the Bull. This is one reason why it may be suspected that in Aldebaran are concentrated the energies of the constellation Taurus in which it is found, just as may be the case with Alcyone and the Pleiades.

All the same, it is possible that the term *eye of illumination* as used here refers to some unknown subjective factor or even the third eye in the human being. Certainly, the Tibetan did equate the *Eye of the Bull* with the ajna or brow center in the individual person in particular passages in which this star was discussed. For example, in one passage the Tibetan indicated that the *Eye of the Bull* is like unto the single eye of the New Testament, which when “single” (or perhaps concentrated), makes the whole body full of light.<sup>51</sup> Clearly, this is a reference to the organ of spiritual vision which, when developed, reveals the clairvoyant view of existence, a light filled energy field. Another passage in this same vein suggests that the star Aldebaran is the archetype for the eye of spiritual vision in the individual person.<sup>52</sup> Yet a third asserts that the *Eye of the Bull* and the focused, opened *eye of illumination* in the individual person are the same thing.<sup>53</sup> In this sense, then, to say that far distant star energies flow through the *eye of the bull* is to say that such stellar energies flow through the ajna center of the human person at some point in evolution, and it is in this way that the true esoteric work of the Taurus archetype is facilitated.

There can be little doubt that the Tibetan meant to indicate a strong correlation between the functioning of Aldebaran, the star, and the *Eye of the Bull* as the etheric “eye” near the forehead of the human person. In fact, it might perhaps be well to go so far as to say that the equivalence between the celestial Bull’s Eye and the human ajna suggests a linkage between the mastery of the forces of Taurus and the development of the ajna center, such that when the mastery of these Taurean forces takes place, so also occurs the unfoldment of the eye of illumination in the individual human person, unto the point of complete clairvoyant perception.

Compelling as this analogy between star and etheric center may be, it nonetheless seems that in other contexts, the term Eye of the Bull almost undoubtedly refers straightforwardly to the star Aldebaran. Thus, there emerges a picture of the star Aldebaran as an illumined orb capturing the massive Ray One energies emanating from the Great Bear, which then pour through this star as though it were an open eye casting the rays of its light-filled gaze downward into creation, thus prodding the Taurean Bull and all its effects the more forcefully into action.

In so doing, this great Taurean celestial eye functions also, according to the Tibetan, as the “eye of revelation.”<sup>54</sup> The revelation here referred to is no doubt of both cosmic and personal scope, affecting universal process and individual progress alike. But just exactly what does the *Eye of the Bull* reveal? According to the Tibetan, it reveals nothing less than “...the stupendous and sublime plan of Deity.”<sup>55</sup> This is the essential esoteric function of the star Aldebaran, known since ancient times as the *Eye of the Bull*. It has the power to pull aside the curtains of matter shrouding the central mystery of existence, and in so doing, expose the workings of Divine Intent to full view. This it does not only for the individual seeker, but for the collective as well, though the collective may only grasp such a communication slowly. Still, such is the potential for subjective experience conferred by the rays of Aldebaran, which star was said by the Tibetan to convey a spiritual vision of synthesis as an ultimate revelation.<sup>56</sup>

Of course, such a majestic stellar revelation is hardly a simple thing to receive, even though requiring only a few words to declare. To glimpse the entirety of the Divine Plan is a staggering experience surpassing the confines of normal human mentation. Much preparation must take place before cosmic content such as this can be contained in the consciousness of a group or individual. Many erroneous structures of thought and behavior must be swept away, that an opening in mind and matter may be made. And much must be changed in the orientation toward material embodiment itself if

such an insight is to be grasped. Otherwise, the mind will simply be too narrow and earthen to comprehend the complexity and nuances of the unfolding Divine Plan.

Fundamental resistance to tremendous change such as that required for cosmic understanding resides right in the form nature, for the form nature is geared toward considerations other than the comprehension of the entirety of the Divine Plan. This resistance inherent in the form nature is symbolized by the Bull of Taurus itself, which animal stands staunchly as master of its territory, unwilling to compromise, bend, or adapt. The exoteric astrological portrayal of Taurus underscores this fact, holding that Taurus represents that which is imperious, set in its ways, and bound by habit.

Thus, the constellation of Taurus contains all the elements of an evolutionary drama, with both the incentive to evolve and the resistance to doing so well represented. Little mystery that this constellation and its representative are also associated with Ray Four, the ray under which understanding is only achieved via drastic contrast, for here the contrasts are marked, indeed. The battle between these contrasts makes for the Taurean drama, which results from the impact of Ray One as it strikes the elementary material tendencies embodied in this archetype. Once this Ray One energy passing from the Great Bear, to Taurus, and through the Eye of the Bull reaches Earth, its kingdoms, and the striving seeker in particular, it is ready to take on any of the resistances the form nature might muster. The Tibetan has indicated that Aldebaran is critical in this process, stating that is through this star (or the *eye of illumination* as he called it) that pours the force responsible for the removal of all obstructions, thus letting the entire impact of Taurus do its work for evolution on our planet.<sup>57</sup> Ray One influence from Aldebaran thus makes way for all the lessons of Taurus, which (stated positively) concern right direction of desire and right orientation to the form nature. In this process, Ray One influence from Aldebaran acts to enhance or increase the presence of spiritual light in the planet and the person, simply by ridding all levels of those factors which impede spiritual evolution.

This is to say a great deal, as might be imagined, but even at its simplest level, it makes clear that Aldebaran is a potent distributor of the Destroyer Ray, Ray One. This ray influence leads directly to the invisible planet, Vulcan, which distributes Ray One itself, and which planet sways the affairs of Taurus from its position as both esoteric and hierarchical ruler of this constellation and sign. Obviously, the influence of Vulcan participates in the decimation and neutralization of those resistances to be found hiding so stubbornly in the form nature, so aptly represented by the Bull. The Tibetan hinted that this is so when he implied that it is really the forces of Ray One Aldebaran and Vulcan which guide the person or group much affected by Taurus.<sup>58</sup>

Thus, it might profitably be speculated that the essential lesson to be learned under Taurean influence concerns the difference between the stubborn little self-will of the separative personality and the majestic cosmic will of the monad and beyond. Aldebaran plays a central role in rendering that distinction in starkest terms to the advancing disciple, though the fullness of its message arrives only over long periods of time. The fact that Aldebaran's influence is only fully accessible to persons on later stages of the spiritual path was underscored by the Tibetan, who stated that the influence of Aldebaran can only act freely in an individual when all glamour and illusion have been dissipated, which stage is reached at the Third Initiation.<sup>59</sup> This qualification falls right in line with other statements made by the Tibetan regarding the stage of evolution at which star energies in general are truly available for the individual seeker. Thus, it can be expected that until the Third Initiation is reached, an individual will be slightly to very discomfited by the influence of Aldebaran, as with that of other stars, for until monadic awareness supervenes, stellar impact is perceived as relatively inimical, especially to the consciousness strongly identified with form. Hence, to those on an early stage of the path, Aldebaran signifies somewhat of an ominous influence, wielding as it does the Ray One capacity for destruction of attachments and mistaken identifications.



In sum, it appears that Aldebaran embodies in a concentrated form the entire evolutionary lesson coded in the constellation and sign of Taurus. This star teaches of the necessity to orient force away from the more primitive physical impulses, and to replace those impulses with a sense of the greater cosmic movement and one's place therein. It might even be said that the influence of Aldebaran itself brings about the reorientation of force necessary to move from control by the separative will to cooperation with the Cosmic Will. The counseling esoteric astrologer and serious student should take note that this dramatic influence from Aldebaran enters our solar system through its astrological intermediaries — which are the visible and invisible planetary representatives of Ray One, Pluto and Vulcan respectively. This fact imparts new meaning to those lifetimes and periods when the individual is strongly influenced by either or both of these two Ray One bodies, which carry the stellar imperative of Aldebaran into the region of human psychology.

## Conclusion

As this essay has shown, the stars Alcyone and Aldebaran play significant roles in the esoteric astrology of Alice Bailey and the Tibetan. Within this context, these two stars are regarded as sources of powerful evolutionary energies, often but not always operating in a manner which is apparently destructive to the form nature.

The esoteric astrological teaching maintains that Alcyone exerts this influence in numerous ways, generating form and maintaining a fundamental connection with it, governing the uplift and subsidence of land masses associated with vast evolutionary periods, activating and governing the intelligent response coded into matter in the previous solar system, and driving the segregative effect of axial rotation, together with its psychospiritual correlate in the process of individualization. Further, Alcyone stands as a pivotal representative of the negative or female polarity, paired as it is with one of the stars of the positive and masculine polarity found in the Great Bear. Finally, the esoteric teaching holds that Alcyone affects all

of Humanity, perhaps through the constellation and related zodiacal sign of Aquarius, through personal awakening into individuated existence and through the instinctual mass migrations or explorations undertaken periodically by large groups of Humanity.

Likewise, the esoteric astrological doctrine maintains that Alcyone's close neighbor, Aldebaran, brings to bear a major influence within the plan of spiritual evolution. Addressing itself to the question of desire and its management, Aldebaran is characterized in the esoteric astrological teaching as the epitome of the themes connected with the constellation and related zodiacal sign of Taurus. In this sense, Aldebaran brings intensive focus to the process of experiencing desire, learning to detach from form control, and ultimately connecting with the Greater Cosmic Purpose. Within this development is implied the gradual lifting of energies from the lower etheric centers of the disciple and initiate to those above the diaphragm. For this purpose, in individuals and the collective, energies from a Ray One source in the Great Bear pour through the constellation and sign of Taurus, the Pleiades, the star Aldebaran, and the planets Pluto and Vulcan to reach life on our planet. The end effect is the destruction and elimination of all impediments to spiritual evolution, a profoundly disruptive process which inevitably entails the temporary intensification of seemingly adverse qualities. The esoteric astrological doctrine thus characterizes the effects of Aldebaran as signally purgative, removing by force and fury those obstacles in the personality and in the collective which would resist the grander vision emerging through stellar stimulation.

The question of exactly how in astrological chart technique this stellar stimulation reaches the individual disciple and initiate is not taken up by the Tibetan Master in the esoteric astrology of Alice Bailey. In the published sources representing this doctrine, the Tibetan Master speaks only of energy flows, the reception of energies by consciousness and its sheaths, and the consequent results in the human outlook. Nowhere in this doctrine are there given specific degrees of the zodiac through which such stellar energy flows are indicated. Modern as-

trologers often find this lack of specificity maddening, accustomed as they are to the use of the 360 degrees of the zodiac as specific placements for the Sun, Moon, Ascendant, Midheaven, planets, and other significant points in the astrological birth chart of the individual. As centuries of use have proven, these specific placements and their activations by transiting planets are valuable and reliable elements of astrological analysis. However, a technique answering to this level of modern astrological analysis was not ever provided by the Tibetan Master in regard to the actual stars themselves. Thus, until another installment is received from authentic Hierarchical sources, it seems best to limit inquiry and discussion to the concepts the Tibetan Master did articulate in the published Bailey writings.

Given that, it is possible to see that the characteristics associated with the stars Alcyone and Aldebaran are timeless, archetypal designs applicable to all human spiritual striving. As enumerated by the presently available esoteric literature, Alcyone and Aldebaran point all sincere seekers to the work of transforming the stubborn ways of the separative personality into the inspired ways of the one who has seen the Greater Cosmic Vision and has committed oneself to it. This would seem enough for the moment.

---

<sup>1</sup> Philip Babcock Gove, ed. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1961). The word "kingfisher" brings to mind the "Fisher King," an important figure in Grail Legendry. This potential connection between Alcyone, kingfishers, Fisher Kings, and Grail Legendry is no doubt worthy of further research by those so inclined.

<sup>2</sup> Of interest is the fact that Renaissance alchemists equated coral with the philosopher's stone. On this point, see Francis Yates, *The Rosicrucian Enlightenment* (Abingdon: Taylor and Francis, 2001), 120, 205. This connection between coral and the alchemical quest suggests yet another line of inquiry that might be taken up in connection with the star Alcyone.

<sup>3</sup> H.P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* vol. II (Wheaton: Theosophical University Press, reprint of 1888 edition), 772.

---

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 768.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> R.H. Allen, *Star Names, Their Lore and Meaning* (New York: Dover Publications, 2000 reprint of 1899 original edition), 403; Vivian Robson, *The Fixed Stars and Constellations in Astrology* (London: Cecil Palmer, 1923), 119.

<sup>7</sup> Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine*, vol. II, 785.

<sup>8</sup> H.P. Blavatsky, *Theosophical Glossary*, (Adhyar: Theosophical Publishing House, reprint of 1892 edition), 16.

<sup>9</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Destiny of the Nations*, (New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1949), 46.

<sup>10</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, (New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1951), 201.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 200.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 111, 679.

<sup>17</sup> Robson, *Fixed Stars*, 14, 119; H.P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* vol. I (Wheaton: Theosophical University Press, reprint of 1888) edition, 501.

<sup>18</sup> Allen, *Star Names*, 405; Robson, *Fixed Stars*, 14.

<sup>19</sup> Robson, *Fixed Stars*, 119. According to Blavatsky in the *Theosophical Glossary*, 17, Amba is the Sanskrit name for the "eldest Pleiad," which fact would make Alcyone the eldest or senior of the Pleiades.

<sup>20</sup> Allen, *Fixed Stars*, 404.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 198.

<sup>23</sup> Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. II, 768.

<sup>24</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 194.

<sup>25</sup> This linkage between Third Ray Alcyone and Aquarius might also indicate an additional ray signature for Aquarius beyond that which is most frequently mentioned by the Tibetan in connection with this sign. Perhaps it shall ultimately be found that Aquarius distributes Ray Three, in addition to the conventional Ray Five, and the previously proposed Ray One.

<sup>26</sup> J.D. Staal, *The New Patterns in the Sky: Myths and Legends of the Stars* (Newark, OH: McDonald and Woodward Publishing Company, 1996), 76.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Allen, *Star Names*, 383.

- 
- 29 Staal, *New Patterns*, 54.  
30 Allen, *Star Names*, 385.  
31 Cyril Fagan and Roy Firebrace, *A Primer of Sidereal Astrology* (publisher unknown, 1961), 135.  
32 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 154, 393, 403, 565, 566.  
33 Ibid., 379.  
34 According to Allen in *Star Names*, 384, the early English called Aldebaran “Bull’s Eye.”  
35 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 398.  
36 Ibid., 107.  
37 Ibid., 205, 381.  
38 Ibid., 376, 381.  
39 Ibid., 381.  
40 The two paragraphs that follow are summarized from Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 377, 378.  
41 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 377, 378.  
42 Ibid., 376.  
43 Ibid., 377, 378.  
44 Ibid., 376.

- 
- 45 Ibid.  
46 Ibid., 375.  
47 Ibid., 376.  
48 Ibid., 377.  
49 Whenever the striving server registers the irresistible intent to aid in the Plan, it is the mark and evidence of this Ray One linkage from the Great Bear via Taurus, the Pleiades, Aldebaran, and Pluto to our planet, coming to resonate in the very head center of the individual, from thence to affect the surroundings.  
50 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 376.  
51 Ibid., 154.  
52 Ibid., 403.  
53 Ibid., 565, 566.  
54 Ibid., 376.  
55 Ibid.  
56 Ibid., 162, 381.  
57 Ibid., 376.  
58 Ibid., 393.  
59 Ibid., 383, 384.

# The Creative Hierarchies

John F. Nash

## Summary

The twelve Creative Hierarchies are frequently mentioned in the esoteric literature but rarely explained or even defined. This article draws upon the writings of Helena Blavatsky and Alice Bailey to offer insights into the meaning, purpose and relevance of the Hierarchies. It explores their correspondences with the planes and kingdoms of nature, and the Hierarchies' relationship with the Seven Rays.

Four of the Hierarchies achieved "liberation" in the first solar system but continue to influence us through a fifth which is in transition toward liberation. The lower seven are in active manifestation in the present solar system. Humanity is active in the fourth and fifth active Hierarchies (counting from above), the former representing "perfected" humanity and the latter humanity at large. Advance to the fourth Hierarchy is a process centered on the fourth, "crucifixion," initiation. Significantly, the Planetary Logos and the fifth *higher* Hierarchy are in the process of taking the fourth cosmic initiation, and the world shares in their suffering.

## Introduction

The Creative Hierarchies are mentioned twenty-seven times in the books of Alice Bailey, written during the period 1919–1949, when she served as amanuensis to the Tibetan Master Djwhal Khul. Several of the books comment on the Hierarchies; and two: *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (1925) and *Esoteric Astrology* (1951),<sup>1</sup> discuss them at length and provide detailed tabulations.

The present article collects and analyzes the most important statements regarding the Creative Hierarchies from Bailey's books and the brief references in Helena Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine* (1888), where the Hierarchies were first mentioned. Significantly, the Tibetan

Master claimed to have provided some of Blavatsky's material. Bailey frequently drew upon Blavatsky's terminology, implying that readers were familiar with the earlier writer's work.

Communicating information about the Creative Hierarchies seems to have been part of the Tibetan's mission. Yet it is still far from clear precisely what the Hierarchies are and how they relate, on the one hand, to the kingdoms of nature, and on the other, to the Seven Rays. Much of the discussion is vague or cryptic, and occult blinds seem to have been planted in the texts. The message is that the topic is not to be understood on cursory reading but requires in-depth study and contemplation. Even then, certain information and explanations have been withheld, to be revealed at the third initiation or later. This is indeed an esoteric topic.

In the face of these challenges the article offers, to the extent possible, an accessible description of the Creative Hierarchies and how they fit into the larger picture of human, planetary, solar and cosmic realities. Its main objective is to stimulate further discussion. Bailey's work provides correspondences—not always consistent—between the Hierarchies, the Rays, the signs of the zodiac, and the planets. Brief remarks are made about these correspondences, but further study is called for. Research is most urgently needed to explore the Hierarchies' astrological significance, and other authors are encouraged to contribute.

## About the Author

**John F. Nash, Ph.D.**, is a long-time esoteric student, author, and teacher. Two of his books, *Quest for the Soul* and *The Soul and Its Destiny*, were reviewed in the Winter 2005 issue of the *Esoteric Quarterly*. *Christianity: The One, the Many*, was reviewed in the Fall 2008 issue. His latest book: *The Sacramental Church* was published in 2011. For further information see the advertisements in this issue and the website <http://www.uriel.com>.

## What Are the Creative Hierarchies?

In *The Secret Doctrine* Helena Blavatsky stated: “[T]he Monads cycling round any septenary chain are divided into seven classes or *hierarchies* according to their respective stages of evolution, consciousness, and merit.”<sup>2</sup> The septenary chain of interest is the Earth Chain, and the Monads are the Divine Sparks, or fragments of Logoiic essence, that invest life in entities of all statures and all types within it. Among those Monads—possibly a small fraction—are the sixty billion that make up the human lifestream.<sup>3</sup>

Blavatsky stated that the seven Hierarchies are part of “twelve great orders.”<sup>4</sup> She also used the terms “hierarchies of ‘Creators’”<sup>5</sup> and “hierarchies of Creative Forces.”<sup>6</sup> Several decades later Alice Bailey spoke specifically of twelve *Creative Hierarchies*,<sup>7</sup> establishing the terminology and schema familiar today.

Based on Blavatsky’s statement and citations to follow, a Creative Hierarchy can be defined as a group of Monads at a particular stage on their evolutionary journey and active at a particular level of reality. “Activity,” in this context, refers to the awakening of consciousness, expression of creative potential, and response to the evolutionary impulse.

From this perspective we can compare the Hierarchies to classes of children in a school system. The American system provides an appealing analogy because it is divided into twelve grades. Children in each grade have age-appropriate experiences and opportunities to learn relevant lessons. If successful, they move up to the next grade. Using that analogy, we discover that humanity corresponds to children in but two grades. A tiny fraction have graduated to fourth grade (nine-to-ten years of age).

*... a Creative Hierarchy can be defined as a group of Monads at a particular stage on their evolutionary journey and active at a particular level of reality. “Activity,” in this context, refers to the awakening of consciousness, expression of creative potential, and response to the evolutionary impulse.*

Nearly eight billion—the current world population—are in third grade (eight to nine), for limited periods of time. The rest of the sixty billion are eligible for third grade but are waiting for positions to become available on a rotating basis.<sup>8</sup> All other grades in the school system are occupied by members of nonhuman lifestreams.

Complementary definitions of the Hierarchies will emerge in due course. The richness in meaning reflects how much we have been told of the Hierarchies but, more importantly, how much awaits our understanding as research continues and as the Masters reveal more information. Meanwhile, the very term *hierarchy* deserves attention.

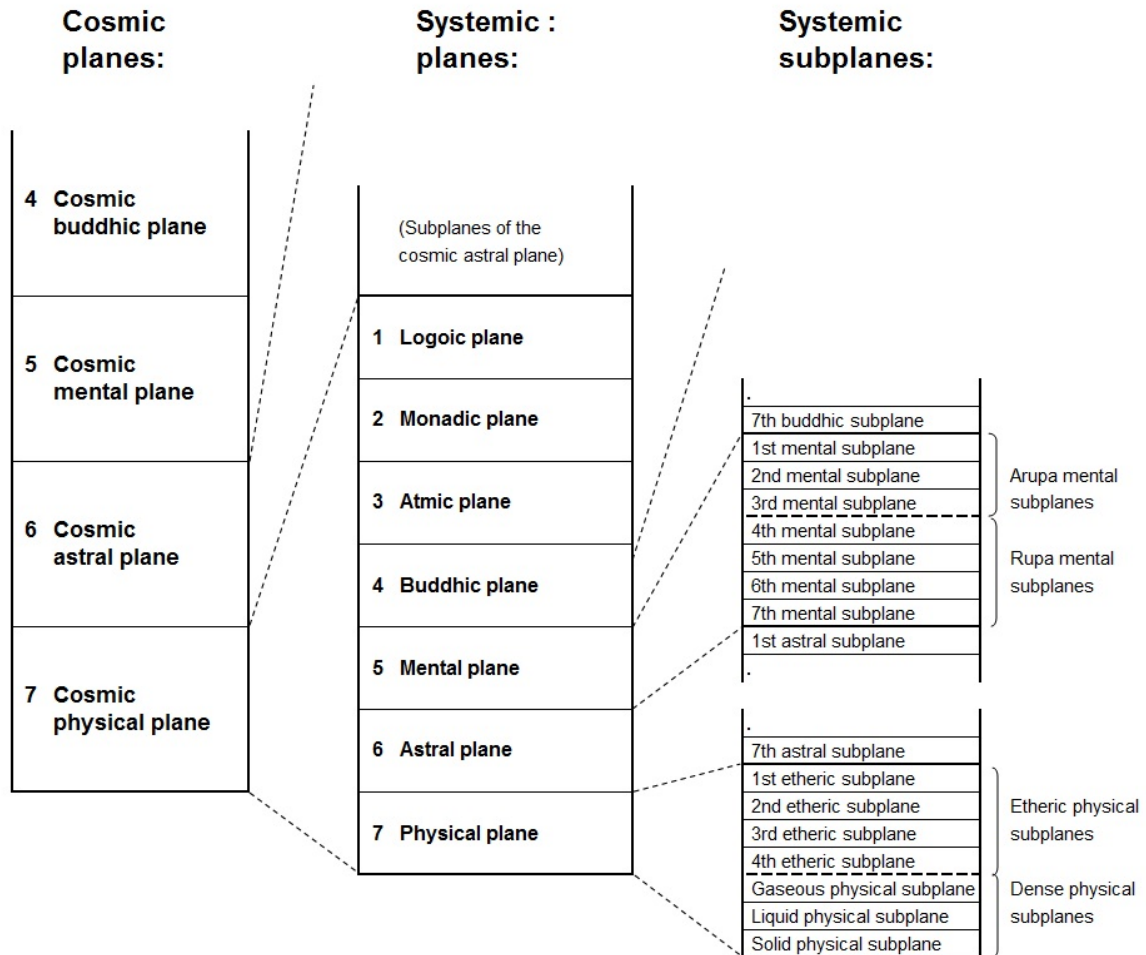
A hierarchy implies “vertical” stratification or ranking, in which some units are represented as “above” or “below” others (direction, of course, being no more than a metaphor). Stratification in the context of the Creative Hierarchies can be understood in at least two ways.

It can be understood in terms of Monads’ urge to express their creative potential through descent into form. The forms are lives in their own right residing on lower levels of reality. For example, the human Monad births a soul, and in turn the soul assembles lower vehicles from devic and elemental substance. During embodiment in the present globe and root races, our vehicles extend down to the dense physical plane.

Alternatively, stratification can be understood in terms of different stages of development among Monads in a given Hierarchy or spanning multiple Hierarchies. The human lifestream descended into matter and now, carrying with it the wisdom of the ages, is ascending again toward spirit. But individual human entities range in consciousness from what Bailey called “animal-man” to Christ and beyond.



**Figure 1. Cosmic Planes and Systemic Planes and Subplanes**



The twelve Hierarchies themselves form a hierarchy, and Bailey explained that the “twelve creative Hierarchies are themselves but subsidiary branches of one cosmic Hierarchy.”<sup>9</sup> Similar fractal patterns occur in other contexts; for example: “The seven planes of Divine Manifestation, or the seven major planes of our system, are but the seven subplanes of the lowest cosmic plane. The seven Rays ... are likewise but the seven subrays of one cosmic Ray.”<sup>10</sup> The fractal pattern of the cosmic planes, systemic planes, and systemic subplanes is illustrated in Figure 1.

Bailey offered a musical analogy for the fractal pattern of Hierarchies:

They form but one chord in the cosmic symphony. When that sevenfold cosmic chord, of which we form so humble a part, reverberates in synthetic perfection, then, and only then, will come comprehension of the words in the Book of Job: “The morning stars sang together.” Dissonance yet sounds forth, and discord arises from many systems, but in the progression of the eons an ordered harmony will eventuate, and the

day will dawn when (if we dare speak of eternities in the terms of time) the sound of the perfected universe will resound to the uttermost bounds of the furthest constellation. Then will be known the mystery of “the marriage song of the heavens.”<sup>11</sup>

Another statement attributed to the Tibetan Master places more emphasis on the timing of this cadence—and suggests that discord may underlie the very nature of manifest existence: “When the final great chord sounds, struck by the Master Musician, when the seven-fold arpeggio has become the grand dominant chord and sounds forth as one sound, the effect will be to call back again into the One, the circle of manifestation will be disrupted and pralaya will supervene.”<sup>12</sup>

The consciousness of the Monads in a Hierarchy is evolving, individually and collectively, toward the attainment of a particular Logoic goal. Synthesis at the planetary level and the “ordered symphony” and “final great chord,” at the solar or cosmic level, express the completion of an evolutionary phase—and most likely the attainment of a Logoic initiation. We shall see that the goal of the Hierarchies in the first solar system was to express Intelligence, and the goal of those in the present solar system is to express Love. The goal of Hierarchies in the third solar system can be expected to be to express Will.

Bailey emphasized the importance of *relationship*: “All such terms as planes, groups, creative Hierarchies, and centers are simply word modes of inferring relationship, interplay and mutual impression between the beings or the lives who make up the sum total of our manifested universe.” But she added that these relationships are “signs of our leading up to a planetary synthesis or a planetary integrity of a nature hitherto not even visioned by man.”<sup>13</sup>

The Creative Hierarchies are closely related to the Seven Rays, but Bailey warned that they should not be confused: “The ‘Rays’ are but the primordial forms of certain Lives who ‘carry in their Hearts’ all the Seeds of Form. The Hierarchies are the manifold groups of lives, at all stages of unfoldment and growth who will use the forms.”<sup>14</sup> Over long periods of time,

Monads progress from one Hierarchy to the next, experiencing changes in Ray influence.

The Rays determine the Hierarchies’ qualities or forms. Bailey explained that “the Rays are the positive aspect in manifestation and pass down into negative matter, deva or hierarchical substance, thus causing certain evidences of activity. The Hierarchies are the negative aspect as far as the Rays are concerned and are responsive to Ray impulse.”<sup>15</sup> In other words, the Rays are the active, “masculine,” elements of a functional polarity, and the Hierarchies are the receptive, “feminine,” elements.

The Rays also create further relationships or interconnectedness among the Hierarchies:

These seven hierarchies are veiled by the Rays, but each is found behind the veil of every ray, for in their totality they are the informing lives of every planetary scheme within the system; they are the life of all interplanetary space, and the existences who are expressing themselves through the planetoids, and all forms of lesser independent life than a planet.<sup>16</sup>

Monads clearly are to be understood in a very broad sense, even to include the “life of interplanetary space.” Meanwhile, the reference to planetoids and interplanetary space provides insight into the extent of a Planetary Logos’ domain of influence, or “ring-pass-not.”

The “originating Sources of the seven rays of our solar system” are the stars of the Great Bear, *Ursa Major*.<sup>17</sup> We also read: “Sirius, the Great Bear and the Pleiades work through the medium of the twelve constellations, pouring their influences through nine of them in particular.”<sup>18</sup> The twelve constellations define the zodiac.

Bailey frequently mentioned that the star system Sirius and the constellations of the Great Bear and the Pleiades are of great importance to humanity, Earth, and the solar system. She commented that the Great Bear has a positive—that is, masculine—energy, and the Pleiades have a negative, feminine, energy, adding: “Perhaps these two types of energy, one from the Pleiades and the other from the Great Bear, meet, and in their conjunction produce

that blazing forth in the heavens which we call our solar system.”<sup>19</sup> This statement would seem to have alchemical significance.

The “seven sisters” of the Pleiades are mentioned three times in the Bible. *Job* comments on “the sweet influences of Pleiades.”<sup>20</sup> And in *Amos* we read: “Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night.”<sup>21</sup> Bailey noted that the Pleiades “are connected with the Mother aspect which nurtures the infant Christ.”<sup>22</sup> Evidently the Pleiades have a strong connection with the Hierarchies, and “the infant Christ” represents evolving human Monads. Bailey’s statement that the first initiation can be described as “the birth of the Christ” may be relevant in this regard.<sup>23</sup>

Correspondences are to be expected between the twelve Creative Hierarchies and the twelve signs of the zodiac. Bailey explained that this is indeed the case, and that the correspondences have implications for humanity: “One thing which will later emerge, but which is at present impossible of elucidation, is the fact that the twelve Creative Hierarchies are all connected with one or other of the twelve signs of the zodiac and these all definitely affect the human family and the unit in that family also.”<sup>24</sup>

The phrase “all connected with one or other of the twelve signs of the zodiac” is ambiguous. It could mean that there is a one-to-one correspondence between the Hierarchies and signs; but those correspondences had already been “elucidated” earlier in the same book. Alternatively, it could mean that all twelve Hierarchies have a special connection to a single, as yet undisclosed, zodiacal sign. In any event Bailey offered a cautious prediction:

A close study of the relations indicated in this new tabulation and a study also of the Hierarchies and the signs will cause a drastic revolution in modern astrology and one of most basic importance. More than this I cannot here indicate and more will not be possible until the present astrologers have done some concentrated work along the lines here designated.<sup>25</sup>

The twelve Creative Hierarchies can be divided into higher and lower groups. They are shown in Table 1, which is based primarily on Tabulations I and II on pages 34 and 35 of Bailey’s *Esoteric Astrology*. In the upper group of five Hierarchies, four “achieved liberation in the first solar system”<sup>26</sup> and a fifth is “nearing liberation.”<sup>27</sup> The seven Hierarchies in the lower group are said to be in manifestation, or “active planetary expression,” in the present solar system. The meaning of the terms “liberated” and “active” will be examined in due course. The incarnating human entity extends over six of the seven systemic planes and, correspondingly, six of the seven lower Hierarchies. But human Monads are now in *active* expression in the fourth and fifth lower Hierarchies (counting from above), while our astral and physical bodies are animated by lives in the sixth and seventh.

Confusion may arise because three distinct numbering systems are used to refer to the Hierarchies. Bailey numbered the twelve Hierarchies in ascending or descending order, or the lower seven Hierarchies separately (Table 1). And she was in the habit of switching from one system to another without warning. “The fifth Hierarchy,” to take an example, might refer to any of three different Hierarchies, to be identified solely by context. In what follows, all Hierarchies—as well as all planes and sub-planes—will be counted from above.

## The Higher Creative Hierarchies

The goal of the five higher Creative Hierarchies, which attained or approached liberation in the first solar system, was “Intelligence or Manas.” Indeed, the “five liberated hierarchies are in their totality the sumtotal of manas.”<sup>28</sup> The Sanskrit word *Manas* is derived from the verbal root *man* “to think,” and is believed to be the origin of our word “man.”<sup>29</sup> Bailey’s use of the word in this context draws attention to the higher Hierarchies’ importance to humanity and our challenge to express the mental nature.

Bailey commented that the names of the five Hierarchies are unknown, but their energies

**Table 1. The Twelve Creative Hierarchies**

No. from above	No. from above	No. from below	Ray	Name	Status	Sign	Planet
<b>Overshadowing Principles:</b>							
			I	The Universal Mystery			
			II	Celestial Virgin			
<b>Higher Hierarchies:</b>							
1		12	III		Liberated	Pisces	Pluto *
2		11	IV		Liberated	Aries	Uranus *
3		10	V		Liberated	Taurus	Vulcan *
4		9	VI		Liberated	Gemini	Earth *
5		8	VII		Transitional	Cancer	Neptune *
<b>Lower Hierarchies:</b>							
6	1	7	I	Divine Flames	Active	Leo	Sun
7	2	6	II	Divine Builders	Active	Virgo	Jupiter
8	3	5	III	Lesser Builders	Active	Libra	Saturn
9	4	4	IV	“Human Hierarchy”	Active	Scorpio	Mercury
10	5	3	V	“Human Personality”	Active	Capricorn	Venus
11	6	2	VI	Lunar Lords	Active	Sagittarius	Mars
12	7	1	VII	Elementals	Active	Aquarius	Moon

\* By inference from *Esoteric Astrology*, p. 66.

can be described as “Intelligent substance,” “Unity thro’ [sic] effort,” “Light thro’ knowledge,” “Desire for duality,” and “Mass life.”<sup>30</sup> These terms are not explained, nor do they appear anywhere else in Alice Bailey’s or Helena Blavatsky’s writings.

The five higher Hierarchies are associated, respectively, with Rays III through VII<sup>31</sup> and with the astrological signs of Pisces, Aries, Taurus, Gemini and Cancer. One might expect Aries to be the first, but Bailey explained:

Pisces is seen at the head of the list of zodiacal signs because it is governing the present great astrological world cycle of 25,000 years. It was also one of the dominant signs, influencing our planet at the time of individualization when the human kingdom came into being. It is basically re-

lated to the first or highest Creative Hierarchy which is, in its turn, related to the third Ray of Active Intelligence. It was the product of the first solar system. The development of illumination through an awakened intelligence is the first goal of humanity.<sup>32</sup>

From information provided elsewhere in the same book, we infer that the five Hierarchies are associated, respectively, with the planets Pluto, Uranus, Vulcan, Earth, and Neptune.<sup>33</sup> The planets are products of the present, second, solar system, so these attributions can only relate to the Hierarchies as they are now, not as they were in the first system. The same may be true of the zodiacal signs or constellations. Although these are patterns and qualities of the “fixed” stars, we do not know whether they had the same significance in the first solar

system, or whether the constellations even existed. The comment concerning Pisces clearly refers to events in the present system and our current understanding of the sign's meaning.

Bailey declared that the first four Creative Hierarchies in the upper group achieved liberation in the first solar system. She did not define "liberation" in that context, but elsewhere she indicated that the term means the attainment of a state free from form;<sup>34</sup> that is, an *arupa* state. Importantly, it should be understood that "formlessness" is relative; what might be considered formless from a lower level of consciousness might appear to have form when viewed from above.

The "four Creative Hierarchies which have achieved liberation are now ... focused upon the cosmic astral plane; hence their potency even when out of manifestation."<sup>35</sup> "Their influence," she continued, "reached our Earth through the medium of the fifth Creative Hierarchy."<sup>36</sup>

The fifth Hierarchy of "Mass Life" is associated with Ray VII and the sign of Cancer, It is said to be "in process of achieving final liberation, or taking its fourth Initiation, which is the cause of certain phenomena upon our planet which has merited our planet being called the 'Star of Suffering.'"<sup>37</sup> We also read:

[T]he planetary Logos of our scheme ... is midway through His career upon the cosmic Path of Initiation, and consequently is to take the fourth Initiation in this chain. Well may this globe, therefore, be considered the globe of sorrow and of pain, for through it our planetary Logos is undergoing that which the mystic calls "the Crucifixion."<sup>38</sup>

Bailey did not specifically identify the fifth Hierarchy with the Planetary Logos, but their similar positions on the initiatory path might prompt that conclusion. In either case, it is unclear what she meant by "Mass Life."

The fifth Creative Hierarchy reportedly "will join the other four Hierarchies when the sixth Creative Hierarchy has measured up to cosmic opportunity."<sup>39</sup> This is an interesting concept:

an entity's ability to move up to a higher level is determined not only by its own efforts but also by the ability of lower entities to take its place. The "sixth Creative Hierarchy" would be the first *lower* Hierarchy.

Bailey commented that the fifth Hierarchy exists on the highest etheric level."<sup>40</sup> Presumably this is the highest *cosmic* etheric subplane. Significantly, in relation to the statement that the fifth Hierarchy is the channel through which the upper four Hierarchies influence Earth, this is our systemic Logoc plane.

The upper group of Creative Hierarchies are "related to the four rays which work as minor rays of Attribute under the great major third Ray of Active Intelligence."<sup>41</sup> The first Hierarchy is said to be associated with Ray III, and the remaining members of the upper group with the Rays of Attribute. This statement raises an interesting question: Where are Rays I and II?

One might expect all three Rays of Aspect to appear explicitly in the upper group of Hierarchies, as they do in the lower. The most likely answer is that they precede the whole hierarchy of Hierarchies. They are not themselves Hierarchies but are the *Overshadowing Principles* in which the Hierarchies have their origin. Table 1 shows them in their respective positions.

Ray I is associated with the One whom Blavatsky described as "the Universal Mystery," "the eternally Self-Existent One," "the unmanifested Logos."<sup>42</sup> Ray II is associated with the "Primordial," the "Heavenly or Celestial Virgin," "the immaculate Virgin-Mother, who is overshadowed, not impregnated, by the Universal Mystery—when she emerges from her state of Laya or undifferentiated condition."<sup>43</sup> The Celestial Virgin comes into manifestation at the beginning of a manvantara and passes out of manifestation at the end. She has attributes and is at least partially knowable; by contrast, "the Self-Existent One" remains eternally unmanifest, unknown and unknowable.

Blavatsky cited an ancient Japanese tradition that explained the emergence of the Celestial Virgin, or "Invisible Celibate," Mother thus:

“The male aethereal” (*Yo*) principle ascends and the female grosser or more material principle (*In*) is precipitated into the Universe of substance, when a separation occurs between the celestial and the terrestrial. From this the female, the mother, the first rudimentary objective being is born. It is ethereal, without form or sex, and yet it is from this and the mother that the Seven Divine Spirits are born, from whom will emanate the seven creations.<sup>44</sup>

It is highly significant that Blavatsky assigned feminine gender to the first manifestation from the unmanifest Logos. She is a virgin “not impregnated, by the Universal Mystery,” yet she births the Creative Hierarchies. The Celestial Virgin’s association with Ray II is appropriate since the even-numbered rays have a feminine polarity.<sup>45</sup> *One*, origin of all the natural numbers, can be considered either masculine or presexual.

Bailey did not reveal the symbols of any of the Creative Hierarchies, “as they are known to Adepts.” But she listed the symbols of the five higher Hierarchies “accessible to disciples” thus:

1. A ball of green fire with three rays of rose.
2. A sphere, divided by a Tau [T], in colors green and silver.
3. A bird, with plumage dark and with the eye of radiant fire.
4. Two stars of vivid rose linked by a band of violet.
5. An ovoid of color indigo with five letters or symbolic words within its borders.<sup>46</sup>

Bailey added: “These hierarchies are also classed together and viewed as one and are called in esoteric parlance: ‘The Lives of that which appeared, rotated and gathered to themselves the fifth aspect of Mahat.’”<sup>47</sup> *Mahat* is “the universal mind,” or “mind manifesting in the macrocosm.”<sup>48</sup>

The unifying symbol of the five Hierarchies, “which signifies the liberation achieved and the gains attained in System One, takes the

form of a blazing altar of pure fire out of which is escaping a bird of green and gold plumage with five wings outspread. Above this symbol appear certain hieroglyphics in the earliest *Sensa* script signifying, ‘Still I seek.’”<sup>49</sup> Perhaps “seeking” captures a characteristic of the higher Hierarchies; seeking in the sense of curiosity is stimulated by Intelligence or Mind, said to be the goal of the higher Hierarchies.

Much concerning the symbols of the higher Hierarchies remains veiled. Bailey did not explain what the symbols meant; nor did she disclose what the “five letters or symbolic words” in the symbol of the fifth Hierarchy were. Writing for the Master Djwhal Khul, Bailey warned that any additional information about the symbols would reveal “much that it is deemed wiser to guard in secrecy.”<sup>50</sup> We recall that the names of the higher Creative Hierarchies were not revealed either.

A major reason for Bailey’s reticence, in these several instances, may be is that the Hierarchies are the “mediators between Spirit and matter” and “transmitters of force from sources extraneous to the solar system to forms within the solar system.”<sup>51</sup> Occult practices invoking their names or symbols might summon dangerously powerful forces; we would literally be playing with Cosmic Fire. We may meditate on the symbolism of the Hierarchies, but any attempt to penetrate it intellectually would either be fruitless, until we have reached an appropriate level of initiation, or might inadvertently reveal privileged information.

## The Lower Creative Hierarchies

Monads in the five higher Hierarchies are formless, or approaching that state, and presumably are fully conscious. By contrast, those in the seven lower Hierarchies are experiencing the descent into form and the gradual awakening of consciousness. Within a group of related Monads, consciousness may be awakened to different degrees because some members are evolving faster than others. Variations can be expected within any given Hierarchy and may be large enough that the monadic group is active in more than one Hierarchy.



Such is the case with the human lifestream and the deva evolution.

One of the factors shaping a Monad's experience is the plane on which its associated Hierarchy is situated. Bailey commented: "Full expression and consciousness on each and every plane is the objective, remembering that each plane with its varying states of consciousness is equally a part of the divine Life. What is lacking as yet with the majority of aspirants is a synthetic consciousness and the capacity to hold and register continuity."<sup>52</sup> A better understanding of the Hierarchies might remedy what is lacking.

Typically, a Hierarchy is anchored on a plane lower than the Monads' "own plane." Tension between them contributes to the impulse for evolutionary progress. To illustrate, human Monads reside (as their name implies) on the monadic plane. The most advanced members of the human family are in the fourth Hierarchy, which resides on the buddhic plane, while the rest of us are in the fifth Hierarchy, on the mental plane. But we all feel, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, the "pull" of the Monad, urging us forward on our journey.<sup>53</sup>

According to Alice Bailey the lower Creative Hierarchies bear the names: "Divine Flames," "Divine Builders," "Lesser Builders," "Human Hierarchy," "Human Personality," "Lunar Lords," and "Elemental Lives." They are associated, respectively, with the signs Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Capricorn, Sagittarius and Aquarius, and with the Sun, Jupiter, Saturn, Mercury, Venus, Mars and the Moon. They correspond in direct numerical sequence to the seven Rays (Table 1).<sup>54</sup>

The sign, planet, Ray—and perhaps the name—shape the experience offered by the Hierarchy with which they are associated. In the school analogy they provide the learning opportunities appropriate to the particular age group; the plane on which the Hierarchy lies is the classroom.

The stated correspondences among signs, planets and Rays call for a number of com-

ments. First, the planets are neither the exoteric nor esoteric rulers of the associated signs. For example, the exoteric and esoteric rulers of Aries are Mars and Mercury, respectively; but its "hierarchical" ruler is said to be Uranus.<sup>55</sup> The hierarchical ruler is described as the planet to which an initiate of the third or higher degree is expected to be responsive. Bailey explained: "The forces of these Hierarchies ... sweep into and through the initiate and awaken those major group responses which eventually give him systemic consciousness and make him a world server in Aquarius and a world savior in Pisces."<sup>56</sup>

Second, the signs listed in Table 1 are not in their naturally occurring sequence in the annual cycle. Sagittarius is placed between Capricorn and Aquarius, rather than between Scorpio and Capricorn. The sequence is cited in two separate tabulations in *Esoteric Astrology*,<sup>57</sup> discouraging any suggestion of a typographical error. A note attached to one of the tabulations concedes that "[m]uch in this chart may seem obscure and even erroneous" but predicts that an explanation will be revealed as a mystery of initiation. Information from both tabulations is incorporated into Table 2 of the present article.

Third, the Rays associated with the seven lower Hierarchies are not, in every case, the same as those assigned to their hierarchical ruling planets (Table 2). The first Hierarchy is associated with Ray I, whereas its ruling planet, the Sun, is normally associated with Ray II. The seventh Hierarchy is associated with Ray VII, but its ruling planet, the Moon, is associated with Ray IV.<sup>58</sup>

One way to explain the ambiguities in Rays is to recall Bailey's assertion that the Sun and Moon both veil hidden planets.<sup>59</sup> Vulcan, a Ray I planet, "is spoken of sometimes as being veiled by the Sun."<sup>60</sup> Similarly, "the moon is spoken of in the ancient teaching as 'veiling either Vulcan or Uranus'";<sup>61</sup> Uranus is a Ray VII planet.

**Table 2. The Lower Hierarchies: Rays, Signs, and Planetary Rulers**

No. from above	No. from below	Ray *	Name	Sign	Hierarchical Ruler	Ray **
1	7	I	Divine Flames	Leo	Sun	II
2	6	II	Divine Builders	Virgo	Jupiter	II
3	5	III	Lesser Builders	Libra	Saturn	III
4	4	IV	Humanity	Scorpio	Mercury	IV
5	3	V	“Human personalities”	Capricorn	Venus	V
6	2	VI	Lunar Lords	Sagittarius	Mars	VI
7	1	VII	Elementals	Aquarius	Moon	IV

\* Associated with the Hierarchy  
 \*\* Associated with the Hierarchical Ruler

Alternatively, we could turn to Bailey’s statement that each planetary Logos has both a “personality” Ray and an “egoic” Ray, and that these are “in esoteric conflict.”<sup>62</sup> Perhaps Rays I and II are the Sun’s soul and personality Rays (respectively or otherwise), and Rays VII and IV are the Moon’s. Bailey offers a hint relating to the Sun: “Hercules, the Sun-God, had a first ray soul, a second ray personality.”<sup>63</sup> But there is no “Lunar Logos,” and no suggestion can be found in the literature that the Moon might have a Ray VII soul or personality.<sup>64</sup> In any event, speculation on the planets’ soul and personality Rays is not encouraged. Writing for the Tibetan Master, Bailey warned darkly: “Too much accuracy and too detailed information is not at this time good for humanity, which is yet too selfish to be entrusted with it.”<sup>65</sup>

Again, we are faced with a number of occult blinds and must await our own progress on the initiatory path or the Planetary Hierarchy’s judgment that humanity is ready to receive more accurate or consistent information. Setting aside these difficulties, however, we can examine the seven lower Creative Hierarchies

collectively and individually to glean what information is currently available.

According to Bailey the “Rulers of the seven [lower] Creative Hierarchies” are the “seven Rishis of the Great Bear.”<sup>66</sup> These Rulers appear to be the great Lives from whom the seven Rays originate. As noted earlier, the Hierarchies’ qualities or forms are determined by the Rays, which emanate from the Great Bear.<sup>67</sup>

Bailey did not list symbols of the lower Hierarchies “accessible to disciples,” but she stated that they are “all enclosed in a circle denoting limitation and the circumscribing of the Life.” Bailey added:

All these hierarchies are Sons of Desire, and are paramountly an expression of the desire for manifested life of the solar Logos. They receive their primary impulse from the cosmic astral plane. They are also the expression of a vibration emanating from the second row of petals in the logioic Lotus on the cosmic mental plane.”<sup>68</sup>

The statement that the lower Hierarchies express a vibration “from the second row of petals in the logioic Lotus” deserves special

attention. By analogy with the human egoic lotus, the petals of the second row are the Love Petals.<sup>69</sup> Bailey drew attention to “a direct stream of energy flowing through” the “logoic twelve-petalled egoic lotus,” the “solar twelve-petalled lotus,” the “planetary logoic heart, also a twelve-petalled lotus,” the “twelve-petalled human egoic lotus,” and the “twelve-petalled heart center in a human being.”<sup>70</sup> The Solar Logos unmistakably expresses the Second Aspect of Love-Wisdom, and the number *twelve* seems to be fundamental in the way it flows down to humanity.

We are told that a Solar Logos “has His main focal point on the cosmic mental plane,” though his origin is on a higher cosmic level.<sup>71</sup> The cosmic mental plane has a strong connection with the star Sirius.<sup>72</sup> We also read that the causal body of a Planetary Logos lies on the third subplane of the cosmic mental plane, “while that of the solar Logos and those of the three Persons of the logoic Trinity are upon the first subplane.”<sup>73</sup> The following quote is also of interest:

The planetary Logos works—as far as His manifestation, the Earth, is concerned—from cosmic mental levels; all that is manifested through His Creative Word is His focused thought and His fixed mental intention. In order to create a material world, He directs His thought from what can be regarded as the concrete levels of the cosmic mental plane; the whole process is one of precipitation, consolidation and irradiation.<sup>74</sup>

As noted, four of the higher Hierarchies reside on the cosmic astral plane, They influence us via the fifth higher Hierarchy which resides on the first cosmic “etheric” subplane—that is, our logoic plane.<sup>75</sup> The first *lower* Hierarchy also resides on the systemic logoic plane, establishing the potential for considerable interaction between the two.

The seven lower Hierarchies are paired numerically with the systemic planes: the first Hierarchy lies on the logoic plane, the second Hierarchy on the monadic plane, and so forth. Because of the fractal pattern that governs the planes, the seven systemic planes can be

viewed as subplanes of the cosmic physical plane (Figure 1). We have already seen that the first systemic plane, our logoic plane, is the first cosmic etheric subplane, or “first cosmic ether.” To cite two more examples: the fourth systemic plane, our buddhic plane, is the fourth cosmic ether; and the sixth systemic plane, our astral plane, is the cosmic “liquid” physical subplane.

## The Lower Hierarchies in Detail

### *The First Three Hierarchies*

The first lower Creative Hierarchy, to quote Helena Blavatsky, “is composed of the divine Flames, so-called, also spoken of as the ‘Fiery Lions’ and the ‘Lions of Life,’ whose esotericism is securely hidden in the Zodiacal sign of Leo.”<sup>76</sup> Alice Bailey referred to them as “Divine Flames,” “Divine Lives,” “the burning Sons of Desire,” and “the Sons of Necessity.” Bailey added: “It is said of them in the old Commentary: ‘They burned to know. They rushed into the spheres. They are the longing of the Father for the Mother. Hence do they suffer, burn, and long through the sixth sphere of sense.’”<sup>77</sup>

Not surprisingly, the first Hierarchy is associated with the fire element and the color orange.<sup>78</sup> It is associated with Leo and the Sun, and with Ray I—though the Ray of its planetary ruler is Ray II.<sup>79</sup> As noted, Ray I may be the Sun’s “Egoic Ray,” or it may come into play because Vulcan, a Ray I planet, is veiled by the Sun. The First Ray would be appropriate for the first Hierarchy, progenitor of the other six lower Hierarchies, though in this case it is mediated by Ray II, the Ray of the Solar Logos.

The first Hierarchy is anchored on the logoic plane, sharing that plane with the fifth *higher* Hierarchy, the conduit for energy flowing from the four liberated Hierarchies. In turn, the first lower Hierarchy serves as the conduit for energy flowing to the lower systemic planes and their respective lives.

The second Creative Hierarchy is referred to as the “Divine Builders Conferring Soul” or “Burning Souls of Desire.” It is anchored on the monadic plane. The second Hierarchy is

associated with Virgo and Jupiter, Ray II (unambiguously), the element “ether,” and the color blue.<sup>80</sup>

Among the denizens of the second and third Creative Hierarchies are the archangels and angels: members of the deva evolution whose consciousness is higher than our own. They have “passed beyond the human stage altogether.”<sup>81</sup> The lower devas: nature spirits and elementals, are found in the sixth and seventh Hierarchies.

The second Hierarchy, we are told, is “closely allied with the Great Bear,” “the source of monadic Life.” But Bailey emphasized that its lives “are not the Monads; They are far higher.” The second Hierarchy “is the influx into our system of those Lives who in the first solar system remained on their own plane, being too sinless and holy to find opportunity in that very material and intellectual evolution.”<sup>82</sup> Yet we may question whether the second Hierarchy is composed *entirely* of Monads from the first solar system.

A likely senior member of the second Hierarchy is Mary the mother of Jesus. “[F]inding the seven paths open before her,” to quote Theosophist Charles Leadbeater, she “chose to enter the glorious Deva evolution and was received into it with great honor and distinction.”<sup>83</sup> Or in the words of fellow Theosophist Geoffrey Hodson, Mary “left the human kingdom altogether and entered the Angelic Hierarchy, being naturally moved to do so, knowing that with Her nature She could best help onward the evolution of human beings and animals as a Member of the Angelic Hosts.”<sup>84</sup> Certainly, traditional Christianity regards Mary, the Immaculate Conception, as “sinless”; but it is hard to think of her as a product of the first solar system.

It is highly significant that the second Hierarchy is associated with the sign of Virgo and with the color blue: the color of Mary’s robes in many recent apparitions. Moreover, to place Mary in the second Hierarchy would create an appropriate correspondence with the Ray II “Celestial Virgin” who birthed the five *higher* Hierarchies.

Broad support exists among teachers in the trans-Himalayan tradition for belief in the World Mother, and the belief that Mary now holds that office. But it should be noted that Bailey dismissed notions of a World Mother as purely symbolic, adding:

Such an individual has never existed in our particular planetary life, though the avatars of a previous solar system, expressing itself through planetary life, always took this form. But not in this solar system.... This symbolism has come down from the far-off period of the Matriarchate, which had a religion that recalled the ancient ways of the earlier system and in which period of time Lilith symbolized the World Mother, until Eve took her place.<sup>85</sup>

The issue is discussed elsewhere and readers are referred to relevant literature.<sup>86</sup>

The third Creative Hierarchy is called the “Lesser Builders Conferring Form” or “The Triple Flowers.” It is associated with Libra and Pluto, Ray III, and the color Green.<sup>87</sup> The third Hierarchy is associated with the water element and is anchored on the atmic plane.

Blavatsky commented that the third Hierarchy “corresponds to the Atma-Buddhi-Manas: Spirit, Soul and Intellect, and is called the ‘Triads.’”<sup>88</sup> Bailey found the third Hierarchy “peculiarly interesting,” noting that its members are

“Triads” for they hold in themselves the potencies of triple evolution, mental, psychical, and spiritual. These Triads of Life are inherently the three Persons and the flower of the earlier system.... They are the eight-fold points awaiting opportunity to flame forth. They are the devas who are ready for service, which is to give to another hierarchy certain qualities which are lacking. This Hierarchy is regarded as the great donors of immortality whilst themselves “standing aloof from incarnation.”<sup>89</sup>

She added that they are “Lords of Sacrifice and Love ... but They cannot pass out of the logic etheric body into the dense physical vehicle.”

The Triads, to which Blavatsky and Bailey both referred, bear some resemblance to the *Nirmanakayas*, “perfected beings who renounce Nirvana ... and choose a life of self-sacrifice.”<sup>90</sup> *Nirmanakayas* dwell in the spiritual triad, as we dwell in the lower vehicles. These perfected beings originated in the human lifestream, but, like Mary, they may have made the transition to the deva evolution. Also, like Mary, they are normally considered to be products of our present solar system.<sup>91</sup>

### ***The Fourth and Fifth Hierarchies: the Human Hierarchies***

Esoteric writers often assert that humanity is the fourth Creative Hierarchy. Indeed, Bailey herself might have given that impression when she wrote of “the fourth Creative Hierarchy, the human kingdom.”<sup>92</sup> But the assertion is over-simplistic, even presumptuous; and it is not supported by the great volume of Bailey’s teachings. The fourth Hierarchy resides on the buddhic plane. Most of us are still in the *fifth* Hierarchy, focused on the mental plane.<sup>93</sup>

In broad terms the fourth Hierarchy is the kingdom of souls, and the fifth the realm of personalities. We are, in the words of the psalmist, created “a little lower than the angels”<sup>94</sup>—to which many people have added “... and a little higher than the apes.” Bailey explained that the fourth Hierarchy is

the group wherein the highest aspect of man, his “Father in Heaven” finds place. These lives are the points of fire who must become the flame; this they do through the agency of the fifth Hierarchy and the four wicks, or the two dual lower hierarchies. Thus, it can be seen that where man is concerned, the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh hierarchies are, during the cycle of incarnation, his very self. They are the “Lords of Sacrifice” and “Lords of Love,” the flower of Atma-buddhi.<sup>95</sup>

*Atma-buddhi* (Sanskrit: *atman* “self” + *buddhi* “spiritual soul”) is the “divine-spiritual part of a human being. The ... higher duad.”<sup>96</sup>

The fourth through seventh lower hierarchies, the “lower quaternary,” represent the dense physical body (plus the fourth ether) of the

Solar Logos.<sup>97</sup> Blavatsky noted that the sixth Hierarchy “remains almost inseparable from man, who draws from it all but his highest and lowest principles, or his spirit and body.”<sup>98</sup>

Bailey’s comment that the four lowest hierarchies are man’s “very self” provides the clearest example of the descent of Monadic force through forms on multiple planes. Our Monad’s “own plane” is the monadic plane; we are currently focused on the fourth or fifth Hierarchy; and our mental, astral, etheric, and dense physical vehicles are built from the four lower Hierarchies. In its entirety the incarnating human entity is an expression of life extending over the immense range of six systemic planes.

The fourth Creative Hierarchy is referred to as the “Human Hierarchy,” “Initiates,” and “Lords of Sacrifice.” It is associated with Scorpio, Mercury, and the color yellow.<sup>99</sup> Its plane of activity is the buddhic plane. No element is assigned to either the fourth or fifth Hierarchy.

Blavatsky declared that the Fourth Hierarchy “is the highest group among the Rupas.... It is the nursery of the human, conscious, spiritual Souls. They are called the ‘Imperishable Jivas,’ and constitute, through the order below their own ... the great mystery of human conscious and intellectual Being.”<sup>100</sup> *Rupa* means “in form,” or in some sense “embodied.” *Jiva*, “a living being,” is somewhat ill-defined. Sometimes it is used synonymously with Monad, but here it seems to connote “soul.”

Those of us on the path of aspiration or discipleship, or on the early stages of the initiatory path, are striving toward the fourth Hierarchy and receive help from higher entities, whose work on our behalf involves individual and collective sacrifice. They include the Masters and our Solar Angels. Bailey commented:

The Lords of Will and Sacrifice come down into manifestation, sacrificing their high position and opportunities upon the higher planes of manifestation in order to redeem matter and raise the lives by which it is informed (the lower Creative Hierarchies) to the status of Themselves in so far as They constitute the fourth Creative Hierarchy. This is the subjective purpose, underlying

the sacrifice of these divine Lives Who are ourselves essentially, Who are qualified by knowledge, love and will, and animated by ceaseless persevering devotion.<sup>101</sup>

Advancement to the fourth Hierarchy is a process spanning the third, fourth and fifth initiations. The third initiation frees the individual from the authority of the personality. At the fourth initiation, the individual repudiates not only the personality but all that is material and all that relates to the world of appearances. Bailey declared:

It is instituted during every fourth round, and its peculiar interest lies in the fact that the emphasis for the fourth Creative Hierarchy in every fourth chain and globe during the fourth round is laid upon the fourth initiation, that of the Crucifixion. The fourth Creative Hierarchy is the great expression of the conscious will and sacrifice of the Solar Logos, and the great symbol of the intelligent union of spirit and matter. Hence the fourth initiation, with its presentation of these cosmic truths, and its epitomizing of the purpose of this fundamental sacrifice, has a pre-eminent place.<sup>102</sup>

The fourth initiation typically involves great suffering, and in Christian esotericism it is often termed the “crucifixion initiation.” As noted earlier, the Planetary Logos and the fifth higher Hierarchy are in the process of attaining the fourth cosmic initiation, and the pervasive suffering in the world is a consequence thereof.

The fourth-degree initiate appreciates the full potential of the antahkarana, only to discover that it is no longer of service. In Bailey’s words:

One tremendous experience is vouchsafed to the initiate at this time; he realizes... that the antahkarana has been successfully completed and that there is a direct line of ener-

gy from the Spiritual Triad, via the antahkarana, to his mind and brain. This brings to the forefront of his consciousness the sudden and appalling recognition that the soul itself, the egoic body on its own level, and that which for ages has been the supposed source of his existence and his guide and mentor, is no longer needed.<sup>103</sup>

***Monads in the five higher Hierarchies are formless, or approaching that state, and presumably are fully conscious. By contrast, those in the seven lower Hierarchies are experiencing the descent into form and the gradual awakening of consciousness.***

Reaching the fourth Hierarchy is the culmination of a long process of development of the human soul. For long eons the Solar Angel—whose point of contact is the egoic lotus, or causal body—serves as our “soul,” investing us with consciousness, urging us forward on our evolutionary journey, and orchestrating the construction of lower vehicles at the beginning of each incarnation.

Our own human soul gradually gains coherence and permanence, capable of spanning incarnations, and by the third initiation is ready to take over the Solar Angel’s responsibilities. At the fourth initiation the causal body is destroyed and the Solar Angel departs.<sup>104</sup>

What happens to the human soul is a matter of controversy. Some authorities suggest that the soul is absorbed into the spiritual triad, while others insist that it loses individual identity or is annihilated. Supporting the argument for the soul’s survival in some fashion is the recognition that a soul is the inevitable “result of the union of spirit and matter.”<sup>105</sup> Moreover, it appears that even Planetary Logoi have soul Rays, implying that they also have souls.

At the fifth initiation the “fires” of personality, mind, and higher self merge “with the Divine Flame.... Matter has been correctly adjusted to spirit, and finally the indwelling life slips forth out of its sheath which forms now only a channel for liberation.”<sup>106</sup> The fifth initiation completes the transition to the fourth Hierarchy. In Bailey’s words, the individual “stands in his buddhic sheath,” “Master in the three worlds.”<sup>107</sup> It will be recalled that the buddhic



plane is the native plane of the fourth Hierarchy.

The fifth Hierarchy is called the “Human Personality.” It is associated with Capricorn, Venus, and the color indigo.<sup>108</sup> The fifth Hierarchy seems to echo some of the qualities of the first. Both are associated with the fire element. The lives of the fifth Hierarchy, to quote Bailey, are “called ‘The Hearts of Fiery Love.’”

[T]hey save through love, and in their turn these lives are peculiarly close to the great Heart of Love of the solar Logos. These great redeeming Angels, who are the Sons of Men on their own true plane, the mental, are ever, therefore, pictured as taking the form of twelve-petaled lotuses—this symbology linking them up with “the Son of Divine Love,” the manifested solar system, which is said to be a cosmic twelve-petaled lotus, and with the logoc causal lotus, equally of a twelve-petaled nature.<sup>109</sup>

The fifth Hierarchy is anchored on the mental plane, the fifth systemic plane. The soul’s point of contact is the egoic lotus, or causal body, on the second or third mental subplane,<sup>110</sup> and the personality’s highest point of contact is the mental unit on the fourth mental subplane. “[U]nder the law,” we read, the fifth Hierarchy is “a distributor of energy to the fifth subplane of each plane in the system.” Bailey added: “This hierarchy wields, as we know, the dual aspects of manas, one in the three worlds and one which makes itself felt in higher spheres.”<sup>111</sup>

The fourth and fifth Hierarchies are associated, respectively, with Rays IV and V. Elsewhere Bailey states that the human kingdom is governed by Ray IV, in terms of “experience,” and Ray V in terms of intellect.<sup>112</sup> Certainly the Ray IV quality of Harmony through Conflict is evident in humanity’s long evolutionary journey. Ray V has been of particular importance during the fifth root race—and even more important in the fifth subrace—with its emphasis on the development of intellect. The fourth and fifth Hierarchies are

the “Seekers of satisfaction” and the cause of the second fall into generation, the fact behind the taking of a lower nature by the

Ego. The fourth and the fifth Hierarchies are the ninth and tenth [of all twelve Hierarchies], or the “Initiates” and the “Perfect Ones.” All human beings ... evolve through a graded series of initiations.... This they achieve through a “marriage” with the order next to them, the fifth. They are then completed or perfected, and it is owing to this occult fact that the fourth Hierarchy is regarded as masculine and the fifth as feminine.<sup>113</sup>

The statement that we attain initiation through a “marriage” with fifth-degree initiates is evocative. Notions of a gender polarity between struggling humanity and the higher entities who seek to help us provide an interesting perspective on the relationship with our Adept mentors. On the other hand, assignment of the masculine gender to the fourth Hierarchy might seem to support traditional—and, in the view of many commentators, anachronistic—assumptions that attainment of the fifth initiation requires a male body and that Masters necessarily have male “personas.”

### *The Sixth and Seventh Hierarchies*

The sixth Hierarchy is said to comprise the “Lunar Pitris,” “Lunar Lords” or “Sacrificial Fires.”<sup>114</sup> The seventh Hierarchy comprises the “Elemental Lives,” “The Baskets of Nourishment,” and “The Blinded Lives.”<sup>115</sup> The sixth and seventh Hierarchies are associated, respectively, with Rays VI and VII.

Blavatsky commented that the sixth and seventh Hierarchies “partake of the lower qualities of the Quaternary.” Their lives are

conscious, ethereal Entities, as invisible as Ether, which are shot out like the boughs of a tree from the first central group of the four, and shoot out in their turn numberless side groups, the lower of which are the Nature-Spirits, or Elementals of countless kinds and varieties; from the formless and unsubstantial—the ideal thoughts of their creators—down to the Atomic, though, to human perception, invisible organisms. The latter are considered as the “Spirits of Atoms” for they are the first remove (backwards) from the physical Atom—sentient, if not intelligent creatures.<sup>116</sup>

Here, Blavatsky seemed to include not only natural but also “artificial elementals”: that is, thoughtforms created by human activity.

Bailey offered the following information about the two Hierarchies, emphasizing the roles they play in relation to the Planetary Logos as well as to ourselves:

These sixth and seventh Hierarchies which provide the substance forms of the three worlds have a vital use and a most interesting place. From the logoc standpoint, they are not regarded as providing principles, but from the standpoint of man they do provide him with his lowest principles. They hold the same relation to the Logos as the dense physical body does to man, and all that concerns the evolution of man must (in this particular place) be studied as going on within the physical, logoc vehicle. They deal with the display of physical energy; with the working out in the physical vehicle, of all divine purposes, and with the physical organization of a certain great cosmic Life.<sup>117</sup>

She added that the sixth and seventh Hierarchies are the lowest residue of the previous solar system:

[T]he energy of that matter (liquid, gaseous and dense) which the vibration of the logoc permanent atom (on the plane *adi*) attracts to itself in the building of the divine form. For purposes of clarification and of generalization, it might be noted that the seventh Hierarchy is the life or energy found at the heart of every atom, its positive aspect, and the sixth Hierarchy is the life of the forms of all the etheric bodies of every tangible object.<sup>118</sup>

*Adi* literally means “first” or “primal.”<sup>119</sup>

The sixth Hierarchy is associated with Sagittarius, Mars, and the color red.<sup>120</sup> It is associated with the water element, and its lives are anchored on the astral plane, or the cosmic liquid physical subplane. The sixth Hierarchy is the domain of the nature spirits that animate the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms; they also animate the cells of the human body. Nature spirits are swept into activity by the

Builders of the second and third Hierarchies, or by our own Solar Angels. One might expect the vegetable kingdom itself—that is, aside from its animating devas—to be associated with the sixth Hierarchy, but the literature provides no information on where the animal and vegetable kingdoms fit into the Hierarchical structure.

The seventh, or lowest, Hierarchy is associated with Aquarius, the Moon, and the color violet.<sup>121</sup> Like the first Hierarchy, it seems to be under the influence of two Rays; the seventh Hierarchy is numerically associated with Ray VII, but the Ray of its planetary ruler, the Moon, is Ray IV (see Table 2). As noted, the Moon sometimes is said to veil Uranus, a Ray VII planet.

The seventh Hierarchy is associated with the earth element, and its lives reside on the physical plane, or the cosmic solid physical subplane. Its lives comprise the raw material from which physical forms are built. The seventh Hierarchy may be an exception to the notion of lives extending down to lower planes, but it should be remembered that elementals are on an involutionary arc, and the physical plane is the goal of their present phase of development.

## Conclusions

The writings of Helena Blavatsky and Alice Bailey establish that the Creative Hierarchies can be understood in three ways, as:

- A classification system of Monads in the body of the Solar Logos, based on where they are on their involutionary/evolutionary journeys.
- A way of understanding the Logoc Life in its diversity.
- Cohesive groups of Monads, at particular stages of development, serving as centers of force originating from outside the solar system.

Four of the twelve Hierarchies attained liberation in the first solar system but continue to influence us through a fifth, which is in process of achieving liberation. “Liberation,” in this context, is interpreted as freedom from form. The lower seven Hierarchies are current-

ly in manifestation—that is, creatively active in relative levels of form. The second and third lower Hierarchies encompass the higher devas, or angels, while humanity spans the fourth and fifth.

*Hierarchy* implies “vertical” stratification. This can refer to the different stages of awakening among Monads of the same group. Or it can refer the descent into form—a process that placed Monads in the Hierarchies where they are currently active and may also bring them into contact with neighboring Hierarchies.

Each of the lower Hierarchies resides on one or other of the seven systemic planes. Typically, a Hierarchy resides on a plane lower than the Monads’ “own plane.” Inter-plane tension contributes to the impulse to evolve, and the gap narrows as consciousness is awakened and the Monads express their creative potential. Meanwhile, the evolving Hierarchy may receive help from Hierarchies on higher planes, or it may sweep lower Hierarchies into activity to further its own—and their own—development.

Human Monads reside on the second, monadic, plane, but humanity’s present phase of development extends no higher than the buddhic plane. Advanced members of the human family, like the Masters, have reached the fourth Hierarchy, which resides on the buddhic plane. The rest of us remain in the fifth Hierarchy, anchored on the mental plane. During incarnation, our mental, astral and physical vehicles are built from lives that share the lower reaches of the fifth Hierarchy and lives native to the sixth and seventh Hierarchies. In response to monadic impulse, transmitted via the soul, we yearn to advance to the fourth Hierarchy and can receive help from its denizens.

Themes running through Bailey’s commentary on the Creative Hierarchies are renunciation and sacrifice. For us, advancement to the fourth Hierarchy is a process spanning the third, fourth and fifth initiations. But our greatest challenge is the fourth initiation, when we renounce the lower self. Typically, the fourth initiation involves great suffering, prompting Christian esotericists to call it the “crucifixion” initiation.<sup>122</sup> On a higher level, the Planetary

Logos and the fifth higher Hierarchy are taking the fourth *cosmic* initiation, and all lives on Earth share in their suffering.

Correspondences exist between the Creative Hierarchies, the signs of the zodiac, the planets, and the Rays. The planets assigned to the zodiacal signs, in the context of the Hierarchies, are distinct from the signs’ exoteric and esoteric rulers. Moreover, the Rays associated with the first and seventh Hierarchies are ambiguous. The two Hierarchies themselves are assigned to Rays I and VII, but the Rays of their respective planets, the Sun and Moon, are Rays II and IV. It turns out that Rays I and VII are the Rays of hidden planets that the Sun and Moon “veil.”

The purpose of this article has been to draw attention to an area of esoteric studies which has received little attention beyond the texts where it was first revealed. What is presented here is no more than a starting point. Much more research needs to be done, particularly to address astrological aspects of the Hierarchies. Esotericists versed in esoteric astrology have opportunities to contribute much to our collective knowledge.

Research is challenging because occult blinds seem to have been planted in the texts. Bailey herself conceded that critical information is withheld until the third initiation, or later, because it cannot yet be entrusted to humanity at large. Clearly, we are working at the limits of what is currently permitted to be known, and all of us must tread lightly to avoid inadvertently disclosing privileged information. Higher guidance should be sought to avoid the dangerous scenario in which insights by different writers could be pieced together and used for unlawful purposes.

---

<sup>1</sup> Alice Bailey made her transition in 1949, but several of her books were published posthumously.

<sup>2</sup> Helena P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. I (Krotona, CA: Theosophical University Press, 1888), 171. Emphasis added.

<sup>3</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (New York: Lucis, 1925), 579.

<sup>4</sup> Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. I, 213.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 426.  
<sup>6</sup> Helena P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. II (Los Angeles: Theosophical University Press, 1888/1993), 33.  
<sup>7</sup> Blavatsky used the term “Celestial Hierarchy” to refer to higher beings in general.  
<sup>8</sup> If we are humbled to learn that we are only in third grade and face many more years of school, we might consider that an enormously longer time will be needed to reach the “twelfth grade” in a real world of the Creative Hierarchies.  
<sup>9</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation Human and Solar* (New York: Lucis, 1922), 4.  
<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 3-4.  
<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 4. Parenthesis in original.  
<sup>12</sup> Mary Bailey, *A Learning Experience* (New York: Lucis, 1990), 61. This quote is from a section headed “Extracts from D.K.’s Instructions to A.A.B. during 1919.”  
<sup>13</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle* (New York: Lucis, 1950), 124.  
<sup>14</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1194-1195. Elsewhere she stated: “A ray is but a name for a particular force or type of energy, with the emphasis upon the quality which that force exhibits and not upon the form aspect which it creates.” Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. 1 (New York: Lucis, 1936), 316.  
<sup>15</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology* (New York: Lucis, 1951), 703-704.  
<sup>16</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1196.  
<sup>17</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 85.  
<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 112. For an in-depth study of the Pleiades see Maureen T. Richmond “The Pleiades,” *The Esoteric Quarterly* (Summer 2019), 13.  
<sup>19</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Consciousness of the Atom* (New York: Lucis, 1922), 157.  
<sup>20</sup> *Job* 38:31. All biblical references herein are from the King James Bible.  
<sup>21</sup> *Amos* 5:8. Orion’s belt, one of the most familiar features of the constellations, points toward the Pleiades. In the other direction it points to the star Sirius.  
<sup>22</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 201.  
<sup>23</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. 1 (New York: Lucis, 1944), 717.  
<sup>24</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 334.  
<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 334-335.  
<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 36.  
<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 33.  
<sup>28</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1197.

<sup>29</sup> G. de Purucker, *Encyclopedic Theosophical Glossary*. Online: <https://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/etgloss/etg-hp.htm> (Last accessed July 31, 2019).  
<sup>30</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 34.  
<sup>31</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 37.  
<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 68.  
<sup>34</sup> See for example Bailey, *The Consciousness of the Atom*, 62.  
<sup>35</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 33. Even though the four highest Hierarchies have achieved liberation, tension presumably continues between them and cosmic evil, which is also centered on the cosmic astral plane. See Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalization of the Hierarchy* (New York: Lucis, 1957), 688.  
<sup>36</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 36.  
<sup>37</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1197.  
<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 384.  
<sup>39</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 33.  
<sup>40</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 37.  
<sup>42</sup> Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. I, 88, 216.  
<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 88, 215. Emphasis removed.  
<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 216-217. Note that in these teachings the masculine gender is assigned to the One from whom the Celestial Virgin proceeds. “Ascends” seems to be a reference to the procreative act.  
<sup>45</sup> John F. Nash, “A Study of Gender, Part I: Gender at the Human and Higher Levels,” *The Esoteric Quarterly* (Fall 2017), 61-89.  
<sup>46</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1225.  
<sup>47</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>48</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Light of the Soul* (New York: Lucis, 1927), 15.  
<sup>49</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1225.  
<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 1224.  
<sup>51</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 38.  
<sup>52</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic* (New York: Lucis, 1934), 324.  
<sup>53</sup> Until the third initiation there is no conscious connection between Monad and personality, so the Solar Angel provides the upward “pull.”  
<sup>54</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 35.  
<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 68. The hierarchical ruler is also called the “unconventional” ruler.  
<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 268. For a discussion of the planetary rulerships see Maureen T. Richmond, “The Threefold Rulership System in Esoteric As-

- trology,” *The Esoteric Quarterly* (Winter 2018), 53-72.
- 57 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, Tabulation II, p. 35, and Tabulation VII, p. 68.
- 58 *Ibid.*, 66, 513, 649.
- 59 See for example, Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. 1, 335.
- 60 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 393.
- 61 *Ibid.*, 13.
- 62 *Ibid.*, 335. Precisely what “Ego” and “personality” mean in that context is unclear. In humanity, the personality is sacrificed at the fourth initiation.
- 63 Alice A. Bailey, *The Destiny of the Nations* (New York: Lucis, 1949), 38.
- 64 It is hard to imagine that the Moon has a soul Ray—or even a soul—since it is a dead planet.
- 65 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 335.
- 66 *Ibid.*, 270.
- 67 *Ibid.*, 85.
- 68 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1225.
- 69 Our egoic lotus is centered on the second (systemic) mental subplane. See Bailey, *Initiation Human and Solar*, 141.
- 70 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 47.
- 71 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 272.
- 72 *Ibid.*, 571.
- 73 *Ibid.*, 532. It is unclear why the Solar Logos, who has far surpassed the fourth cosmic initiation, would still have a causal body.
- 74 Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. 2 (New York: Lucis, 1955), 385.
- 75 Terms like “first cosmic etheric subplane” and “cosmic dense physical subplane” have no literal meaning, but they draw useful attention to the fractal pattern of the cosmic planes, systemic planes, and their respective subplanes (Figure 1). Appropriate correspondences may also exist with the systemic etheric and dense physical subplanes.
- 76 Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. I, 213.
- 77 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1197. This section of *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* is reproduced in Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, beginning on page 39.
- 78 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 35.
- 79 *Ibid.*, 35, 68.
- 80 *Ibid.*, 35.
- 81 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1201.
- 82 *Ibid.*, 1197-1198.
- 83 Charles W. Leadbeater, *The Masters and the Path* (Adyar, India: Theosophical Publishing House, 1925), 288.
- 84 Sandra Hodson (ed.), *Light of the Sanctuary: The Occult Diary of Geoffrey Hodson* (Manila, Philippines: Theosophical Publishers, 1988), 268.
- 85 Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing* (New York: Lucis, 1953), 362-363.
- 86 See for example John F. Nash, “The World Mother: Teachings of Helena Roerich and Geoffrey Hodson” *The Esoteric Quarterly* (Winter 2006), 35-46; “Adept, Queen, Mother, Priestess: Mary in the Writings of Geoffrey Hodson,” *The Esoteric Quarterly* (Winter 2019), 37-65.
- 87 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 35.
- 88 Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. I, 218.
- 89 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1198-1199.
- 90 Bailey, *Initiation Human and Solar*, 222.
- 91 Blavatsky distinguished this use of the term *Nirmanakaya* from Buddhist usage: “the body ‘in which a Buddha or a Bodhisattva appears on earth.’” Helena P. Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary* (Krotona, CA: Theosophical Publishing House, 1973), 231.
- 92 Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II (New York: Lucis, 1942), 63.
- 93 With regard to the school-system analogy, it should be noted that grades are numbered from the bottom up. Thus the fifth Hierarchy corresponds to third grade, and the fourth Hierarchy to fourth grade.
- 94 *Psalms* 8:5.
- 95 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1200.
- 96 Purucker, *Encyclopedic Theosophical Glossary*.
- 97 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1202.
- 98 Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. I, 222.
- 99 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 35.
- 100 Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. I, 218-219.
- 101 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 116-117. Parenthesis in original.
- 102 Bailey, *Initiation Human and Solar*, 94-95.
- 103 Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and The Initiations* (New York: Lucis, 1960), 695.
- 104 For a discussion of the soul and its development see: John F. Nash, “The Solar Angel,” *The Beacon* (March/April 2001), 7-14; “The Human Soul,” *The Beacon* (January/February 2003, 6-10 & March/April 2003, 6-10). See also John F. Nash, *The Soul and Its Destiny* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2004), chs. 7-9.
- 105 Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 158.

- 
- <sup>106</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 47.  
<sup>107</sup> Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 16-17.  
<sup>108</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 35.  
<sup>109</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1204.  
<sup>110</sup> The causal body of “average man” is located on the third mental subplane. But the causal body expands, and its center moves to the second subplane, in advance of the fourth initiation. Alice A. Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation* (New York: Lucis, 1922), 3; 29-33. See also Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 532, 542-543, 578.  
<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 1205.  
<sup>112</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. 1 (New York: Lucis, 1936), 412.

- 
- <sup>113</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1200.  
<sup>114</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 35.  
<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>116</sup> Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, vol. I, 221. Parenthesis in original. Capitalization of whole words removed.  
<sup>117</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1207.  
<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>119</sup> Purucker, *Encyclopedic Theosophical Glossary*.  
<sup>120</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 35.  
<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>122</sup> Indeed, Jesus is believed to have attained the fourth initiation at the crucifixion.



# The Rediscovery of Byzantine Orthodox Mysticism: An Introduction to the Medieval Hesychasts' Theory of Humanity's Deification

Nicolas Laos

## Abstract

In the present essay, I investigate and elucidate the principles of the Byzantine Orthodox mystics' theory of humanity's deification in a way that helps one to understand the difference between a propositional and a mystical approach to Christianity, as well as to contemplate the significant yet elusive relationship between "Orthodoxy" and "Gnosticism." The Byzantine tradition of "hesychasm" is the focus of this essay. In particular, I use the term "Orthodoxy" in order to refer to a canonical theological system, namely, a theological system approved by a theologically legitimate Church Council. I interpret hesychasm not merely as a medieval monastic practice but as a system of spirituality that can be endorsed by any person who appreciates hesychasm's teachings about the deification of humanity and inner illumination and as a system of philosophical anthropology focused on and underpinned by the thesis that the human being is a potential god. In addition, I use the term "Gnosticism" in order to refer to the following three things: firstly, a language (not a particular religion or sect) that enables people to communicate with each other regarding that which transcends words and concepts by using symbols and allegories; secondly, a poetic approach to the transcendent; and, thirdly, an attitude towards religion whose purpose is the spiritualization of the material world (according to Armann Righ's "The Gospel of the Living,"<sup>1</sup> and Miguel Conner's "A Summary of Gnosticism Both Aeons and Archons Agree On"<sup>2</sup>).

## The Meaning of Hesychasm

Hesychasm, or "nepsis" (Greek: νῆσις), is the hallmark of sanctity, according to the medieval Byzantines' Christian Orthodox (or

"canonical") theology. The term "nepsis" comes from the New Testament (1 Peter 5:8), and it means to be vigilant and of sober mind. Nepsis is a state of watchfulness and sobriety acquired after a period of inner cleansing. The term "hesychasm" (Greek: ἡσυχασμός) comes from the New Testament (Matthew 6:6), and it is a process of retiring inward by quieting (cleansing) the body and the mind in order, ultimately, to achieve an experiential knowledge of God. The emphasis that the hesychasts, or Neptic Fathers, place on inner cleansing as a precondition of true theology and for seeing God is a clear Platonic influence,<sup>3</sup> and it resonates with Gnostic epistemology and Gnostic mystical quests for illumination.<sup>4</sup> In the eighteenth century, the monk, theologian, and philosopher Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain and Makarios of Corinth (Bishop of Corinth and theologian) compiled the works of the hesychasts, written between the fourth and the fifteenth centuries, into a collection that is called *The Philokalia*.<sup>5</sup>

## About the Author

**Dr. Nicolas Laos** is a philosopher, religious visionary, mathematician, and geopolitics expert and consultant, and he has taught courses in political philosophy and international relations theory at the University of Indianapolis (Dept. of International Relations). He is also a Freemason (regularly installed Grand Hierophant-97° of the Ancient and Primitive Rite of Memphis-Misraim), and the Founder and Grand Master of the Scholarly and Political Order of the Ur-Illuminati (SPOUI). He is the author of several scholarly books, including *The Meaning of Being Illuminati* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019), in which he elucidates his research program of "Ur-Illuminism." His correspondence address is: Nicolas Laos, P.O. Box 9316, Athens 10032, Greece. He can also be contacted via the following email: nicolaslaos@nicolaslaos.com.

It is important to understand that hesychasm is not merely a medieval monastic practice, nor is it merely confined to the life of Byzantine monks. On the contrary, I interpret hesychasm as a system of mystical theology and especially as a system of philosophical anthropology that highlights and elucidates the potential divinity of the human being and the manner in which the human being can actualize humanity's divine potential. Therefore, I interpret hesychasm in the context of my attempt to endow humanism with ontological underpinnings. In particular, my conception of humanism is underpinned by a creative reinterpretation and "rediscovery" of Platonism, medieval Christian mystics' and scholars' writings, and various "illuminist" systems, from the Orphic mystical cult to the European Enlightenment and thence to the eighteenth-century Illuminati fraternities and beyond (including such schools of mystical belief as Hermeticism, the Kabbalah, alchemy, the Rosicrucian movement, and Freemasonry).<sup>6</sup>

Evagrius Ponticus (345–399 A.D.), Maximus the Confessor (ca. 580–662 A.D.), and Symeon the New Theologian (949–1022 A.D.), three of the most influential Greek hesychasts, understood hesychasm as a practice of psychic cleansing and inner prayer aimed at achieving union with God in a way that transcends images, concepts, and language (*Philokalia*, vols. 1, 2, and 4). However, Gregory of Sinai (ca. 1260s–1346), another prominent Greek hesychast, pointed out that, even though images and thoughts are to be excluded, hesychasm does not reject all feelings. He asserts that, rightly practised, inner Christocentric prayer leads to a sense of joyful sorrow and to a feeling of spiritual warmth, which, the hesychasts maintain, make the aspirant capable of experiencing the divine illumination that three Apostles, namely Peter, James, son of Zebedee, and John, experienced at the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ on Mount Tabor (Matthew 17: 1–9; Mark 9:2–8; Luke 9:28–36; 2 Peter 1:16–18). The hesychasts emphasize that the light that shined at the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ is the uncreated light of God's Glory.<sup>7</sup>

Kallistos Katafygiotis,<sup>8</sup> a fourteenth-century hesychast whose treatise *On Union with God*

*and Life of Theoria* is included in the fifth volume of the *Philokalia*, exposes and elucidates the hesychasts' conception of the deification (Greek: "theosis") of humanity and the hesychasts' theses about the operation of the mind (Greek: "nous"). In the aforementioned treatise, Katafygiotis argues that all beings (including the mind) have received their movement and their natural characteristics from the divine Logos, who has created them, and that the movement of the mind, in particular, has as its characteristic the "for ever," which is infinite and unlimited. Therefore, Katafygiotis maintains, it would have been beneath the nature and the value of the mind if it moved in a finite and limited way, namely, if it had its movement in finite and limited things. According to Katafygiotis, due to the mind's logos and nature, the perpetual movement of the mind needs to move towards something eternal and unlimited, and nothing is really (that is, by its nature) infinite and unlimited but God, who by nature is One. Hence, the mind must gaze at and move towards the infinite One, God.

In the aforementioned treatise, Katafygiotis argues that there are only three ways in which the mind ascends to the "theoria" (vision) of God: the self-mobilized way (Greek: "autokinetos"), the other-mobilized way (Greek: "heterokinetos"), and the mixed way. The self-mobilized way is performed with the mind's own will accompanied by imagination, and its conclusion is the "theoria" of things related to God (namely, an indirect and imperfect knowledge of God). The other-mobilized way is performed only with the will and illumination of God, and, therefore, it is supernatural; in such a state, the entire mind is found under divine possession, and it is caught in divine revelations. The mixed way consists partly of both the self-mobilized way and the other-mobilized way: as long as one works with one's own will and imagination, one is in agreement with the self-mobilized way, whereas one partakes of the other-mobilized way as long as one unites with oneself by means of the divine illumination, and sees God ineffably, beyond the mental union with oneself. Moreover, in the same treatise, Katafygiotis makes the following remarks about faith,

divine illumination, and union with God: when the mind uses its imagination in order to contemplate the ineffable, it is guided by faith; when the mind receives the divine illumination of God's grace, it is assured with hope; and, when the divine light takes hold of it, the mind becomes a repository of love towards humanity and much more so towards God. Thus, the triune alignment and movement of the mind, with faith, hope, and love, becomes perfect and deifying.

In Nikiphoros the Hesychast's treatise *On Watchfulness and the Guarding of the Heart* (which is included in the fourth volume of the *Philokalia*) and in Symeon the New Theologian's treatises *The Three Methods of Prayer* and *153 Practical and Theological Texts* (which are also included in the fourth volume of the *Philokalia*), the following physical hesychastic techniques are exposed: the aspirant should sit with his head bowed, with his gaze fixed on the place of the heart or on his navel, he should slow his breathing rhythm, and, at the same time, he should search inwardly for the place of the heart. Moreover, in that prescribed state, the aspirant should recite the "Jesus Prayer," whose standard form is: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner," or "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, illuminate my darkness." The significance of the Jesus Prayer has been emphasized by Gregory of Sinai and Gregory Palamas (1296–1359), two of the most influential hesychasts, whose treatises are included in the fifth volume of the *Philokalia*.

The hesychastically observant Christian emerges from a critical and creative synthesis of the best qualities of two human prototypes: "cognitive human being" and "religious human being." On the one hand, there is the intellectual and scientifically aware human being who, in one's quest to explain and master the universe cognitively as well as to understand the meaning of "explaining" and "mastering" the universe cognitively, orders one's existence on the basis of reason, reflection (careful examination and assessment of life), and the empirical knowledge resulting from the autonomous investigation of the world. This is the "cognitive human being." On the other hand, there is the religious personality, who is primarily mo-

tivated by and oriented towards the knowledge of and one's connection with God, namely, the source of the significance of the beings and things that exist in the world. Searching for the ultimate and transcendent Logos of the world, namely, for the effective and the final cause of the world, the religious personality is unsatisfied with beholding this life bound by space and time, and seeks mystically to transcend the limits of the created, material universe. This is the "religious human being."

From the perspective of mysticism, as opposed to propositional religion, the religious human being is primarily motivated by the desire to know God, and is oriented to seeking to realize union with God. Hence, in the context of mysticism, the religious human being's thoughts and actions are directed at knowing God. As the renowned fifth-century A.D. hesychast Mark the Ascetic maintains in his book *On the Spiritual Law* (paragraph 54), "to journey without direction is wasted effort."

Mystical experience is the sense of the presence of the supreme reality (specifically, the deity) all around and within us as well as a desire to hold communion with this supreme reality and, in this way, understand who we really are and what the world really is. To understand this, we must begin with the question of the relation between being and personal identity. "Personhood" is not a quality added to the human being, but it has an ontological weight. Inherent to "personhood" is the claim of absolute being, namely, a metaphysical claim.

Mysticism is a form of awareness of one's personhood. Specifically, let us consider the question: "Who am I?" This question includes three elements, namely:

- (i) "Who": the "who" element calls for some sort of definition, and it expresses a desire to articulate knowledge. In mysticism, the "who" question is a call of consciousness, and it leads to higher levels of consciousness. In mysticism, the "who" question arises from an awareness that we are faced with a given world which obliges us to develop our identity through comparison with other beings that already exist in this

world. Thus, in mysticism, self-assertion always is identified with a tendency to transcend ourselves, specifically, depart from the confines of our own entity or ego, in order to meet other beings and, through our communication with them, to become aware of ourselves. In the context of hesychastic mysticism, in particular, that significant Other Being, whose presence and whose interaction with us underpins our self-knowledge is the Absolute, or the good-in-itself, and the place of encounter with the Absolute is the human mind, whose seat is the heart. Emphasizing the importance of the Absolute as the existential mirror in which one can really recognize, assess, and contemplate oneself, the seventh-century A.D. Greek hesychast and leading Orthodox theologian Maximus the Confessor, in his *Ambiguum 10 (Patrologia Graeca, vol. 91, 1113 BC)*, writes that “God and man are examples of each other,” and that “God makes himself man out of love for men as much as man deifies himself out of love for God.”

- (ii) “Am”: the “am” element—which, by the way, is the central issue and the spiritual core of Heidegger’s philosophy of existence—calls for security, in the sense that one inquires into one’s being in the face of the facts that one has not always been here, and one will not always remain here.
- (iii) “I”: the “I” element calls for particularity, or otherness, and, therefore, it expresses some sort of uniqueness.

### A Historical Notice

Hesychasm was called into question and challenged during the decade 1337–47, in what is known as the hesychastic controversy. The attack on hesychasm was launched by a learned Greek from southern Italy, Barlaam the Calabrian (ca. 1290–1348), who was influenced by the fourteenth-century rationalist schools of Western Europe. Barlaam was answered by a learned monk from Mount Athos, Gregory Palamas. Palamas’s famous book *Tri-*

*ads in Defense of the Sacred Hesychasts*, which was probably written between 1338 and 1341, is comprised of nine treatises in the form of questions and answers. After a period of fierce theological controversies, on August 15, 1351, a decree of a Church Council at Constantinople made the hesychastic theological doctrines the exclusive “binding truth for the whole Orthodox Church,” and, in 1368, the Patriarch of Constantinople, Philotheos, convened a new council on hesychasm, which proclaimed Gregory Palamas, the major defender of hesychasm against its critics, a saint.

The fact that, before its vindication by the *Church Councils* of Constantinople in 1347 and 1351, hesychasm was attacked and deemed to be heretical by several members of the Byzantine Orthodox intelligentsia and by Western (Roman Catholic) scholastics (the latter continued to treat hesychasm as a heresy even after its vindication by the *Church Councils* of Constantinople in 1347 and 1351) has urged me to try to restore the conceptual virginity of the term “heresy”—which is derived from the Greek verb “herō” (“αἰρῶ”), meaning to receive, to conquer (e.g., to grasp the inner meaning of something), and to be courageous and bold enough to defend one’s theses and spiritual discoveries—by articulating and proposing an “Orthodox Heresy,” which is underpinned by the research program of “Ur-Illuminism,” which I articulate and elucidate in my book *The Meaning of Being Illuminati* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019).<sup>9</sup> From my perspective, “orthodoxy” means (or should mean) sensitivity to and pursuit of the real truth, and “heresy” means (or should mean) the erection of an illumined mind that is determined and bold enough to communicate its awarenesses and spiritual discoveries to the rest of humanity.

The zenith of hesychasm in medieval Byzantium was followed by the fall of Byzantium to the Ottomans in 1453. Thus, the hesychastic renaissance that took place in Byzantium during the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries, primarily due to Gregory Palamas, was violently interrupted by the Ottoman empire. The Ottoman rule inhibited the development of the hesychastic spirituality in the Greek East for

approximately four centuries. However, after the liberation of the Greeks from the Ottoman rule in the 1830s, the development of the hesychastic spirituality was inhibited due to various historical and societal reasons pertaining to the modern Greek State (political instability, cultural and social underdevelopment, underqualified ruling elites, etc.) and due to the flaws of the neohellenic theological establishment, which have been thoroughly analyzed by the distinguished Greek historian and theologian Panagiotis Chrestou.<sup>10</sup> In particular, as Chrestou has argued, the heart of the neohellenic theology was rooted in the Eastern Orthodox tradition, but the neohellenic theology was intellectually fed and conditioned by Protestantism (especially Puritanism and Pietism), and its argumentation derived from medieval scholasticism (rationalist rhetoric).<sup>11</sup> Thus, from the beginning of the nineteenth century until the beginning of the twenty-first century, on several occasions, in the modern Greek State, the defense and the preservation of hesychasm was either formalistic or subconscious (on the part of simple, insufficiently educated people). It often reflected a spiritually puny kind of traditionalism, and it was commonly used as a rhetorical fig leaf in order to conceal the spiritual incompetence of several members of the Greek Orthodox clergy.

Even though the Ottoman rule in Byzantium marked the end of the hesychastic renaissance in the Greek East, and even though hesychasm could not be easily transplanted in Western soil due to the hesychasts' opposition to scholasticism and Western rationalism, hesychasm found fertile land in Russia, and it blossomed there after the fall of Byzantium. The Russian hesychastic tradition is contained in the six volumes of the *Little Russian Philokalia*, which has been published by the St. Herman of

Alaska Brotherhood. The six volumes of the previous book are devoted to the following Russian hesychasts: Vol. 1: Seraphim of Sarov; Vol. 2: Abbott Nazarius of Valaam; Vol. 3: Herman of Alaska; Vol. 4: Paisius Velichkovsky; Vol. 5: Elder Theodore of Sanaxor; and Vol. 6: Elder Zosima of Siberia.

*It is important to understand that hesychasm is not merely a medieval monastic practice, nor is it merely confined to the life of Byzantine monks. On the contrary, I interpret hesychasm as a system of mystical theology and especially as a system of philosophical anthropology that highlights and elucidates the potential divinity of the human being.*

However, in the Middle Ages, Slavic peoples, including Russians, adopted Byzantine Orthodox Christianity without having previously become partakers of Greek philosophy, on which the Greek Church Fathers had been based in order to form Orthodox Christian theology. The fact that many Slavic peoples, including Russians, adopted Byzantine Orthodox Christianity, specifically, the theology of the Greek Church Fathers, without having assimilated the genuine content of clas-

sical Greek philosophy, which played a key role in the formation of Byzantine Orthodox Christianity, did not allow the medieval Russian Orthodox to articulate a Russian philosophical and social discourse that would be in agreement with Byzantine Orthodox Christianity, especially with hesychasm, and would provide a philosophically rigorous and attractive alternative to rationalist theological systems (such as scholasticism) and legalistic and formalistic religious attitudes (such as Puritanism and Pietism).

In general, the Russian civilization is marked by an inner, psychic conflict between the following three spiritual forces: (i) the Byzantine Orthodox religious identity and heritage of the Russian people, (ii) particular, medieval and modern Western "schools" of thought that have influenced the development of philosophy and political thought in Russia and conflict with the spiritual core of Russia's Byzantine Orthodox religious identity and heritage, and

(iii) Eurasian Pagan mystical traditions. In the nineteenth century, through his novels, Fyodor M. Dostoevsky indirectly yet clearly pointed out that the Russian people (“narod”) still had not made its final, conscious choice for the orthodox Christ and that it, therefore, still was capable of “throwing itself—while staying and seeking for its [historical destiny]—into the most monstrous deviations and experimentations.”<sup>12</sup> In modern, pre-Soviet Russia, the major center of hesychastic theology was the Optina Hermitage (or Pustinia). Paisius Velichkovsky (1722–94) was very influential in reviving hesychasm in Russia, and his hesychastic work found in Optina Monastery a “headquarters” from which hesychasm spread throughout Russia.

### **The Three Levels of God’s Existence**

**I**n the era of the early Church Councils, there was much confusion concerning the meaning of the Trinitarian formula. The Cappadocian Fathers—namely, Basil the Great (330–379), who was Bishop of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa (ca. 332–395), who was Bishop of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus (329–389), who became Patriarch of Constantinople—made major contributions to the definition of the Holy Trinity finalized at the Second Ecumenical Council (convened in Constantinople, in 381 A.D.). In the final version of the Nicene Creed, finalized there, they clarified the three levels of God’s existence, namely: God’s uncreated essence, God’s uncreated hypostases (Holy Trinity), and God’s uncreated energies (e.g., God’s omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, goodness, provision, creativity, etc.).

Gregory of Nyssa emphasized the difference between the terms “ousia” (essence) and “hypostasis.” The distinction between essence and hypostasis corresponds to the distinction between what is common (Greek: “koinon”) and what is particular and proper (Greek: “idion”). Essence is related to hypostasis as the common is to the particular. Following the same reasoning, in his Epistle 236, Basil the Great writes that “there is the same difference between essence and hypostasis as between what is com-

mon and what is particular, for example, between animal and a certain man.” In summary, the Cappadocian Fathers developed the following conceptual correspondences:

Essence = common = species (according to Aristotle’s terminology: universal or secondary substance)

Hypostasis = proper = individual (according to Aristotle’s terminology: primary substance).

According to hesychasm, God’s essence is totally transcendent, totally inconceivable, and totally unknowable. Many hesychasts used to refer to God’s essence as the “inconceivable nothing,” in the sense that, from the perspective of the human mind, God’s essence is the positive void from which the ultimate significance of every being and thing in the world derives. However, God’s essence exists hypostatically (specifically, as a communion of three persons), and manifests itself through its uncreated energies.

In order to understand God’s hypostatic way of existence (that is, the Trinitarian doctrine), let us consider the poet T. S. Eliot. The poetry of T. S. Eliot is his “logos,” or word, it is begotten from Eliot’s “nous” (mind), and it provides those who read it with Eliot’s “spirit,” specifically, with a special culture and a special feeling of participation in Eliot’s personal world. Eliot’s spirit remains with the readers of Eliot’s poetry (his “logos”) even when they do not have his poems in front of them. By analogy, God the Father is the Nous (Mind) of God, God the Son is the Logos (Word) of God, and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. However, in the case of the Holy Trinity, the Nous of God (Father), the Logos of God (Son), and the Holy Spirit are not attributes or functions of a being, but they are distinct Persons (hypostases) of the same divine nature/essence. Therefore, God is a communion of three hypostases.

According to the Nicene Creed, the relationship between the Father and the Son is called begottenness/generation: the Logos (God the Son) of God is begotten from the divine Nous (God the Father) “before all ages,” that is, before creation, before the commencement of time, in an eternally timeless existence without



beginning or end. Moreover, according to the Nicene Creed, the relationship between the Father and the Holy Spirit is called procession. Gregory of Nazianzus is the first to use the idea of procession to describe the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the Father/Godhead. In his *Fifth Theological Oration*, Gregory of Nazianzus writes that “the Holy Spirit is truly Spirit, coming forth from the Father indeed but not after the manner of the Son, for it is not by generation but by procession, since I must coin a word for the sake of clearness.”

John of Damascus (ca. 675/676–749), a Syrian monk and priest, and one of the most influential Fathers of the Eastern Orthodox Church, in his essay entitled *The Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, defines “nature” as the principle of motion and repose, and, on this ground, he identifies “nature” with “substance.” However, he endorses the Aristotelian distinction between primary substance and secondary substance. The distinction (central to Aristotle’s *Categories*) between primary and secondary substances is reformulated by John of Damascus with the help of the non-Aristotelian concept of “hypostasis.” His originality with regard to Gregory of Nyssa lies in the priority given to the “hypostasis.” John of Damascus reinterprets the Cappadocian Fathers’ distinction between essence and hypostasis from the perspective of the priority of primary substances in Aristotle’s *Categories*. In other words, according to John of Damascus, reality is fundamentally hypostatic: everything exists as, or in relation to, hypostases.

Hypostasis signifies an existential otherness (and, hence, individuality), and John of Damascus defines individuality as numerical difference. He defines hypostasis and, hence, individuality by following Porphyry’s *Isagoge* (7, 19–27), according to which one individual is distinct from other individuals of the same species due to one’s unique bundle of properties; these properties are not essential, and, thus, John of Damascus calls them “accidental.”

John of Damascus emphasizes that hypostasis not only possesses common as well as individ-

ual characteristics of the subject, but also exists in itself, whereas nature does not exist in itself, but is to be found in hypostasis. Through the distinction between hypostasis and nature/essence, the Church Fathers managed to explain how God can assume the human nature without losing or degrading His divinity. In particular, in the case of Jesus Christ, the same hypostasis of the Logos (Word) became the hypostasis of divine and human natures.

The early Greek Church Fathers, such as the Cappadocian Fathers, emphasize the ontology of particularity and freedom. The hypostatic way of God’s existence implies that God is not constrained by His nature, and that God’s mode of being is freedom. In the second book of his *Answer to Eunomius*, Gregory of Nyssa wrote that “God has created everything by His will and without any difficulty and pain the divine will became nature” (*Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 46, 124B). In other words, God’s action does not admit any mediation, and the only “raw material” that God used in order to create the world was His own free will. Hence, God is free from every logical determination, and the cosmos is an actualization of God’s will, and not an emanation of God’s nature (the nature of the cosmos is created, whereas God’s nature is uncreated). The aforementioned thesis has been systematically elucidated by Maximus the Confessor.<sup>13</sup>

In his *Ambiguum* 7, Maximus the Confessor writes that the act of bringing being out of non-being, which only a sovereign God can do, can only be understood in terms of a common “arche” (beginning) and a common “telos” (end) of being in God, and, therefore, as the source and the ultimate purpose of all being, the divine Logos is in the particular logoi of His creation (“logoi” is the plural form of “logos”). Moreover, in his *Ad Thalassium* 64, Maximus the Confessor adds that both creation and Scripture contain the fullness of the Logos in their logoi, and, therefore, they function together, and they are mirror images of one another (*ibid*, 167). However, in his *Ambiguum* 7, Maximus makes an important clarification: the particular logos of a creature is not a substance, and, therefore, it does not subsist in itself, but it only exists potentially in the crea-

tive divine Logos as a yet unmanifested possibility. Furthermore, in his *Ambiguum* 7, following Dionysius the Areopagite,<sup>14</sup> Maximus the Confessor names the logoi (of the beings and things that exist in the world) divine “wills” (Greek: “thelemata,” which is the plural form of “thelema”). Hence, God knows and treats the beings and things in the world as actualizations of His will, and He relates to them through love, and not according to any logical/natural necessity (since God’s mode of being is freedom).

According to Maximus the Confessor, the incarnation of the divine Logos in Jesus Christ reveals the “telos,” namely, the ultimate scope, of the cosmos. In his *Ad Thalassium* 60, Maximus the Confessor argues that “the Logos, by essence God, became a messenger of this plan when he became a man and . . . established himself as the innermost depth of the Father’s goodness while also displaying in himself the very goal for which his creatures manifestly received the beginning of their existence” (ibid, 125). Moreover, in his *Ambiguum* 7, Maximus the Confessor writes that the Logos of God, who is God, wills always and in all His creatures to accomplish the mystery of His embodiment (ibid, 60).

According to the Greek Church Fathers, apart from the levels of His divine essence and His divine hypostases, God exists also at the level of His divine energies, which disclose His mode of being. In other words, the will of God is manifested through the energies of God. From the aforementioned perspective, the uncreated energies of God should be differentiated from God’s creatures, or acts, which are created results of God’s uncreated energies.

Since the essence of the human being is created, the human being cannot be united with God at the level of God’s essence (in other words, the “essential union” between deity and humanity is ontologically impossible). The union between humanity and God at the level of God’s hypostases (namely, the “hypostatic union” between the divine and the human natures) took place only once, that is, in the case of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Logos of God, who is the incarnate channel of God’s love in

history. Therefore, apart from Jesus Christ, human beings cannot be united with God at the level of God’s hypostases, either. However, each human being can participate in God’s uncreated energies since, according to hesychasm, the human mind is the repository of God’s uncreated energies, and the Incarnation of the divine Logos restored human nature’s ability to carry the uncreated grace of the Holy Spirit, sent by the divine Nous in the name of the divine Logos (John 14:26). Therefore, according to the hesychasts’ theory of humanity’s deification, the human being can be deified without negating one’s humanity (human essence) since the union between humanity and deity takes place at the level of God’s uncreated energies (without calling for the negation of the human essence). In addition, according to the hesychasts, humanity’s participation in God’s uncreated energies, that is, the union between humanity and deity at the level of God’s uncreated energies, is the essence of pure theology and the kind of theoria that the Greek philosophers had been seeking before Christ.

### **The Distinctions between “Essence” and “Energies” and between the “Mind” and the “Intellect” according to Hesychasm**

The Greek Church Fathers in general and the hesychasts in particular emphasize that God alone is uncreated, and everything else, including the human soul, is created. In chapters 5 and 6 of his *Dialogue with Trypho*, Justin Philosopher and Martyr puts forward the following arguments: “if the world is begotten, souls also are necessarily begotten,” and, if the soul were life, “it would cause something else, and not itself, to live, even as motion would move something else than itself”; even though the soul lives, “it lives not as being life, but as the partaker of life . . . the soul partakes of life, since God wills it to live.” According to hesychasm, the human soul and the body are united into a psycho-somatic nexus, and the soul should be understood as the hypostatic (“personal”) carrier of the impersonal life-force,

namely, it is what makes a human being a hypostasis (or “person”).

In the first triad of his treatises *In Defense of the Holy Hesychasts*, Gregory Palamas<sup>15</sup> argues that the heart is the essence of the mind, and the mind is a power of the heart: “the heart is the secret chamber of the mind and the prime physical organ of mental power.” Additionally, in the same triad, he attacks the idea that the human being must drive one’s mind out of one’s body in order to attain spiritual visions as an erroneous belief, and he argues as follows: “We who carry as in vessels of clay, that is in our bodies, the light of the Father, in the person of Jesus Christ, in which we know the glory of the Holy Spirit—how can it dishonor our mind to dwell in the inner sanctuary of the body?” Furthermore, in the second triad of his treatises *In Defense of the Holy Hesychasts*, Gregory Palamas adds the following: “When spiritual joy comes to the body from the mind, it suffers no diminution by this communion with the body, but rather transfigures the body, spiritualizing it. For then, rejecting all evil desires of the flesh, it no longer weighs down the soul that rises up with it, the whole man becoming spirit.”

Hesychasm does not fight against the body, but it aims at liberating the body from the law of sin (specifically, from impersonal, uncontrolled impulses and instincts and from selfishness), and at establishing there the mind as an overseer. The hesychasts lay down laws for every power of the soul and for every member of the body: they dictate to the senses what they have to receive and in what measure, thus achieving self-mastery; they purify the desiring part of the soul through love; and they improve the intellectual part of the soul by eliminating everything that prevents the mind from soaring to God, thus achieving “nepsis.”

According to hesychasm, through its participation in the uncreated energies of God, the human soul can be deified, and, thus, it can be existentially fulfilled and filled with the uncreated light of God’s glory. In the language of ancient mystics, a soul that is a partaker of God’s uncreated energies is called a standing soul. Such a soul is truly immortal. On the oth-

er hand, a soul that is submerged in the lower and the animalistic nature cannot reach immortality, but it will instead perish with the animalistic part, as it is written in Ecclesiastes (3:19); this is the meaning of “spiritual death” (Romans 6:23; Colossians 2:13; Ephesians 2:1–3, 5:8; 1 John 5:12).

Gregory Palamas argues that, through the soul, God’s grace is extended throughout the body, and that God’s gifts to humanity are actualized through the body. According to Gregory Palamas, apathy does not consist in the deadening of the passionate part of the soul, but it consists in the re-orientation of the passionate part of the soul from evil to good. Instead of condemning and rejecting the passionate part of the soul, Gregory Palamas points out that we love through the passionate part of the soul, and, therefore, if we deaden the passionate part of the soul, we are unable to fulfill Christ’s Law, which is to love God and one’s fellow humans (Mark 12:28–31).

It is very important to clarify that, for the hesychasts, the three aspects of the human soul, which are mentioned in the fourth book of Plato’s *Republic*—namely, the appetitive aspect of the soul (which is responsible for the human being’s base desires), the high-spirited, or hot-blooded, aspect of the soul (namely, the part of us that loves to face and overcome great challenges, and that loves victory, winning, challenge, and honor), and the rational aspect of the soul—are not organic, or essential parts of the soul, but they are only consequences of the human being’s exercise of free will. Thus, according to hesychasm, the human being is responsible for one’s psychological contents and states, and the essence of “psychological illness” consists in the dispersion of humanity’s mental energy upon sensibilia (the sensible realm) and in an injury to the sociality of the human soul (which underpins the communion between humanity and God). From the perspective of hesychasm, the phrase “sociality of the human soul” refers to the soul’s receptiveness to God’s uncreated grace and the soul’s openness to one’s fellow humans. Therefore, as I explain in my book *The Meaning of Being Illuminati*, hesychastic psychotherapy is inextricably linked to a radical and, indeed, liberat-

ing form of unselfishness and mental nobility. In my aforementioned book, I maintain that, “by losing the link between God’s Spirit and the human mind, that is, by losing the power of participating in God, human life and human behavior are determined by the egocentric powers of self-gratification and self-vindication, whose nature may be either rational or emotional,” and I explain why neither emotion nor reason (“ratio”) has the power of communion.<sup>16</sup>

Hesychasm emphasizes that the mind does not have any organs, but it is an image of God, and, therefore, it is not essentially determined to succumb to corporeal passions, nor is it essentially attracted to the sensible realm. Whereas the intellect (the rational faculty of the soul), desire, and passion are powers of the soul, and are natural channels of knowledge, the mind is the inner region of supra-natural wisdom.

According to the hesychasts, the intellect is naturally oriented towards and concerned with the world of the senses, and it organizes sense-data into a rational whole, whereas the mind is naturally oriented towards and concerned with the divine Logos. Hence, the mind should not be mingled with the intellect. As a result of the hesychasts’ distinction between the mind and the intellect, it is the mind, and not the intellect, that must be detached from the world of the senses. The intellect cannot function without processing sense-data, and, therefore, if the intellect is detached from the world of the senses, it enters into a sleep state, such as the yogic sleep, which is irrelevant to the hesychasts’ notion of mental stillness. According to the terminology of hesychasm, the intellect is the rational faculty (“power”) of the human soul, whereas the mind (Greek: “nous”) is the vessel or repository of God’s uncreated energies (uncreated grace) within the human being.

The intellect, being concerned with sense-data and their rational organization, does not have free will. The mind alone has free will, since it loves and seeks the supra-rational, absolute good (the good-in-itself), namely, it seeks to participate in the deity. It is exactly due to the distinction between the mind and the intellect that hesychasm leads to the conclusion that the human soul is something more than the nerv-

ous system. The mind can be united with the supra-rational, absolute good only if it is cleansed from the passions of the senses, and this can be achieved through repentance, namely, through the return of the mind to the heart. By being detached from the world of the senses and by returning to the heart, where it remains exclusively oriented towards the divine Logos, the mind experiences God’s freedom, because then it is capable of making passionless choices, namely, choices that are independent from natural determinism.

## Conclusion

This study has examined a mystical aspect and tradition of Orthodox Christianity. In particular, this study has provided a synopsis of the spiritual content of hesychasm. In this way, it paves a new way for a spiritually fruitful and significant rediscovery of the relationship between “Orthodoxy” and “Gnosticism,” and even between “Orthodoxy” and “Heresy,” through and within the context of a new research program of humanity’s illumination, which I have articulated and called “Ur-Illuminism.” I have coined the term “Ur-Illuminati” in order to refer to an ontologically grounded conception of illumination, specifically, to one that is underpinned by Plato’s theory of ideas and the hesychasts’ teachings about humanity’s real (that is, ontological) deification. Thus, in order to distinguish my conception of illumination/Illuminism from other conceptions of illumination/illuminism, I have used the term “Ur,” which denotes that something/someone embodies the basic or essentially deepest qualities of a particular class or type. As I have argued in this study, the essentially deepest quality of humanity’s illumination is humanity’s participation in God’s uncreated energies, namely, humanity’s deification.

---

<sup>1</sup> Armunn Righ, “The Gospel of the Living,” The Aeon Byte Gnostic Radio; online at: <https://thegodabovegod.cp/the-gospeal-of-the-living> (Last accessed June 9, 2019).

<sup>2</sup> Miguel Conner, “A Summary of Gnosticism Both Aeons and Archons Agree On,” The Aeon Byte Gnostic Radio; online at:

- <https://thegodabovegod.com/a-summary-of-gnosticism-both-aeons-and-archons-agree-on/> (Last accessed July 24, 2018).
- <sup>3</sup> In his *Republic* (443d–e), Plato writes that the just person has cured one’s soul by keeping the three elements (namely, reason, the emotions, and the appetites) that make up one’s inward self “in tune, like the notes of a scale,” by setting one’s house to rights, by attaining “self-mastery and order,” and by living “on good terms with oneself,” thus bounding “these elements into a disciplined and harmonious whole.” Moreover, in his *Phaedo* (67b), Plato argues that psychic cleansing is a key presupposition of our transformation into the real good, because “it cannot be that the impure attain the pure.” Hence, according to Plato, the knowledge of the real good presupposes not only the ability to give an account, but also a psychic cleansing or cure.
- <sup>4</sup> See: Miguel Conner, *Voices of Gnosticism*, Dublin: Bardic Press, 2011; Miguel Conner, *Other Voices of Gnosticism*, Dublin: Bardic Press, 2016.
- <sup>5</sup> In Greek, the word “philokalia” means love of the beautiful and good.
- <sup>6</sup> Nicolas Laos, Interview by Miguel Conner, The Aeon Byte Gnostic Radio; online: <https://thegodabovegod.com/the-quest-for-inner-illumination/> (Last accessed August 26, 2019).
- <sup>7</sup> See: Nicolas Laos, *The Meaning of Being Illuminati* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019), 2.2.2.
- <sup>8</sup> “Kallistos Katafygiotis” is the pen name of an anonymous hesychast. Upon ordination, many hesychasts were given the name “Kallistos.”
- <sup>9</sup> Nicolas Laos, Interview by Ryan Burns, HEROparanormal podcast; online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xP0hLwF e1Yg> (Last accessed August 23, 2019).
- <sup>10</sup> Panagiotes K. Chrestou, “Neohellenic Theology at the Crossroads,” *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, vol. XXVIII, 1983, 39–54.
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, p. 51.
- <sup>12</sup> Quoted in: Irene Masing-Delic, *Exotic Moscow under Western Eyes* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2009), 99; Dostoevsky as quoted in: Boris Vysheslavtsev, “Russkaia stikhiia u Dostoevskogo,” in *F. M. Dostoevskii 1881–100–1981* (London: Overseas Publications Interchange Limited, 1981), 119.
- <sup>13</sup> Initially, Maximus the Confessor was an aide to the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius. However, he gave up his career as a senior civil servant in order to become a monk. He moved to Carthage, where he studied Greek philosophy and especially Neoplatonism, and he became a prominent author
- <sup>14</sup> Dionysius the Areopagite was a judge of the Areopagus who, as related in the Acts of the Apostles (17:34), was converted to Christianity by the preaching of the Apostle Paul during the Areopagus Sermon. According to Dionysius of Corinth (Bishop of Corinth; died in 171 A.D.), quoted by the Roman historian and exegete Eusebius of Caesarea, Dionysius the Areopagite then became the first Bishop of Athens. In the early sixth century A.D., a series of famous writings, employing Neoplatonic and Gnostic language to elucidate Christian theology, was ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite
- <sup>15</sup> For a systematic study of Gregory Palamas’s theology and anthropology, see: Nicolas Laos, *The Meaning of Being Illuminati* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019), 2.2.
- <sup>16</sup> Laos, *The Meaning of Being Illuminati*, 95.



# The Fifth-Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease

Zachary F. Lansdowne

## Abstract

The seven rays denote seven primary differentiations of energy, and doctrines on the seven rays have been expounded by various theosophical writers. Alice Bailey, in her book *Esoteric Healing*, presents seven symbolic stanzas that portray “The Seven Ray Causes of Inharmony and Disease,” but with very little explanation. She acknowledges that these stanzas are “abstruse and difficult,” but says that their comprehension leads to “the isolation of the seven psychological causes of disease, inherent in the substance of all forms in this world cycle.” This series of articles elucidates the practical significance of these seven stanzas. The present article, which is the seventh and last in the series, clarifies the fifth-ray stanza by assembling related quotations from the writings of Bailey and others. As this article shows, the cleavage-making characteristic of fifth-ray energy is disadvantageous during a person’s early stage of development, because of its limiting and hindering effects; but the same characteristic becomes advantageous during a later stage, because of its help in achieving higher states of consciousness.

## The Seven Rays

The *seven rays* are mentioned in both the ancient Hindu *Rig Veda* and modern Theosophy,<sup>1</sup> and the following definition is often used: “A ray is but a name for a particular force or type of energy, with the emphasis upon the quality which that force exhibits and not upon the form aspect which it creates.”<sup>2</sup> Alice Bailey (1880 – 1949), a writer in the theosophical tradition, says, “Every unit of the human race is on some one of the seven rays,”<sup>3</sup> so the seven rays provide a way of characterizing human beings according to the qualities that they exhibit. She also says, “We must bear in mind that the ... synthetic characteristic of each of the rays is denoted by the ray name,”<sup>4</sup> and gives the following ray names:

Ray I—Will or Power

Ray II—Love-Wisdom

Ray III—Active Intelligence or Adaptability

Ray IV—Harmony, Beauty, Art

Ray V—Concrete Knowledge or Science

Ray VI—Devotion or Idealism

Ray VII—Ceremonial Order or Magic.<sup>5</sup>

Bailey provides this definition, “When we speak of ray energy we are in reality considering the quality and the will-purpose aspect of a certain great Life to Whom we give the name ‘Lord of a Ray.’”<sup>6</sup> She considers the Lords of the Seven Rays to be “the seven Spirits who are before His throne,” as rendered in Revelation 1:4,<sup>7</sup> and gives this analysis:

The seven Spirits, we are told in the Scriptures of the world, are “before the Throne of God”; this signifies that They are not yet in a position to mount the Throne, symbolically speaking, owing to the fact that They have not yet achieved complete divine expression.<sup>8</sup>

Bailey concludes that the Lords of the Seven Rays must be imperfect Gods, so the seven rays, which are their emanations, must also be imperfect:

It will be apparent to you that these streams of force, emanating from the Lords of the

## About the Author

**Zachary F. Lansdowne, Ph.D.**, who served as President of the Theosophical Society in Boston, has been a frequent contributor to *The Esoteric Quarterly*. His book *The Revelation of Saint John*, which provides a verse-by-verse analysis of the entire *Revelation*, was reviewed in the Fall 2006 issue. He can be reached at: [zflansdowne@gmail.com](mailto:zflansdowne@gmail.com).



Seven Rays, are coloured, therefore, and “tainted”—if I may use such a word—by the limitations of these same great Beings; They are Gods, from our point of view, but in reality, Gods in the making, even though much nearer solar divinity than the most advanced human being is near to planetary divinity. They are the “imperfect Gods” spoken of in *The Secret Doctrine* and are the planetary Logoi of the sacred and non-sacred planets.<sup>9</sup>

Helena Blavatsky (1831 – 1891), a founder of the Theosophical Society, expresses a similar notion:

The millions upon millions of imperfect works found in Nature testify loudly that they are the products of finite, conditioned beings—though the latter were and are Dhyani-Chohans, Archangels, or whatever else they may be named. In short, these imperfect works are the unfinished production of evolution, under the guidance of the imperfect Gods.<sup>10</sup>

Blavatsky also writes, “There are seven chief groups of such Dhyani Chohans, which groups will be found and recognised in every religion, for they are the primeval SEVEN Rays,”<sup>11</sup> so her preceding quotation has this implication: the millions of imperfect works found in nature testify loudly to the imperfection of the seven rays.

According to these statements from Bailey and Blavatsky, the Lords of the Seven Rays are imperfect Gods, and every human being shares in their imperfection by being on some one of the seven rays. Nevertheless, these stated relationships between humans and Lords are not yet practical, because they are too abstract and too theoretical. Before we can apply such relationships in a practical way to transform our daily lives, we need to identify specific human imperfections that reflect the imperfection of each Lord of a Ray and then observe their occurrence within us. How can these imperfections be identified and observed?

## The Seven Stanzas

Bailey’s book *Esoteric Healing* addresses the various ways that the topic of healing is related to the seven rays. In its chapter on karmic liabilities, this book gives seven symbolic stanzas, one for each ray, that portray “The Seven Ray Causes of Inharmony and Disease.”<sup>12</sup> Bailey introduces these stanzas with the following comment:

If the great informing Lives of the planets within our solar system are imperfect, the effect of this imperfection must inevitably affect Their planetary creations, Their bodies of manifestation, and thus introduce a karmic condition over which the individual human being has absolutely no control, but within which he moves and which he shares. It is obviously impossible for me to elucidate this theme. All I can do or am permitted to do is to give you seven stanzas from one of the most ancient volumes in the world; it deals with the seven ray causes of imperfections in our planetary manifestations.<sup>13</sup>

She also describes the benefits of comprehending these stanzas:

The comprehension of the seven stanzas which I now propose to give you will lead eventually to the isolation of the seven psychological causes of disease, inherent in the substance of all forms in this world cycle, because all forms are infused with the life energy of the “imperfect Gods.”<sup>14</sup>

The purpose of this series of articles is to explain these stanzas. Even though *Esoteric Healing* was first published in 1953, and even though its seven stanzas are said to embody revelatory information, no publicized effort seems to have been made, prior to this series of articles, to explain any of these stanzas. A reason for this absence is that each stanza consists of very enigmatic sentences. Bailey herself acknowledges, “These are abstruse and difficult concepts, but they should be pondered upon, and deep reflection will lead to under-

standing.”<sup>15</sup> The six preceding articles in this series provide explanations of the third-ray,<sup>16</sup> sixth-ray,<sup>17</sup> second-ray,<sup>18</sup> fourth-ray,<sup>19</sup> seventh-ray,<sup>20</sup> and first-ray stanzas.<sup>21</sup>

The present article is the final one in the series, and it considers the fifth-ray stanza, which consists of nine symbolic sentences:

The Great One arose in His wrath and separated Himself. He swept aside the great dualities and saw primarily the field of multiplicity. He produced cleavage on every hand. He wrought with potent thought for separative action. He established barriers with joy. He brooked no understanding; He knew no unity, for He was cold, austere, ascetic and forever cruel. He stood between the tender, loving centre of all lives and the outer court of writhing, living men. Yet He stood not at the midway point, and naught He did sufficed to heal the breach. He widened all cleavages, erected barriers, and sought to make still wider gaps.<sup>22</sup>

Bailey’s entire commentary on the fifth-ray stanza is as follows:

It has been most difficult to describe the nature of the imperfection of the energy of the Lord of the fifth ray. In the activity of this energy which demonstrates primarily upon the fifth or mental plane will be found eventually the source of many psychological disorders and mental trouble. Cleavage is the outstanding characteristic—cleavage within the individual or between the individual and his group, rendering him anti-social. I have dealt with this in an earlier part of this treatise and need not further enlarge upon the difficulties here. Other results are certain forms of insanities, brain lesions and those gaps in the relation of the physical body to the subtle bodies which show as imbecilities and psychological troubles. Another form of disease, emerging as a result of this fifth ray force is migraine, which is caused by a lack of relationship between the energy around the pineal gland and that around the pituitary body.<sup>23</sup>

Let us note that Bailey’s commentary appears as brief and enigmatic as the stanza that it purports to explain, so there is a need for a more clarifying explanation.

## The Fifth-Ray Stanza

The purpose of this article is to clarify the practical significance of the fifth-ray stanza by assembling related quotations from the writings of Bailey and others. Each sentence in the stanza is considered separately and is repeated in bold print.

### ***1. The Great One arose in His wrath and separated Himself.***

In the fifth-ray stanza’s first sentence, what does “the Great One” denote? The Lords of the Seven Rays are sometimes called “the seven great Lords,”<sup>24</sup> so the straightforward meaning of “the Great One” is that it denotes the Lord of the Fifth Ray. With this meaning, however, the first sentence would depict events in the macrocosmic world that seem to have little practical significance for the mundane world of human beings. Bailey relates these two worlds by regarding the Lords of the Seven Rays as “the Prototypes of man.”<sup>25</sup> Accordingly, the alternative meaning of “the Great One” is that it denotes the people who are on the fifth ray, because such people reflect their prototype, namely, the great Lord of that ray.

This alternative meaning may seem unusual, but it is consistent with two biblical themes: one’s name indicates one’s nature;<sup>26</sup> and one is influenced by one’s line of descent.<sup>27</sup> For example, in Genesis 32:28, the change in the patriarch’s name from Jacob to Israel indicates the change in his nature: “Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed.” Israel is also the name of Jacob’s descendants (Joshua 3:17, 7:25). James Hastings, in *A Dictionary of the Bible*, is impressed by the remarkable way in which Jacob is the prototype of his descendants:

The patriarchs are ... idealized in another direction, in common with many of the other patriarchal figures in Genesis, by being

invested with the characteristics which afterwards marked the tribes descended, or reputed to be descended, from them ... But, however that may be, it is impossible not to be impressed by the remarkable manner in which Jacob, both in the brighter and in the darker aspects of his character, is the prototype of his descendants.<sup>28</sup>

Consequently, as narrated in the Bible, Israel denotes the people who descend from and thereby reflect the patriarch known as Israel. Similarly, with the alternative meaning, “the Great One” denotes the people who are on the fifth ray and thereby reflect the Great One known as the Lord of the Fifth Ray. In either case, the progenitor is the prototype of the ensuing people, and a designation used for the progenitor is also used for the people themselves. Thus, even though the alternative meaning of “the Great One” may seem unusual, it resembles what can be found in biblical accounts. In what follows, we employ this alternative meaning, because our commentary shows that it yields practical significances that are consistent across all sentences of the stanza.

Who are the people on the fifth ray? Bailey gives this explanation:

This is the ray of science and of research. The man on this ray will possess keen intellect, great accuracy in detail, and will make unwearied efforts to trace the smallest fact to its source, and to verify every theory. He will generally be extremely truthful, full of lucid explanation of facts, though sometimes pedantic and wearisome from his insistence on trivial and unnecessary verbal minutiae. He will be orderly, punctual, business-like, disliking to receive favours or flattery.<sup>29</sup>

The stanza’s first sentence, “The Great One arose in His wrath and separated Himself,” relates wrath, or fierce anger, to separation. In fact, wrath is related to two kinds of separation. The first kind is what psychology calls *projection*. Todd Feinberg, a clinical professor of psychiatry and neurology, defines it as follows:

In psychoanalytic terms, projection is an unconscious process wherein unacceptable thoughts, feelings, or motivations are *rejected* and *projected* outside of the self, typically onto other persons. In this fashion, one’s own thoughts and feelings do not become conscious self-attributes, but are experienced as aspects of the external world.<sup>30</sup>

In other words, by rejecting and projecting unacceptable qualities, one mentally separates oneself from those qualities. Bailey indicates that projection is a problem faced by disciples: “An individual disciple ... knows too that at present they [other disciples] cannot help but see in him and even in their Master the very qualities which are dominating them. For, my brother, we see in others what is in us, even when it is not there at all or to the same extent.”<sup>31</sup>

What is the relationship between projection and anger? *A Course in Miracles (ACIM)*, a modern system of spiritual psychology that has gained wide acceptance in the esoteric community,<sup>32</sup> gives this answer:

Projection and attack are inevitably related, because projection is always a means of justifying attack. Anger without projection is impossible. The ego uses projection only to destroy your perception of both yourself and your brothers. The process begins by excluding something that exists in you but which you do not want, and leads directly to excluding you from your brothers.<sup>33</sup>

The second kind of separation is emotional isolation. David Wilson, in *Anger Management for Christians*, describes it in this way:

People will not like you when you are angry. Your anger does not lend itself to love and it does not cause people to respect you. If you use your anger and get your way then it is not out of respect that people give in. Instead, they submit to you to appease your anger. Therefore, such submission is not based on love, or even what is right or wrong. Instead, that submission is based on fear. If you look into the eyes of your

spouse, your children, your co-workers, your neighbors, and all of the other people you are having conflict with you will not see love or respect, you will see fear ... I want you to realize that your unmanaged anger will only serve to isolate you from the very people you love and care about.<sup>34</sup>

A *vice* is “a failing or imperfection in character,” whereas a *virtue* is “the quality or practice of moral excellence or righteousness.”<sup>35</sup> Bailey lists “Unforgiving temper,” “Mental separation,” and “Intensification of the power to isolate” as characteristic fifth-ray vices.<sup>36</sup> In the first sentence, “wrath” illustrates “Unforgiving temper”; projection, which is the first kind of separation, illustrates “Mental separation”; and emotional isolation, which is the second kind of separation, illustrates “Intensification of the power to isolate.” Bailey also mentions “the transmutation of what you term vices, into virtues,”<sup>37</sup> so the first sentence’s three characteristic vices are transmuted eventually into virtues, indicating that this sentence corresponds to an early stage of development for fifth-ray people.

Thus, the first sentence is given this meaning: *During an early stage in their development, fifth-ray people arise in their wrath and separate themselves in two ways: first, they project their negative qualities onto other people, thereby justifying their attack on them; and second, they attack them, thereby emotionally isolating themselves from them.*

## ***2. He swept aside the great dualities and saw primarily the field of multiplicity.***

Before considering this sentence, it is helpful to introduce some additional terminology. According to Theosophy, the planetary life consists of seven worlds that are often called “planes” and have the following names: 1) lo-gic; 2) monadic; 3) spiritual; 4) intuitional; 5) mental; 6) emotional; and 7) physical.<sup>38</sup> These planes are regarded as being arranged metaphorically in a higher and lower manner, so that the physical plane is the lowest plane.

*Pairs of opposites* can be classified by whether they are vertical or horizontal.<sup>39</sup> A *great duality*, which is mentioned in the stanza’s second sentence, is a vertical pair of opposites, be-

cause its contrasting poles are on different planes. Bailey gives these examples: “spirit and matter, life and form, the self and the not-self.”<sup>40</sup> The Apostle Paul, in 2 Corinthians 5:4, gives another example:

For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life.

In this case, the vertical duality is between “life” and “what is mortal,” the latter being a dying material form.

A *lesser duality*, which is used in later sentences, is a horizontal pair of opposites, because its contrasting poles are on the same plane. For example, a mental duality is between ignorance and knowledge; and an emotional duality is between asceticism and self-indulgence.

The second sentence’s initial phrase says, “He swept aside the great dualities,” but how is that done? By living on the physical plane, human beings are aware of the lower poles of the great dualities, such as matter, multiplicity, and form. They need the higher illumination, however, to be aware of the higher poles, such as spirit, unity, and life. Bailey describes a related feature of the mental body, or concrete mind:

By its intense activity and stimulated action it [the concrete mind] hinders the downflow of inspiration from on high. It acts as a dark curtain that shuts out the higher illumination. Only through steadiness and a stable restfulness can that illumination percolate, via the higher bodies, to the physical brain and so be available for practical service.<sup>41</sup>

Accordingly, the concrete mind’s intense activity and stimulated action, which are depicted in the first sentence, act as “a dark curtain that shuts out the higher illumination.” Blavatsky, in *The Voice of the Silence*, expresses the same idea: “The Mind is the great slayer of the real.”<sup>42</sup> Thus, by shutting out the higher illumination, fifth-ray people sweep aside any awareness of the great vertical dualities.

What does this lack of awareness imply? Bailey writes:

Man has to learn through experience and pain the fact of the duality of all existence. Having thus learnt, he chooses that which concerns the fully conscious spirit aspect of divinity, and learns to centre himself in that aspect.<sup>43</sup>

Thus, the second sentence's initial phrase has this meaning: By shutting out the higher illumination through their intense mental activity, they sweep aside any awareness of the great vertical dualities, and are unable to choose that which concerns the higher poles of these dualities.

Bailey describes a related fifth-ray vice: "Intense materialism and temporarily the negation of Deity."<sup>44</sup> But what is "intense materialism"? *Random House Webster's Dictionary* provides two definitions of materialism:

1. Preoccupation with or emphasis on material objects, comforts, and considerations, as opposed to spiritual or intellectual values.
2. The philosophical theory that regards matter as constituting the universe, and all phenomena, including those of mind, as due to material agencies.<sup>45</sup>

The first definition is for what is called "consumer materialism"; the second definition is for what is called "philosophical materialism." Paul Moser and John Trout, in *Contemporary Materialism*, report that contemporary philosophers and scientists typically adopt the theory of philosophical materialism:

Materialism, put broadly, affirms that all phenomena are physical. Questions about materialism, or "physicalism," currently guide work in various areas of philosophy: for example, metaphysics, philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, and theory of value. Materialism is now the dominant systematic ontology among philosophers and scientists, and there are currently no established alternative ontological views competing with it. As a result, typical theoretical work in philosophy and the sciences is constrained, implicitly or explicitly, by various conceptions of what materialism entails.<sup>46</sup>

Given Bailey's earlier explanation that the fifth ray is "the ray of science and of research," we infer that "intense materialism"—as a fifth-ray characteristic—is philosophical materialism.

The second sentence's final phrase states: "and saw primarily the field of multiplicity." Put differently, the portrayed people are primarily occupied with the lower poles of the great dualities, so that they are primarily, in Bailey's words, "occupied with the matter aspect in its multiplicity of forms."<sup>47</sup> Moreover, given that the portrayed people are on the fifth ray, they characteristically adopt the theory of philosophical materialism.

In summary, the second sentence has this overall meaning: *By shutting out the higher illumination through their intense mental activity, they sweep aside any awareness of the great vertical dualities—such as between spirit and matter, unity and multiplicity, or life and form—and are unable to choose that which concerns the higher poles of these dualities. Instead, they are primarily occupied with the matter aspect in its multiplicity of forms, and adopt the theory of philosophical materialism, which regards all reality as material or physical.*

### **3. He produced cleavage on every hand.**

Before considering this sentence, it is helpful to introduce additional terminology. Every human being has both a *lower self* and a *higher self*. The lower self is the *personality*, and it consists of the mental, emotional, and physical bodies. The higher self is the *soul*, and its characteristics are described later.<sup>48</sup>

In the stanza's third sentence, *on every hand* means "on all sides; in all directions,"<sup>49</sup> so the sentence indicates that fifth-ray people produce many kinds of cleavage. Why do they do so? Bailey writes, "It is the mind which separates and divides,"<sup>50</sup> and "this mental body must be guided into being an instrument of illumination."<sup>51</sup> Accordingly, by utilizing their mental body—with its discriminating and analyzing faculty—without the higher illumination, they separate themselves from many factors. Let us identify those factors by considering seven

qualities that Bailey lists as additional vices characterizing fifth-ray people:

- a. The implications of wrong emphasis.
- b. Mental devotion to form and form activity.
- c. The power to rationalise and destroy.
- d. Criticism.
- e. Distorted views of truth.
- f. Theology.
- g. The energy of ignorance.<sup>52</sup>

a. “The implications of wrong emphasis.” Bailey illustrates this vice by giving related instruction:

It is not the evil rampant in the world today which is hindering the revelation and hindering the unfoldment of the spiritual life. That evil is the result of the misapprehension and the wrong orientation of the human mind, of the emphasis upon material things which ages of competitive activity have brought about.<sup>53</sup>

Thus, the wrong emphasis of the human mind is “the emphasis upon material things,” so this vice is the direct result of the stanza’s second sentence. Moreover, the implications of the wrong emphasis include “hindering the revelation and hindering the unfoldment of the spiritual life.” Thus, through their wrong emphasis, the portrayed people separate themselves from the revelation of divine truth and the unfoldment of their spiritual life.

b. “Mental devotion to form and form activity.” This vice is another direct result of the stanza’s second sentence. Bailey writes,

We are so apt always to think in terms of form and form activity, that it seems necessary again and again to reiterate the necessity for thinking in terms of consciousness and awareness, leading to an eventual realization.<sup>54</sup>

Thus, through their mental devotion to form and form activity, the portrayed people separate themselves from thinking in terms of consciousness and awareness.

c. “The power to rationalise and destroy.” Bailey illustrates this vice by giving related instruction to a fifth-ray student:

First, your ... soul ray focusses itself in and through your fifth ray mental body. This ... has given you your defined mental focus, your critical attitude and your isolation, relatively speaking. It is this combination which has always enabled you to rationalise yourself into a confidence in the rightness of your decisions and into a surety that your particular life choices and your preferred circumstances are correct and justified.<sup>55</sup>

The *Collins English Dictionary* provides this definition: “*Self-deception* involves allowing yourself to believe something about yourself that is not true, because the truth is more unpleasant.”<sup>56</sup> Accordingly, “the power to rationalise and destroy” is the power to deceive oneself and destroy truth. Through their use of this power, the portrayed people separate themselves from their own truthful thinking about themselves.

d. “Criticism.” Bailey illustrates this vice by giving related instruction to a fifth-ray student:

What, therefore, constitutes your major difficulty, for you are not satisfied yourself with your progress, and rightly so? The main reason lies in your fifth ray personality, wherein the emphasis is laid upon the critical, analytical mind. This leads you to watch and criticise and to argue with yourself and with circumstances ... It is yourself, however, whom you mainly criticise, but this can be as wrong and as unnecessary as criticising others.<sup>57</sup>

Accordingly, this student is mainly involved with self-criticism, for which Wikipedia gives this description:

*Self-criticism* involves how an individual evaluates oneself. Self-criticism in psychology is typically studied and discussed as a negative personality trait in which a person has a disrupted self-identity. The opposite of self-criticism would be someone who has a coherent, comprehensive, and generally positive self-identity.<sup>58</sup>

Thus, through their criticism of themselves, the portrayed people separate themselves from a generally positive self-identity.

e. “Distorted views of truth.” Bailey describes how a partial view distorts and misinterprets ideas:

The idea, a vital entity or a germ of living potency, is seen through the medium of a partial view, distorted through the inadequacy of the mental equipment, and frequently stepped down into futility. The mechanism for right understanding is lacking, and though the man may be giving his highest and his best, and though he may be able in some measure to hold his mind steady in the light, yet what he is offering to the idea is but a poor thing at the best. This leads to illusion through misinterpretation.<sup>59</sup>

Thus, through their distorted mental views, the portrayed people separate themselves from right understanding of ideas.

f. “Theology.” Bailey considers that theology exemplifies dogmatic assertions,<sup>60</sup> and that being dogmatic leads to being separative:

The one point you should remember is that the fifth ray is a crystallising factor and ... could tend to make you dogmatic and consequently separative.<sup>61</sup>

Thus, through their theology, whether a religious creed or a systematic ontology, the portrayed people separate themselves from whomever disagrees with their dogmatic assertions.

g. “The energy of ignorance.” Blavatsky defines the Sanskrit word *avidya* as “Ignorance which proceeds from, and is produced by the illusion of the Senses.”<sup>62</sup> Bailey similarly mentions, “*Ignorance* or *avidya*, the result of this wrong identification [with form] and at the same time the cause of it.”<sup>63</sup> The earlier cleavages entail wrong identification with form, so these cleavages produce ignorance and at the same time are the result of it. Bailey also says,

Every time, however, that “thoughts contrary to yoga” are knowingly entertained, the self submerges itself still more in the illusory world and adds to the veil of ignorance.<sup>64</sup>

Making any of the earlier cleavages entails “thoughts contrary to yoga,” so a person making such an effort adds to his or her “veil of

ignorance,” which further obscures his or her perception of reality. Thus, the “veil of ignorance” is a kind of energy with which a person interacts, so it is taken as denoting the final listed vice: “The energy of ignorance.”

The notion of the “veil of ignorance” can be found in the Indian philosophy of Vedanta. For example, Swami Vivekananda (1863 – 1902), a key figure in the introduction of Vedanta to the Western world, writes:

Here [in a longing for spiritual freedom] we see the divine dimly shining through the veil of ignorance. The veil is very dense at first and the light may be almost obscured, but it is there, ever pure and undimmed—the radiant fire of freedom and perfection.<sup>65</sup>

Thus, Vivekananda agrees that the “veil of ignorance” varies in density and obscures the ever-present divine light, which is sometimes denoted with the Sanskrit term *Atman*. Moreover, the Vedanta Society of Southern California states:

Like a diamond buried in mud, the *Atman* shines within us, yet its presence remains obscured, its shining purity masked by countless layers of ignorance: wrong identification, incorrect knowledge, misguided perceptions. It is important to emphasize that we are not trying to become something other than what we already are. We are not trying to become pure; we are pure. We are not trying to become perfect; we are perfect already. That is our real nature. Acting in accordance with our real nature—acting nobly, truthfully, kindly—tears away the veil of ignorance that hides the truth of reality.<sup>66</sup>

Accordingly, the “veil of ignorance” hides the truth, or knowledge, of the divine reality and consists of these layers of ignorance: “wrong identification, incorrect knowledge, misguided perceptions.”

The notion of the “veil of ignorance” can also be found in the Bible. Paul envisions the unbelieving mind as having a veil over it (2 Corinthians 3:12-15), and says, “whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away” (2 Corinthians 3:16). He describes how this veil



keeps people ignorant of spiritual truth (2 Corinthians 4:3–4):

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Here, ignorance, or avidya, is “the god of this world”; the veil of ignorance is formed when “the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving”; and the effect of this veil is “that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ.” In contrast, Paul describes what people see when this veil is removed (2 Corinthians 3:18):

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

In summary, the preceding analysis clarifies the meaning of seven characteristic fifth-ray vices. Based on this analysis, the stanza’s third sentence, “He produced cleavage on every hand,” is explained through accumulating the preceding meanings: *By utilizing their mental body—with its discriminating and analyzing faculty—without the higher illumination, they separate themselves from the following factors: the revelation of divine truth and the unfoldment of their spiritual life; thinking in terms of consciousness and awareness; their own truthful thinking about themselves; a generally positive self-identity; right understanding of ideas; and whomever disagrees with their dogmatic assertions. Their making any of these cleavages adds to their veil of ignorance and at the same time is the result of it.*

In her earlier commentary on the fifth-ray stanza, Bailey says in part:

In the activity of this energy which demonstrates primarily upon the fifth or mental plane will be found eventually the source of

*It has been most difficult to describe the nature of the imperfection of the energy of the Lord of the fifth ray. In the activity of this energy which demonstrates primarily upon the fifth or mental plane will be found eventually the source of many psychological disorders and mental trouble. Cleavage is the outstanding characteristic...*

many psychological disorders and mental trouble. Cleavage is the outstanding characteristic—cleavage within the individual or between the individual and his group, rendering him anti-social.

In the preceding analysis, “cleavage within the individual” is illustrated by these vices: The implications of wrong emphasis; Mental devotion to form and form activity; The power to rationalise and destroy; Criticism; and

Distorted views of truth. In addition, “cleavage ... between the individual and his group” is illustrated by this vice: Theology.

**4. He wrought with potent thought for separative action.**

Ignorance and knowledge constitute a pair of opposites on the mental plane. During the stage of the stanza’s third sentence, fifth-ray people are at the pole of ignorance, because they live behind the “veil of ignorance.” Bailey speaks of “the swing, consciously registered, between the pairs of opposites,”<sup>67</sup> so these people eventually acquire the fifth-ray characteristic that Bailey describes as “Desire for knowledge”<sup>68</sup> and thereby swing towards the opposite pole. The fourth sentence depicts such a swing.

Bailey writes, “For the fifth ray, the method of approaching the Path is by scientific research, pushed to ultimate conclusions, and by the acceptance of the inferences which follow these.”<sup>69</sup> The stanza’s fourth sentence is interpreted as depicting this fifth-ray method of approaching the spiritual path. This method implements in an orderly manner the fifth-ray

desire for knowledge. Moreover, the adjective *orderly* is also a fifth-ray characteristic.<sup>70</sup> Accordingly, “potent thought” in the fourth sentence denotes *scientific research*, but what is the meaning of “separative action”?

As shown in the earlier commentary for the stanza’s second sentence, the assumption of philosophical materialism underlies much of contemporary science. Let us consider two other key assumptions: *empiricism*, which is the “theory that all knowledge is based on experience derived from the senses”,<sup>71</sup> and *reductionism*, which is the “theory that all complex systems can be completely understood in terms of their components.”<sup>72</sup> As Wikipedia explains, these two assumptions also underlie much of contemporary science:

In science, empirical evidence is required for a hypothesis to gain acceptance in the scientific community. Normally, this validation is achieved by the scientific method of forming a hypothesis, experimental design, peer review, reproduction of results, conference presentation, and journal publication.<sup>73</sup>

Reductionist thinking and methods form the basis for many of the well-developed topics of modern science, including much of physics, chemistry and cell biology. Classical mechanics in particular is seen as a reductionist framework, and statistical mechanics can be considered as a reconciliation of macroscopic thermodynamic laws with the reductionist method of explaining macroscopic properties in terms of microscopic components.<sup>74</sup>

These three assumptions are interrelated. For example, David Armstrong, an Australian philosopher, notes, “Since contemporary if not past Materialism claims to spring out of scientific results and plausible speculations, it is committed to Empiricism.”<sup>75</sup> Jon Mills, a Canadian philosopher and clinical psychologist, also notes: “Materialists, on the other hand, are dogmatic in their insistence that all mental events are ultimately reducible to physical events or brain states in the organism. Thus, physical reductionism is the *sine qua non* of materialism.”<sup>76</sup>

Philosophical materialism, however, is a separative assumption, because it separates a researcher from important areas of research. Mario Beauregard, Gary Schwartz, and Lisa Miller, in “Manifesto for a Post-Materialist Science,” describe some of those areas:

Scientific methods based upon materialistic philosophy have been highly successful in not only increasing our understanding of nature but also in bringing greater control and freedom through advances in technology. However, the nearly absolute dominance of materialism in the academic world has seriously constricted the sciences and hampered the development of the scientific study of mind and spirituality. Faith in this ideology, as an exclusive explanatory framework for reality, has compelled scientists to neglect the subjective dimension of human experience. This has led to a severely distorted and impoverished understanding of ourselves and our place in nature.<sup>77</sup>

Empiricism is also a separative assumption, because it separates a researcher from other sources of knowledge. The *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* describes two such sources: “The Intuition/Deduction thesis claims that we can know some propositions by intuition and still more by deduction.”<sup>78</sup> Reductionism is also a separative assumption, because it separates a researcher from other ways of acquiring understanding. Varadaraja Raman, an emeritus professor of physics and humanities at the Rochester Institute of Technology, describes another such way:

Holism is a philosophical view which states that by considering the whole picture one gets a deeper and more complete view of a situation than by analyzing it into its component parts. What this means is that a system consisting of several recognizable parts has properties which are not present in any of its component parts.

It takes time, effort, and careful analysis and search to find out the details of the components, that is to say, to establish the reductionist basis of a system. There is hardly a system without holistic properties. More often than not, what we experi-

ence is the holistic aspect of a system. From this perspective, the process of analysis may lead us to the reductionist components, but on the way some aspect of the whole is lost.<sup>79</sup>

Thus, in the stanza's fourth sentence, "separative action" is construed as activity based on philosophical materialism, empiricism, and reductionism, because these three assumptions are separative and underlie much of contemporary science.

The fourth sentence states: "He wrought with potent thought for separative action." Given that "potent thought" denotes scientific research, and "separative action" denotes activity based on the three preceding assumptions, the sentence has this meaning: *As their method of approaching the spiritual path, they engage in scientific research based on three separative assumptions: philosophical materialism, empiricism, and reductionism.*

##### **5. He established barriers with joy.**

The fifth sentence mentions "joy," but what is it? Bailey writes,

The life of Christ is a life to be lived today, eventually by all. It is a life of joy and happiness, of test and of problems, but its essence is love and its method is love.<sup>80</sup>

Thus, "a life of joy" can be lived today, and "its essence is love," which suggests that joy is an attribute of love. *ACIM* makes this relationship explicit:

Happiness is an attribute of love. It cannot be apart from it. Nor can it be experienced where love is not. Love has no limits, being everywhere. And therefore joy is everywhere as well. Yet can the mind deny that this is so, believing there are gaps in love where sin can enter, bringing pain instead of joy. This strange belief would limit happiness by redefining love as limited, and introducing opposition in what has no limit and no opposite.<sup>81</sup>

The above quotation considers that "Happiness is an attribute of love," and it uses the words "happiness" and "joy" synonymously, implying that joy is an attribute of love. The above

quotation also indicates that a belief can act as a barrier that limits love and thereby joy. As *ACIM* also explains, such a belief is the notion that one's reality is bounded by one's physical body:

While you believe that your reality or your brother's is bounded by a body, you will believe in sin ... For the belief that bodies limit mind leads to a perception of the world in which the proof of separation seems to be everywhere. And God and His creation seem to be split apart and overthrown.<sup>82</sup>

Bailey mentions "love, based on realised unity,"<sup>83</sup> and "the realisation of the unity of all beings,"<sup>84</sup> thereby indicating that love is based on the realization of the unity of all beings. The belief that one's reality is bounded by one's physical body, however, denies the unity of all beings, so holding this belief is a barrier to the experience of love.

*Vitalism* is "a doctrine that attributes the viability of a living organism to a vital principle distinct from the physical and chemical processes of life."<sup>85</sup> Philosophical materialism, according to its earlier definition, denies vitalism. Empiricism does not support vitalism, because empirical testing and experiment have not established the existence of a vital principle. The philosophers William Bechtel and Robert Richardson describe empiricism's view in this way:

Vitalism now has no credibility. This is sometimes credited to the view that vitalism posits an unknowable factor in explaining life; and further, vitalism is often viewed as unfalsifiable, and therefore a pernicious metaphysical doctrine.<sup>86</sup>

Here, *unknowable* means "impossible to know, especially being beyond the range of human experience,"<sup>87</sup> and *unfalsifiable* means "unable to be shown as false, although possibly not true."<sup>88</sup>

Bailey speaks of "the unity of all life,"<sup>89</sup> indicating that her notion of the vital principle is that it constitutes an indivisible whole. Marcel Weber and Michael Esfeld, in "Holism in the Sciences," make a corresponding observation:

most forms of vitalism are holistic because the vital force or entelechy is assumed to constitute an indivisible whole which, in contrast to mechanical systems, cannot be analyzed into parts.<sup>90</sup>

If the vital principle existed and resembled Bailey's notion, its holistic nature could not be analyzed into parts, which means that it could not be understood through reductionism. Consequently, by accepting the assumptions of philosophical materialism, empiricism, and reductionism as part of the stanza's fourth sentence, fifth-ray people must deny vitalism and accept this implication: one's reality is bounded by one's physical body.

The stanza's fifth sentence states: "He established barriers with joy." Here, the preposition *with* has this common meaning: "in opposition to; against."<sup>91</sup> The preceding remarks imply that the fifth sentence has the following explanation: *By accepting the belief that one's reality is bounded by one's physical body, they establish a barrier against their realization of the unity of all beings, which in turn is a barrier against their experience of love and its attribute, joy.*

**6. He brooked no understanding; He knew no unity, for He was cold, austere, ascetic and forever cruel.**

The sixth sentence's first clause states: "He brooked no understanding." To *brook* means to "put up with something or somebody unpleasant."<sup>92</sup> In the fourth sentence, fifth-ray people use scientific research to learn why things happen in some area of the natural world; but in the sixth sentence's first clause, they put up with having "no understanding" about their research area and are displeased about it. Bailey gives this explanation:

Men everywhere are recognising the accuracy of ... material science, yet at the same time they feel innately that there is, underlying the proven objective manifestation, some vitalising force, and some coherent purpose which cannot be accounted for in terms of matter alone.<sup>93</sup>

Thus, the first clause has this meaning: They put up with having no understanding about

their area of scientific research and are displeased about it, because they feel innately that a purely materialistic account of nature is inadequate.

Why is there this lack of understanding? As shown by previous articles in this series on the seven stanzas, each stanza is a carefully crafted message from beginning to end, with later parts continually building on earlier parts. The stanza's fifth sentence indicates that fifth-ray people lack love, so the adjacency of the fifth and sixth sentences suggests a relationship between love and understanding. Indeed, Bailey describes such a relationship: "True knowledge is intelligent love, for it is the blending of the intellect and the devotion."<sup>94</sup> Lucille Cedercrans (1921 – 1984), who presented a teaching called the "New Thought-form Presentation of the Wisdom," similarly states:

The energy of Love in the Mind produces right understanding or Wisdom."<sup>95</sup>

Love, then produces comprehension. It is the energy which relates many experiences in such a way as to produce a pattern, an evolution, and, finally, intelligent productive thought.<sup>96</sup>

According to these quotations, the lack of love in the fifth sentence brings about the lack of "true knowledge," "right understanding," or "comprehension" in the sixth sentence's first clause.

The second clause states: "He knew no unity, for He was cold, austere, ascetic and forever cruel." Let us begin by considering the listed series of adjectives. *Cold* is the first adjective and, in the present context, has this psychological meaning: "unfriendly or unresponsive or showing dislike."<sup>97</sup> Bailey illustrates this meaning's use:

The coldness of that light [of the personality] refers to the light of substance, which cannot be warmed into a glow by desire or by the heat of passion, but is now and at last only responsive to the light of the soul. It is therefore cold to all that limits and hinders, and this state of personality consciousness has to be realised at the very centre of man's being.<sup>98</sup>

Here, the “light of the soul” is a channel for the intuition.<sup>99</sup> The stanza’s first through fifth sentences depict fifth-ray people as accumulating many cleavages that may limit and hinder their research. According to the above quotation, “this state of personality consciousness” is “cold to all that limits and hinders,” but is “responsive to the light of the soul.” Thus, psychological coldness in this context has two significances: the portrayed people are cold in that they show their dislike for the cleavages that they perceive as limiting and hindering, which means that they question the beliefs that underlie those cleavages; and they are also cold in that they lack the “light of the soul,” because they would have been responsive to that light if it were present.

Rupert Sheldrake, who has worked as a scientist in biochemistry and cell biology, observes that most scientists do not think critically about the beliefs that govern their scientific thinking:

Contemporary science is based on the claim that all reality is material or physical. There is no reality but material reality. Consciousness is a by-product of the physical activity of the brain. Matter is unconscious. Evolution is purposeless. God exists only as an idea in human minds, and hence in human heads. These beliefs are powerful not because most scientists think about them critically, but because they do not. The facts of science are real enough, and so are the techniques that scientists use, and so are the technologies based on them. But the belief system that governs conventional scientific thinking is an act of faith, grounded in a 19th-century ideology.<sup>100</sup>

Thus, the second clause signifies a change of direction for fifth-ray people, because it depicts them as beginning to question their underlying beliefs.

*Austere*, which is the second adjective in the series, means “Severe or stern in disposition or appearance.”<sup>101</sup> Bailey writes, “As still further progress is made, the joy of the soul begins to pour through the worn and weary vehicles, and gradually the positive nature of the soul takes hold.”<sup>102</sup> Thus, being austere indicates that the portrayed people lack the “joy of the soul.”

*Ascetic* means “Characterized by severe self-discipline and abstention from all forms of indulgence,”<sup>103</sup> so ascetic and self-indulgent constitute a pair of opposites on the emotional plane. Bailey speaks of “the balancing between the pairs of opposites,”<sup>104</sup> so being ascetic indicates an unbalanced, inharmonious emotional nature. Bailey writes, “in place of the restless self-centered emotional nature and the activity of the solar plexus centre (carrying the powerful forces of the astral plane) there should be imposed the steady detached and harmonising rhythm of the soul, the higher self.”<sup>105</sup> Here, “astral” is a synonym for emotional.<sup>106</sup> Accordingly, being ascetic indicates that the portrayed people lack the “harmonising rhythm of the soul.”

*Forever cruel* is the final modifier in the series. Bailey writes, “devotion can be fanatical and cruel,”<sup>107</sup> and “the releasing power of love is essential but it must be the love of the soul, and not personality love, which must be demonstrated.”<sup>108</sup> Thus, being forever cruel indicates that the portrayed people have devotion, which could be regarded as personality love, but lack the “love of the soul.”

Consequently, in the second clause, the series of adjectives has this meaning: they lack the light, joy, harmonizing rhythm, and love of the soul. This series discloses the meaning of the preceding phrase, “He knew no unity,” because in this context “unity” must signify alignment with the soul.

Thus, the entire sixth sentence is given this explanation: *They put up with having no understanding about their area of scientific research and are displeased about it, because they feel innately that a purely materialistic account of nature is inadequate. Afterwards, they question the beliefs underlying the cleavages that they perceive as limiting and hindering, but without having established alignment with the soul, or higher self, for they lack the light, joy, harmonizing rhythm, and love of the soul.*

The sixth sentence alludes to two kinds of reasoning: first, there is reasoning that lacks the light of the soul, which means that it lacks the channel for the intuition; and second, there is

intuitional understanding. Bailey explains the difference:

Intuitional understanding is always spontaneous. Where the reasoning *to* an understanding enters, it is not the activity of the intuition.<sup>109</sup>

At the stage represented by the sixth sentence, fifth-ray people have not learned how to achieve alignment with the soul and thereby gain access to the intuition. As a result, they lack understanding when they question whether their underlying beliefs are false concepts, or illusions, because, in Bailey's words, "It is the soul itself which dispels illusion, through the use of the faculty of the intuition."<sup>110</sup>

**7. He stood between the tender, loving centre of all lives and the outer court of writhing, living men.**

The seventh sentence has four layers of meaning, the first of which is explained as follows. In the initial phrase, the adjective *loving* means "showing love or great care,"<sup>111</sup> so the "loving centre" has love as the dynamic factor. Bailey writes, "*spiritual love* ... is the paramount soul characteristic, for only the soul has it as the dynamic factor."<sup>112</sup> Accordingly, the "loving centre" signifies the soul.

In the final phrase, to *writhe* means "to make twisting movements with the body, especially because you are feeling strong emotion."<sup>113</sup> Thus, fifth-ray people "stood" at a midway spot between the soul ("loving centre") and the emotional plight of other people ("writhing, living men"). What is that midway spot? Bailey gives this answer:

You ask for a clearer definition of the "midway" spot ... For the *disciple* it is the mental plane where form and soul make contact.<sup>114</sup>

To *stand* means "to rise or straighten up,"<sup>115</sup> but this verb sometimes has a symbolic meaning, such as in Romans 5:2, "this grace in which we stand." Bailey speaks of "humanity as a whole, polarised as it is in the emotional nature,"<sup>116</sup> and the phrase "forever cruel" in the stanza's sixth sentence indicates that the portrayed people were emotionally polarized during that stage. Given that the midway spot

signifies the mental plane, to stand at this spot has this symbolic meaning: to raise the polarization from the emotional to the mental body. Given that the portrayed people "stood" at this spot, the seventh sentence's first layer of meaning is as follows: fifth-ray people raise their polarization of consciousness from their emotional body to their mental body.

Bailey describes how this standing is achieved:

In meditation the emotional body should be controlled from the mental plane, and when the polarisation has been transferred into the mental body through forms of meditation and intensity of purpose and of will, then the emotional becomes quiescent and receptive.<sup>117</sup>

One's initial effort to achieve mental polarization is successful only intermittently, however, as shown by Bailey's instructions to a fifth-ray student:

Figuratively speaking, there is a lack of steady contact between the mind and the astral body. Here is the weak place in your alignment. When you are mentally alert, which is quite often, a temporary coordination is set up and there is what one might call a momentary alignment. But the moment your mental activity ceases there is a complete break. You then function as a sentient, emotionally vital and active person, with the mental nature remaining outside the lower alignment.<sup>118</sup>

Consequently, Bailey says that one must work towards the goal of sustained mental polarization:

Increasingly must your inner life be lived upon the mental plane. Steadily and without descent must the attitude of meditation be held—not for a few minutes each morning or at specific moments throughout the day, but constantly, all day long.<sup>119</sup>

Let us consider the seventh sentence's second layer of meaning: fifth-ray people stand between "the tender, loving centre," which depicts the soul as conveying love, and "writhing, living men," which depicts other people as receiving this love. Moreover, the adjective

*tender* indicates that the soul's love is meeting the need of writhing, or distressed, recipients, so the portrayed people must be working as the intermediary between the soul's love and those recipients.

Bailey says, "The work therefore falls into two categories: that of invoking divine aid (to use Christian phraseology) and then—through faith and acceptance—directing the energies of light and love (which have been invoked) to all men everywhere."<sup>120</sup> These two categories are needed, because the portrayed people cannot give what they do not have: they must first receive the divine aid from a level that is higher than their own, before they can convey it to others.

Bailey provides the following instruction to a student for such an effort:

I would suggest that you concentrate upon "holding the mind steady in the light." This will involve renewed work in alignment, and in the conscious refocussing of the mind towards reality. It is the activity of the inner, conscious man which ceaselessly turns its attention to the soul, seeking identification with that soul.

The bringing about of a better alignment would also release more fully the love of your soul into your personality life and render you more radiant and attractive in the spiritual sense. This would increase your usefulness in service and supply a need. It is more a need in expression than a need in fact. This release of love will come through alignment, decentralisation from the things of the personality and a more loving attentiveness to the service of others.<sup>121</sup>

Thus, as the sentence's second layer of meaning, fifth-ray people become aligned with the soul, invoke the love of the soul, and then convey this tender love outwardly to meet the need of distressed people.

Let us consider the third layer of meaning. The seventh sentence's final phrase speaks of "the outer court of writhing, living men," which alludes to a temple that has both an inner and outer court, like Solomon's temple (1 Kings 7:12). Bailey mentions a related phrase, "So

humanity enters into the outer Court of God's love,"<sup>122</sup> which alludes to several verses in the Bible. The notion that humanity can enter the outer court is found in Revelation 11:2: "Leave out the court which is outside the temple and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations." The notion that people in the outer court receive God's love is found in Ezekiel 10:5:

Moreover, the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard as far as the outer court, like the voice of God Almighty when He speaks.

Here, the cherubim are angels sent as ministering spirits (Hebrews 1:14), so they are expressions of God's love.

In addition, Ezekiel 10:3 states, "the cloud filled the inner court," which refers to the cloud of God's presence (Exodus 13:21-22). Accordingly, fifth-ray people enter the inner court when they become aligned with the soul, which is called "the inner divinity,"<sup>123</sup> and invoke the love of the soul, which is symbolized by the cloud of God's presence. Afterwards, they work as the soul's intermediary by conveying this love to the people in the outer court. Thus, the second and third layers of meaning are really the same, except that the third layer is expressed with the theological symbols of inner and outer courts.

What is the significance of the third layer of meaning? Bailey makes a related comment:

Truth must also be given in a wider form, and with a more general connotation to those who are beginning to live consciously as souls, and who can therefore be trusted to see the meaning behind the symbol and the significance behind the outer appearance of theology.<sup>124</sup>

At the stage of the stanza's third sentence, fifth-ray people display their characteristic vice called "Theology," which means that they use theology to separate themselves from other people. At the stage of the seventh sentence, however, they can see the meaning behind the theological symbols, and can then apply their understanding of these symbols to serve other people. Thus, the third layer of meaning signi-



fies the transmutation of the vice, “Theology,” into a virtue.

As the fourth and final layer of meaning, let us note that all lacks mentioned in the stanza’s sixth sentence are resolved in the seventh sentence:

In the sixth sentence, the portrayed people lack understanding because they lack love, and they lack love because they lack alignment with the soul. In the seventh sentence, however, they become aligned with the soul and invoke the love of the soul.

In the sixth sentence, they lack the light of the soul. Bailey mentions “The golden light of love,”<sup>125</sup> so in the seventh sentence they obtain this light as an attribute of love.

In the sixth sentence, the portrayed people lack the joy of the soul. The fifth sentence, however, indicates that joy is an attribute of love, so in the seventh sentence they obtain joy as that attribute.

In the sixth sentence, they lack the harmonizing rhythm of the soul. Bailey mentions “the balancing factor of love,”<sup>126</sup> so in the seventh sentence they obtain this harmonizing rhythm as an attribute of love, because *harmonize* is a synonym for the verb *balance*.<sup>127</sup>

Consequently, at the stage represented by the seventh sentence, the portrayed people acquire the characteristic fifth-ray virtue that Bailey calls, “The realisation of the soul and its potentialities.”<sup>128</sup>

In summary, the seventh sentence has this overall meaning: *They raise their polarization of consciousness from their emotional body to their mental body, become aligned with the soul, invoke the love of the soul, convey this tender love outwardly to meet the need of distressed people, and thereby also obtain the light, joy, and harmonizing rhythm of the soul.*

### **8. Yet He stood not at the midway point, and naught He did sufficed to heal the breach.**

The seventh sentence depicts fifth-ray people as standing at a midway point, but the eighth sentence’s initial phrase states, “Yet He stood not at the midway point.” The explanation for

this apparent contradiction is that the midway point for the seventh sentence is the mental body, but the midway point for the eighth sentence is a higher spot. Before the latter spot can be identified, it is necessary to introduce some additional terminology.

The mental body, or concrete mind, is the highest part of the personality and is that which is usually regarded as the mind, because it is the instrument of discrimination and analysis. Esoteric traditions, however, have the notion of a higher mind that is sometimes called the “causal body.” The Bible refers to this higher mind as the “house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (2 Corinthians 5:1),<sup>129</sup> and Hinduism calls it by its Sanskrit name, *karana sarira*. Here, *karana* means “cause” and *sarira* means “body.”<sup>130</sup>

Theosophy divides the mental plane into seven levels, or subplanes: four concrete, or lower, levels; and three abstract, or higher, levels.<sup>131</sup> The mental body is said to reside on the concrete levels of the mental plane, and the causal body on the abstract levels of the mental plane, namely, on the second and third highest mental subplanes.<sup>132</sup> I. K. Taimni, a theosophical writer, refers to the mental body as “the vehicle of concrete thoughts,” and says, “The first function of the Causal body is that it serves as the organ of abstract thought.”<sup>133</sup>

Using the foregoing terminology, Bailey identifies the higher midway spot:

For the advanced disciple and the initiate, the midway spot is the causal body, the *karana sarira*, the spiritual body of the soul, standing as the intermediary between Spirit and matter, Life and form, the monad and the personality.<sup>134</sup>

Accordingly, the causal body is the intermediary between what the stanza’s second sentence calls “the great dualities.” Bailey also describes the goal of becoming polarized in the causal body:

The true student seeks to draw his consciousness away from his physical body, and away from the emotional body into the realms of thought, or into the lower mind body. Having achieved that much, he seeks

then to transcend that lower mind and to become polarised in the causal body.<sup>135</sup>

Consequently, in the eighth sentence, to stand at the midway point has this symbolic meaning: to raise the polarization of consciousness from the mental to the causal body. By achieving this higher polarization, fifth-ray people become the intermediary between the great dualities, so they acquire the characteristic fifth-ray virtue that Bailey calls, “Sensitivity to Deity, to light and to wisdom.”<sup>136</sup>

The term *causal consciousness* signifies that the polarization of consciousness is in the causal body. How is causal consciousness achieved? Bailey writes, “It is by meditation, or the reaching from the concrete to the abstract, that the causal consciousness is entered, and man—during this final period—becomes the Higher self and not the Personality.”<sup>137</sup> Nevertheless, causal consciousness is difficult to prolong, as Bailey also explains:

Seldom is the three-fold Personality yet to be found lined up, if so I may put it, with the causal consciousness. Temporary moments occur when this is the case and when (in moments of highest aspiration and for purposes of unselfish endeavor) the higher and the lower form a line direct. Usually the emotional body, through violent emotion and vibration, or a fluctuating restlessness, is continuously out of alignment. Where the emotional body may be momentarily aligned, then the mental body acts as an obstruction, preventing the percolation down from the higher to the lower, and so to the physical brain.<sup>138</sup>

Consequently, the eighth sentence’s initial phrase, “Yet He stood not at the midway point,” signifies that the portrayed people are unable to widen the duration of each occurrence of causal consciousness; and the final phrase, “and naught He did sufficed to heal the breach,” signifies that nothing that they try suffices to stabilize it.

In summary, the eighth sentence is given this meaning: *Through meditation, or the reaching from the concrete to the abstract, they temporarily raise their polarization of consciousness from their mental body to their causal body;*

*yet they are unable to widen the duration of each occurrence of causal consciousness, and nothing that they try suffices to stabilize it.*

**9. He widened all cleavages, erected barriers, and sought to make still wider gaps.**

Given that the eighth sentence’s first phrase signifies an inability to widen the duration of each occurrence of causal consciousness, the ninth sentence’s first phrase, “He widened all cleavages,” is taken as widening all such durations, because each duration is a cleavage, or break, in the occurrence of a lower polarization. Given that the eighth sentence’s second phrase signifies an inability to stabilize causal consciousness, the ninth sentence’s second phrase, “erected barriers,” is taken as such stabilization, because these barriers are self-initiated habits that prevent falling back into mental or emotional polarization.

How can the duration of causal consciousness be prolonged and stabilized? Bailey uses the term *esoteric sense* to denote “a constant inner contact with the soul”:

You ask me to define more clearly what I mean by the words “esoteric sense”. I mean essentially the power to live and to function subjectively, to possess a constant inner contact with the soul and the world in which it is found, and this must work out subjectively through love, actively shown; through wisdom, steadily outpoured; and through that capacity to include and to identify oneself with all that breathes and feels which is the outstanding characteristic of all truly functioning sons of God.<sup>139</sup>

Accordingly, we take “esoteric sense” as being equivalent to stabilized causal consciousness. Bailey writes, “The first stage in this development and culture of the esoteric sense consists in the holding of the attitude of constant detached observation,”<sup>140</sup> so we conclude that developing “the attitude of constant detached observation” helps to stabilize causal consciousness. Why is developing this attitude helpful?

Through constant detached self-observation, we can observe the differences between the various states of consciousness and observe the

specific thoughts and emotions that pull us out of higher states into lower ones. We can then free ourselves from those thoughts and emotions, perhaps by recognizing that they are generally about the past and that the past is gone. We can also observe the following phenomenon: when we fall from a higher state to a lower state, we often throw knowledge of that higher state away and then act as though we never had it. Bailey gives this explanation:

Separation negates comprehension, or knowledge of that which is to be found outside the separated consciousness, for separative knowledge entails identification with that which is expressing itself through the medium of a form.<sup>141</sup>

For example, when we fall into emotional polarization, our consciousness becomes more separated by identifying with separating emotions, such as fear and hatred, so we may forget the better option of rising out of that condition into a higher polarization, and may forget what we had learned in a higher polarization, such as the potentialities of the soul.

How can constant detached self-observation be developed? Rather than prescribing a definite practice, Bailey presents her students with a series of questions that encourage them to devise their own practice:

I am the redeemer of the lower nature. In what way does observation aid in this redemption?

Does redeeming force, released through observation, pour through me?

In what fashion will the observation of the Observer bring changes in my life, my habits, and my attitudes?

*... the cleavage-making characteristic of fifth-ray energy is disadvantageous during a person's early stage of development, because of its limiting and hindering effects; but the same characteristic becomes advantageous during a later stage, because of its help in achieving higher states of consciousness.*

Through which body do I most easily express myself? Which of my bodies requires the most observation and control?

Have I demonstrated the powers of observation today? Have I been in conscious contact at any moment with the Observer?

What activities and qualities of my lower nature (good as well as undesirable) need to be observed if I desire to serve more intelligently?

What is the major hindrance to my constant practice of observation? How can I offset this difficulty?<sup>142</sup>

Nevertheless, *ACIM* does prescribe a definite practice:

“Who walks with me?” This question should be asked a thousand times a day, till certainty has ended doubting and established peace. Today let doubting cease. God speaks for you in answering your question with these words:

*I walk with God in perfect holiness. I light the world, I light my mind and all the minds which God created one with me.*<sup>143</sup>

The question “Who walks with me?” is intended to evoke our observation of the energies and qualities that function within us. If we were polarized in the emotional body, the question “Who walks with me?” might yield these answers: desire, guilt, fear, or hatred. If we were polarized in the mental body, the question might yield these answers: pride, prejudice, criticism, or mental control of the emotional nature. If we were polarized in the causal body, we would have become the intermediary between the great dualities, so each of us could genuinely answer the question in the following way: “*I walk with God in perfect holiness.*”

In the above quotation, *ACIM* advises, “This question should be asked a thousand times a day,” but how often is that? The advised frequency roughly corresponds to asking the question during every minute of a seventeen-hour day. If we were to build such a habit, then we would develop, in Bailey’s previous words, “the attitude of constant detached observation.” By building such a habit, we would acquire the characteristic fifth-ray virtue that Bailey calls, “Spiritual and mental devotion,”<sup>144</sup> because *devotion* signifies “the act of binding yourself (intellectually or emotionally) to a course of action.”<sup>145</sup>

In summary, the ninth sentence’s first and second phrases are given this meaning: By developing the attitude of constant detached self-observation, they prolong causal consciousness and stabilize it.

Before considering the third phrase, it is helpful to introduce some additional terminology. Bailey provides the following summary of the multidimensional nature of a human being:

Man, in essential essence, is the higher triad demonstrating through a gradually evolving form, the egoic or causal body, and utilising the lower threefold personality as a means to contact the lower three planes. All this has for purpose the development of perfect self-consciousness. Above the triad stands the Monad or the Father in Heaven—a point of abstraction to man as he views the subject from the physical plane.<sup>146</sup>

Here, “the higher triad” comprises, in Bailey’s words, “these three aspects of the Spiritual Triad—the spiritual will, the intuition or pure reason, and the abstract mind.”<sup>147</sup> Bailey states that “The Triad” is synonymous with both the soul and higher self, which are terms used earlier.<sup>148</sup> Regarding the Theosophical planes listed earlier, the Spiritual Triad spans the spiritual plane, intuitional plane, and highest mental subplane; and “the Monad or the Father in Heaven,” which is also mentioned in the above quotation, is on the monadic plane.<sup>149</sup>

Bailey describes the sequential achievement of three polarizations:

The mental body becomes the centre of consciousness and then later—through practice—it becomes the point of departure for the transference of the polarisation into a higher body, first the causal and later into the Triad.<sup>150</sup>

Shifting the polarization of consciousness to the Spiritual Triad results in what is called “triadal consciousness.”<sup>151</sup> The above quotation indicates that the achievement of mental polarization, as depicted in the seventh sentence, and the achievement of causal consciousness, as depicted in the eighth sentence, are prerequisites for the achievement of triadal consciousness.

The ninth sentence’s third phrase is: “and sought to make still wider gaps.” Given that the first and second phrases depict the prolongation and stabilization of causal consciousness, the third phrase is taken as seeking triadal consciousness, because this endeavor builds upon the earlier efforts and makes still wider gaps respect to causal consciousness.

Seeking triadal consciousness is equivalent to building the *antahkarana*, a Sanskrit term, for which Bailey gives this definition: “The technical antahkarana, bridging between the threefold personality and the Spiritual Triad.”<sup>152</sup> She provides extensive descriptions of the steps for building the antahkarana,<sup>153</sup> and says,

The antahkarana must be completed and direct contact must be established with the Spiritual Triad by the time the third initiation has been taken.<sup>154</sup>

Thus, seeking triadal consciousness acquires the characteristic fifth-ray virtue that Bailey calls, “The power to take initiation.”<sup>155</sup>

What is the nature of triadal consciousness? Bailey speaks of people “who have triadal consciousness and can exercise the potency of the monadic life and will, via the Spiritual Triad.”<sup>156</sup> She also describes the effect of shifting from causal consciousness to triadal consciousness: “The centre of consciousness is now in the Will nature, when this point of attainment is reached, and is no longer in the

love nature. Activity and love are still present in full measure, but the focus of the initiate's attention is in the will aspect of divinity."<sup>157</sup>

"Divinity" is sometimes called "the divine reality."<sup>158</sup> Thus, based on the preceding paragraph, triadal consciousness focuses the initiate's attention in the will aspect of the divine reality, thereby yielding the characteristic fifth-ray virtue that Bailey calls "A knowledge of reality."<sup>159</sup> The opposite of knowledge is ignorance. As discussed in the commentary for the third sentence, the "veil of ignorance" is a characteristic fifth-ray vice that hides knowledge of the divine reality. In the fifth-ray stanza, the fourth through ninth sentences depict the steps needed for removing that veil.

In summary, the ninth and final sentence is given this meaning: *By developing the attitude of constant detached self-observation, they prolong causal consciousness and stabilize it. Afterwards, by applying the steps for building the antahkarana, they seek triadal consciousness.*

## Conclusions

Bailey's fifth-ray stanza, which we call the "Fifth-Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease," can be clarified in the following manner:

1. During an early stage in their development, fifth-ray people arise in their wrath and separate themselves in two ways: first, they project their negative qualities onto other people, thereby justifying their attack on them; and second, they attack them, thereby emotionally isolating themselves from them.
2. By shutting out the higher illumination through their intense mental activity, they sweep aside any awareness of the great vertical dualities—such as between spirit and matter, unity and multiplicity, or life and form—and are unable to choose that which concerns the higher poles of these dualities. Instead, they are primarily occupied with the matter aspect in its multiplicity of forms, and adopt the theory of philosophical materialism, which regards all reality as material or physical.

3. By utilizing their mental body—with its discriminating and analyzing faculty—without the higher illumination, they separate themselves from the following factors: the revelation of divine truth and the unfoldment of their spiritual life; thinking in terms of consciousness and awareness; their own truthful thinking about themselves; a generally positive self-identity; right understanding of ideas; and whomever disagrees with their dogmatic assertions. Their making any of these cleavages adds to their veil of ignorance and at the same time is the result of it.

4. As their method of approaching the spiritual path, they engage in scientific research based on three separative assumptions: philosophical materialism, empiricism, and reductionism.

5. By accepting the belief that one's reality is bounded by one's physical body, they establish a barrier against their realization of the unity of all beings, which in turn is a barrier against their experience of love and its attribute, joy.

6. They put up with having no understanding about their area of scientific research and are displeased about it, because they feel innately that a purely materialistic account of nature is inadequate. Afterwards, they question the beliefs underlying the cleavages that they perceive as limiting and hindering, but without having established alignment with the soul, or higher self, for they lack the light, joy, harmonizing rhythm, and love of the soul.

7. They raise their polarization of consciousness from their emotional body to their mental body, become aligned with the soul, invoke the love of the soul, convey this tender love outwardly to meet the need of distressed people, and thereby also obtain the light, joy, and harmonizing rhythm of the soul.

8. Through meditation, or the reaching from the concrete to the abstract, they temporarily raise their polarization of consciousness from their mental body to their causal body;

yet they are unable to widen the duration of each occurrence of causal consciousness, and nothing that they try suffices to stabilize it.

9. By developing the attitude of constant detached self-observation, they prolong causal consciousness and stabilize it. Afterwards, by applying the steps for building the antahkarana, they seek triadal consciousness.

As these nine sentences demonstrate, the spiritual path is a vertical journey with respect to the seven planes of Theosophy, because it entails shifting the polarization of consciousness from the emotional body, to the mental body, to the causal body, and then to the Spiritual Triad. In other words, one moves from emotional consciousness, to mental consciousness, to causal consciousness, and then to triadal consciousness. Bailey refers to this vertical journey as *the upward way* and tells one student, “Be not in any way discouraged, brother of old, if you find the upward way stiff and hard to climb”;<sup>160</sup> but tells another student, “You have trodden the upward Way with greater speed of late.”<sup>161</sup>

Bailey lists “a few succinct and terse phrases” that signify characteristic vices and virtues of fifth-ray people.<sup>162</sup> These phrases are of no practical use, however, unless they convey some useful meaning. The stanza’s first, second, and third sentences clarify the meaning and use of eleven terse phrases that signify characteristic vices: Unforgiving temper; Mental separation; Intensification of the power to isolate; Intense materialism and temporarily the negation of Deity; The implications of wrong emphasis; Mental devotion to form and form activity; The power to rationalise and destroy; Criticism; Distorted views of truth; Theology; and The energy of ignorance.

In contrast, the stanza’s seventh, eighth, and ninth sentences clarify the meaning and use of five terse phrases that signify characteristic virtues: The realisation of the soul and its potentialities; Sensitivity to Deity, to light and to wisdom; Spiritual and mental devotion; The power to take initiation; and A knowledge of reality.

The imperfection of fifth-ray energy as cleavage making as its outstanding characteristic. The stanza’s first through fifth sentences depict the accumulation of many cleavages: projection, emotional isolation, shutting out the higher illumination, cleavage within an individual, cleavage between an individual and a group, separative scientific dogma, and barriers with love and joy. The sixth sentence signifies the beginning of a change of direction, because it depicts the questioning of beliefs upon which perceived cleavages are based. As *ACIM* explains, such questioning brings the “hope of freedom”:

Belief is powerful indeed. The thoughts you hold are mighty, and illusions are as strong in their effects as is the truth. A madman thinks the world he sees is real, and does not doubt it. Nor can he be swayed by questioning his thoughts’ effects. It is but when their source is raised to question that the hope of freedom comes to him at last.<sup>163</sup>

Nevertheless, the sixth sentence depicts the wrong questioning of beliefs, because it looks for answers without accessing the light of the soul. In contrast, Bailey describes the right questioning, which looks for answers “through a search for that source of all knowledge”:

There is a questioning which is right and proper. It is that “asking of questions” spoken of by the Christ in the words “Ask and ye shall receive.” This faculty of enquiry is deliberately cultivated in their disciples by all true Masters in the Orient. They are taught to formulate questions about the inner realities and then to find the answer for themselves through a search for that source of all knowledge, latent at the heart of all beings. To ask intelligently and to find the answer, they must first free themselves from all outer imposed authority and from all tradition and from the imposition of every theological dogma, whether religious or scientific. Only thus can the reality be found and the truth be seen.<sup>164</sup>

The stanza indicates that the wrong questioning of beliefs eventually shifts to the right questioning. Moreover, this shift is represented

as occurring between the sixth and seventh sentences, because the seventh, eighth, and ninth sentences depict the undoing of all preceding kinds of cleavage.

Nevertheless, Bailey says, “We are today governed by the Law of Cleavages,—a divine law and one of fruitful objective.”<sup>165</sup> How can making cleavages be *fruitful*?

The original statement of the ninth sentence is as follows: “He widened all cleavages, erected barriers, and sought to make still wider gaps.” Accordingly, this sentence depicts how fifth-ray people can use the cleavage-making characteristic of the fifth ray in a fruitful way: “He widened all cleavages” portrays widening the durations of causal consciousness, because each duration is a cleavage, or break, in the occurrence of a lower polarization; “erected barriers” portrays stabilizing causal consciousness, because these barriers are self-initiated habits that prevent falling back into a lower polarization; and “sought to make still wider gaps” portrays seeking triadal consciousness, because this effort makes still wider gaps respect to causal consciousness.

Consequently, the cleavage-making characteristic of fifth-ray energy is disadvantageous during a person’s early stage of development, because of its limiting and hindering effects; but the same characteristic becomes advantageous during a later stage, because of its help in achieving higher states of consciousness.

---

<sup>1</sup> Zachary F. Lansdowne, “Vedic Teachings on the Seven Rays,” *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Spring 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I (1936; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1979), 316.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 126-127.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 63-83.

<sup>6</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* (1960; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1976), 568.

<sup>7</sup> All biblical quotations in this article come from the New American Standard Bible. Philippe Le Moigne, Jean-Daniel Macchi,

---

Étienne Nodet, Pierre-Maurice Bogaert, and Christian Cannuyer, *The Bible: Its Languages and Its Translations* (New London, CT: Bayard, 2014), 64, write: “This New American Standard Bible is considered by nearly all evangelical Christian scholars and translators today to be the most accurate, word-for-word translation of the original Greek and Hebrew scriptures into modern English that has ever been produced. It remains the most popular version among theologians, professors, scholars, and seminary students.”

<sup>8</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing* (1953; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1978), 298.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 292-293.

<sup>10</sup> Helena P. Blavatsky, *Collected Writings* (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Society in America, 2002), vol. XIV, 217.

<sup>11</sup> Helena P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine* (1888; reprint; Pasadena, CA: Theosophical University Press, 1977), vol. I, 573.

<sup>12</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 298-304.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 293.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 297.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 304.

<sup>16</sup> Zachary F. Lansdowne, “The Third-Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease,” *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Spring 2017.

<sup>17</sup> Zachary F. Lansdowne, “The Sixth-Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease,” *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Summer 2017.

<sup>18</sup> Zachary F. Lansdowne, “The Second-Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease,” *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Summer 2018.

<sup>19</sup> Zachary F. Lansdowne, “The Fourth-Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease,” *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Winter 2019.

<sup>20</sup> Zachary F. Lansdowne, “The Seventh-Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease,” *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Spring 2019.

<sup>21</sup> Zachary F. Lansdowne, “The First-Ray Cause of Inharmony and Disease,” *The Esoteric Quarterly*, Summer 2019.

<sup>22</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 302.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*



- <sup>24</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Light of the Soul* (1927; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1978), 268.
- <sup>25</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (1925; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1973), 1201.
- <sup>26</sup> John L. McKenzie, *Dictionary of the Bible* (1965; reprint; New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995), 603, writes, “It is a widespread cultural phenomenon that the name is considered to be more than an artificial tag which distinguishes one person from another ... but it is thought to tell something of the kind of person he is.” Timothy F. LaHaye, *Understanding Bible Prophecy for Yourself* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2009), 149, observes, “In the Bible, a name reveals the nature of the person.” For example, 1 Samuel 25:25 says: “for as his name is, so is he.” Roswell D. Hitchcock, *An Interpreting Dictionary of Scripture Proper Names* (New York: A. J. Johnson, 1871), gives meanings of nearly all the names of persons and places in the Bible.
- <sup>27</sup> William W. “Bill” Gothard, “How do the sins of my forefathers affect my life?” *Institute in Basic Life Principles*, <https://iblp.org/questions/how-do-sins-my-forefathers-affect-my-life> (accessed January 26, 2019), states: “Looking back to our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents ... we can observe character traits and spiritual influences that span the generations. A Godly heritage offers a sturdy foundation of virtue and faithfulness, but deeds such as anger, lust, and bitterness set destructive patterns that need to be recognized and overcome. In the Biblical account of Abraham’s family, the iniquity of deception became a stronghold that affected the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob’s sons. (See Genesis 12:10–20, 20, 26:1–11, 27:1–40, 37:12–36.) On the other hand, the New Testament examples of Lois, Eunice, and Timothy demonstrate the richness of a heritage of faith. (See 2 Timothy 1:5.)”
- <sup>28</sup> James Hastings, *A Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. II, part II (1898; reprint; Honolulu, HI: University Press of the Pacific, 2004), 535.
- <sup>29</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I, 207–208.
- <sup>30</sup> Todd E. Feinberg, *From Axons to Identity* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2009), 74.
- <sup>31</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. I (1944; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1976), 729.
- <sup>32</sup> *A Course in Miracles* has gained wide acceptance in the esoteric community. For example, Richard Smoley, “The Future of Esoteric Christianity,” *Quest Magazine* (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Society in America), July-August 2008, 131–134, mentions, “*A Course in Miracles*, that great monument of contemporary esoteric Christianity.” Bradford C. Olsen, *Modern Esoteric: Beyond Our Senses* (second edition; San Francisco: CCC Publishing, 2017), 14, states, “the modern metaphysical thought system *A Course in Miracles* [is] among the best sources of esoteric personal growth material available.”
- <sup>33</sup> *A Course in Miracles* (third edition; Mill Valley, CA: Foundation for Inner Peace, 2007), Text, 96.
- <sup>34</sup> David M. Wilson, *Anger Management for Christians* (Morrisville, NC: Lulu Press, 2011), Introduction.
- <sup>35</sup> *Collins English Dictionary* (seventh edition; New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2015).
- <sup>36</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I, 207; Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II (1942; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1981), 42.
- <sup>37</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation* (1922; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1974), 233.
- <sup>38</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 117.
- <sup>39</sup> Kurt Abraham, *Balancing the Pairs of Opposites: The Seven Rays and Education; Other Essays in Esoteric Psychology* (White City, OR: Lampus Press, 1993), 5, also classifies pairs of opposites by whether they are vertical or horizontal.

- 40 Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar* (1922; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1974), 45.
- 41 Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic* (1934; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1979), 80.
- 42 Helena P. Blavatsky, *The Voice of the Silence* (sixth edition; London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1903), 14.
- 43 Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 35.
- 44 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 42.
- 45 *Random House Webster's College Dictionary* (New York: Random House, 1997).
- 46 Paul K. Moser and John D. Trout, *Contemporary Materialism: A Reader* (New York: Routledge, 1995), viii.
- 47 Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy* (1957; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1976), 75.
- 48 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 48.
- 49 *Webster's New World College Dictionary* (fourth edition; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010).
- 50 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I, 376.
- 51 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. I, 540.
- 52 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 42.
- 53 Alice A. Bailey, *The Reappearance of the Christ* (1948; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1978), 141.
- 54 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 346.
- 55 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. I, 125-126.
- 56 *Collins English Dictionary*.
- 57 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. I, 198.
- 58 Wikipedia contributors, "Self-criticism," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Self-criticism&oldid=885667847> (accessed April 24, 2019).
- 59 Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem* (1950; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1973), 59-60.
- 60 Alice A. Bailey, *From Bethlehem to Calvary* (1937; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1989), 117.
- 61 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. I, 437.
- 62 Helena P. Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary* (London: Theosophical Publishing House, 1892), 45.
- 63 Bailey, *The Light of the Soul*, 194.
- 64 Ibid.
- 65 Swami Vivekananda, "What is Religion?" *The Yogas and Other Works* (revised edition; New York: Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, 1953), 730.
- 66 Vedanta Society of Southern California, "Ethical Principles," <https://vedanta.org/what-is-vedanta/ethical-principles/> (accessed July 30, 2019).
- 67 Bailey, *Glamour*, 79.
- 68 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 42.
- 69 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I, 208.
- 70 Ibid.
- 71 *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (twelfth edition; Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2011).
- 72 *WordNet 3.0, Farlex clipart collection*, <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/reductionism> (accessed June 5 2019).
- 73 Wikipedia contributors, "Empirical evidence," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Empirical\\_evidence&oldid=893553102](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Empirical_evidence&oldid=893553102) (accessed April 25, 2019).
- 74 Wikipedia contributors, "Reductionism," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Reductionism&oldid=887799863> (accessed April 25, 2019).
- 75 David M. Armstrong, "Naturalism, Materialism, and First Philosophy," in Paul K. Moser and John D. Trout (eds.), *Contemporary Materialism: A Reader* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 43.
- 76 Jon Mills, "Five Dangers of Materialism," *Genetic, Social, and General Psychology Monographs*, March 2002, 128(1): 5-27.
- 77 Mario Beauregard, Gary E. Schwartz, and Lisa Miller, "Manifesto for a Post-Materialist Science," *Open Sciences*,

- <http://opensciences.org/about/manifesto-for-a-post-materialist-science> (accessed June 3, 2019).
- <sup>78</sup> *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, “Rationalism vs. Empiricism,” <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rationalism-empiricism/> (accessed April 27, 2019).
- <sup>79</sup> Varadaraja V. Raman, “Reductionism and Holism: Two Sides of the Perception of Reality,” *Metanexus*, <https://www.metanexus.net/reductionism-and-holism-two-sides-perception-reality/> (accessed April 27, 2019).
- <sup>80</sup> Bailey, *From Bethlehem to Calvary*, 79.
- <sup>81</sup> *A Course in Miracles*, Workbook, 185.
- <sup>82</sup> *A Course in Miracles*, Text, 405.
- <sup>83</sup> Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 300.
- <sup>84</sup> Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. I, 25.
- <sup>85</sup> *Random House Webster’s College Dictionary*.
- <sup>86</sup> William P. Bechtel and Robert C. Richardson, “Vitalism,” in Edward Craig (ed.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1998).
- <sup>87</sup> *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (fifth edition; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, 2016).
- <sup>88</sup> *Collins English Dictionary*.
- <sup>89</sup> Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation*, 303.
- <sup>90</sup> Marcel Weber and Michael Esfeld, “Holism in the Sciences,” in Gertrude H. Hardon (ed.), *Unity of Knowledge (in Transdisciplinary Research for Sustainability)* (Oxford, UK: Eolss Publishers, 2009), 94.
- <sup>91</sup> Merriam-Webster, “Definition of with,” <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/with> (accessed August 19, 2019).
- <sup>92</sup> *WordNet 3.0, Farlex clipart collection*, <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/brook> (accessed April 28, 2019).
- <sup>93</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Consciousness of the Atom* (1922; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1973), 13-14.
- <sup>94</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic*, 120.
- <sup>95</sup> Lucille Cedercrans, *Creative Thinking* (Roseville, MN: Wisdom Impressions, 2001), 400.
- <sup>96</sup> Lucille Cedercrans, *The Nature of the Soul* (Roseville, MN: Wisdom Impressions, 2011), 75.
- <sup>97</sup> *WordNet 3.0, Farlex clipart collection*, <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/cold> (accessed May 1, 2019).
- <sup>98</sup> Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 77.
- <sup>99</sup> Bailey, *Glamour*, 210.
- <sup>100</sup> Rupert Sheldrake, “Setting Science Free From Materialism,” *EXPLORE*, July/August 2013, Vol. 9, No. 4, 211; <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1550830713001109?via%3Dihub> (accessed June 3, 2019).
- <sup>101</sup> *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*.
- <sup>102</sup> Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. I, 557.
- <sup>103</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of English* (third edition; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).
- <sup>104</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology* (1951; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1979), 251.
- <sup>105</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic*, 203.
- <sup>106</sup> Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 31.
- <sup>107</sup> Bailey, *From Bethlehem to Calvary*, 24.
- <sup>108</sup> Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. I, 476.
- <sup>109</sup> Bailey, *Glamour*, 4.
- <sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.
- <sup>111</sup> *Pocket Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2002).
- <sup>112</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic*, 39-40.
- <sup>113</sup> *Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary & Thesaurus*, Cambridge University Press, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/writhe> (accessed June 26, 2019).
- <sup>114</sup> Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic*, 247.
- <sup>115</sup> *Collins Thesaurus of the English Language*.

- 
- 116 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 578.  
117 Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation*, 98.  
118 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. I, 192.  
119 Ibid., 50.  
120 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. II, 170.  
121 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. I, 294, 298.  
122 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 279.  
123 Ibid., 492.  
124 Bailey, *From Bethlehem to Calvary*, 117.  
125 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. I, 532.  
126 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. II, 674.  
127 *Roget's 21st Century Thesaurus* (third edition; New York: Dell, 2005).  
128 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 42.  
129 Alice A. Bailey, *Education in the New Age* (1954; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1974), 144.  
130 Wikipedia contributors, "Causal body," *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*, [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Causal\\_body&oldid=763456323](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Causal_body&oldid=763456323) (accessed March 15, 2017).  
131 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 330.  
132 Ibid., 117, 435, 578.  
133 Iqbal K. Taimni, *Self-Culture* (Adyar, India: Theosophical Publishing House, 1976), 83, 110.  
134 Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic*, 247.  
135 Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation*, 94.  
136 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 42.  
137 Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation*, 28.  
138 Ibid., 5-6.  
139 Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic*, 603.  
140 Ibid., 604.  
141 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1124.  
142 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. I, 445.  
143 *A Course in Miracles*, Workbook, 295.  
144 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 42.  
145 *WordNet 3.0, Farlex clipart collection*. <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/devotion>, (accessed May 3, 2019)  
146 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 260-261.  
147 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 712.  
148 Ibid., 48.  
149 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 117.  
150 Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation*, 95.  
Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 169, 256.  
152 Ibid., 476.  
153 Ibid., 444-497.  
154 Ibid., 437.  
155 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 42.  
156 Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 547.  
157 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 507.  
158 Bailey, *From Bethlehem to Calvary*, 127.  
159 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 42.  
160 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, vol. I, 599.  
161 Ibid., 356.  
162 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. II, 39.  
163 *A Course in Miracles*, Workbook, 242.  
164 Bailey, *The Light of the Soul*, 65-66.  
165 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, vol. I, 377.

## Book Review

---

***Introduction to Agni Yoga: The Way to Shambhalla*, by Vicente Beltrán Anglada**, translated and edited by José Becerra, Fundación Vicente Beltrán Anglada, San Juan, Puerto Rico, 2017. Paperback, 250 pages. List price US \$10.95. Available at: Amazon.com.

The term *Agni Yoga* has been variously defined as the “Yoga of Fire,” the “Mergence with Divine Fire,” and the “Yoga of Synthesis.” It was first introduced to the West in 1920, by Nicholas and Helena Roerich. Agni Yoga, as given by the Roerichs, has been described as a “living ethic,” a constant “fiery striving” dedicated to self-perfection, the common good and a cognition of the Divine. The Agni Yoga teachings consist of 14 books that are presented as a series of profound, sometimes complicated aphorisms with no structure in the traditional sense. Furthermore, there are no specific techniques and disciplines, which can make these inspired teachings for spiritual awakening difficult for some students to utilize or fully comprehend.

In this book, which was originally written in Spanish in 1981, Vicente Beltrán-Anglada (VBA), takes a more structured approach in his depiction of Agni Yoga. Yet, his approach is “exquisitely simple.” It combines a first ray approach with what might be described as a second ray approach in which the “voice of silence” is the primary factor. As such, Agni Yoga represents “a Science of the Heart,” or what VBA describes as “a practical exposition of the mystical but intensely dynamic life born in the heart when the mind stops reflecting its external circumstances and surrenders to its spiritual purpose.”

The first part of the book considers the occult principles underlying the psychological makeup of a human being and the importance of establishing a center of unalterable peace in the heart that alleviates tension, fear, conflict, separateness, and a lack of true purpose. Emphasis is given throughout the book to the problem of human loneliness and the sense of isolation

that results from separation from the Divine, and from the loneliness that manifests on the path when intellectual considerations, deceptive mental formulations and faith begin to give way to the silent voice of the heart.

Agni Yoga is an advanced, synthetic yoga, one that is indicated for the emerging advanced souls of the race. VBA links this yoga to the discovery of a new dimension in life and to the influx of the Fourth Ray, which no longer demonstrates as conflict in the disciple’s life, but “as the harmony of the silent heart of Divinity expressing through Humanity.” However, it would be a mistake to think that the “Yoga of the Heart” is a form of Bhakti or devotional Yoga, or that it is “a new discipline that is imposed upon the mind to overcome a given state of consciousness.” The latter is the goal of Raja Yoga, the yoga for the current racial consciousness. Neither is its goal self-perfection, since “perfection” implies rest, fixity and immutability, a state of being that is completely contrary to the ceaseless dynamism of Divine creative action. Perfection, as VBA maintains, is “an ascending spiral emerging from the heart, as light, in a never-ending motion.”

Agni Yoga provides no road map, no goal-oriented course of action. And, as mentioned above, it offers no techniques or disciplines; for “Truth,” as VBA states, “cannot be revealed by the force of discipline.” Truth arises from the depth of consciousness realized through the attitude of serene expectancy.

The concept of serene expectancy is, in fact, pivotal to VBA’s conception of Agni Yoga. Such an attitude is predicated on facility with the system of Raja Yoga—the yoga of the mind and will—as well as the creation of the Antahkarana of causal light. Thus, only those who have integrated the three-fold-personality and centered it in the soul are capable of recognizing the “insatiable thirst for spiritual life” which unseals the doors to an inner vision and the life of higher service.

VBA portrays serene mental expectancy as an attitude of profound attentiveness toward life where all events and happenings are “contemplated through the mystical center of the heart,” the center of tranquil reconciliation, which reveals the truth that lies beyond the confines of the concrete mind. The challenge of Agni Yoga, as he explains: “is the apparent absence of activity on our part, used as we are to weigh, measure and calculate everything, building structures at all levels.” He goes on to say that “the apparent absence of activity is ... a dynamic action of the highest transcendence.”

Submission to the fiery ordeal of silence, is the key to Agni Yoga, because it reveals the true nature of the spiritual Soul which expands into the immensity of the Buddhic plane. The deep silence of the heart when balanced with the will is what allows the disciple to strengthen the Antahkarana and extend “it into the light of the Buddhic plane.” It is here, says VBA, that “the practitioner of Agni Yoga is immersed into the great creative void of consciousness where all ephemeral things are dissolved.” Such an experience is an “arid desert,” a “trial by fire” that offers no security and threatens us with annihilation as we lose our self in the ocean of luminous light. Thus, says VBA, practitioners of Agni Yoga, must “live fearlessly without any mental speculation about their fate or any other living thing.” They must trust in their own great nature and not recoil from the blinding light of consciousness with its great rewards. These rewards being the appearance of the intuition and the higher psychic powers, as well as “the infinite activity of eternal motion,” which the author equates with the great possibilities of the human heart, and “life of the great Solar Heart.”

Elsewhere in the book, VBA touches upon Agni Yoga and Pranayama, the Science of the Centers, and Samadhi—the exquisite equilibrium or peace that is realized on the 4<sup>th</sup> Buddhic Plane—and its relationship to the constellation of Libra, which establishes harmony in the human heart and in the heart of the Solar Logos.

Also discussed are the various connections between Agni Yoga and the number 4: the 4<sup>th</sup> Human Kingdom; the 4<sup>th</sup> center or heart center;

the Fourth Ray; the 4<sup>th</sup> or Buddhic plane, and the mysteries of the 4<sup>th</sup> Initiation. This initiation—the Renunciation—deals with the mysteries of the Solar Angels, with Words of Power or mantras that confer power over a certain group of Devas. These mantras give the initiate control of forces that actively contribute to development of the Plan, making him or her an “Architect” or builder of primordial substance.

The nature of free will, and the movement, through the path of Agni Yoga to the Spiritual will, are considered along with the great responsibility that power or creative Fire confers on the initiate. A section on the workings of space and time is included in which Agni Yoga is portrayed as the path of liberation from fixed perspectives, karma and one’s ancestral past. Eventually, the initiate overcomes the illusion of time and learns to extend the mind through Space.” As this takes place, the initiate “becomes a container for Solar mysteries and not just the container of knowledge.”

Another effect of this yoga practice is Thaumaturgy (from the Greek “wonder” or “miracle”), which is traditionally defined as the art and science of using magic to create change in the world. In the context of Agni Yoga, “Thaumaturgy is the higher energy of the Buddhic plane expressed as the magnetic and healing energy... through the power of [spiritual] radiation.” Thus, Agni Yoga is a powerful healing art that can be applied on physical, emotional and mental levels.

In his *Introduction to Agni Yoga*, VBA provides a luminous and immensely practical elucidation of the Yoga of Fire—of what it is and how it might be achieved. This profound and deeply inspiring work is a beacon on the Path. It is filled with sublime insights which awaken the reader to the deeper mysteries of the heart and a transformative way of living—insights that could only have been garnered through direct experience. The book is a must read for every student of the Ageless Wisdom. I am grateful to have read it and could not recommend it more highly.

Contributed by Donna M. Brown  
Washington, DC

## Book Review

---

*Living on the Inner Edge: A Practical Esoteric Tale*, by Cyrus Ryan. Alresford, England: Axis Mundi Books, 2018. Paperback, 232 pages. US \$16.35. Available from Amazon.

The gnostic or esoteric way of knowing relies on the development of the esoteric sense, a way of perceiving into and through words and experiences to arrive at their deeper meanings, to grasp the essence in terms of inner truth and spiritual purpose. The development of the esoteric sense requires an innate disposition or some sort of pre-existing esoteric hardwiring, along with training in meditation to cultivate the ability to indwell for sustained periods, and guidance in the form of esoteric knowledge. To begin with, the esoteric way of knowing forges a connection between the personality and the soul or Essential Nature and starts the long process of aligning the will of the personality with that of the soul. This process of discriminating between personality and soul natures is the first major step on the path of spiritual evolution and takes immense effort, discipline and perseverance, all of which occur both inside and beyond meditation experience and should become central to daily life.

*Living on the Inner Edge* portrays this journey and makes it a lived reality for the reader. Many books detail the “hows” and “whys” of meditation, few explore the experiential side. Ryan’s testimony sounds a clear note in our current age of confusion. Importantly, Ryan cautions against blind adherence to any spiritual teachings, repeating them, parrot like, as if that were an indication of spiritual progress.

The memoir opens in Toronto in 1975 when a spiritual group is formed around a teacher, RN, and goes on to depict the evolution of the group, the highs and lows, the tests and the

successes and failures. Above all, *Living on the Inner Edge* describes not a search for meaning but the laying bare of an authentic unfoldment of the soul within, the Essential Nature, of the author. Ryan makes several journeys to India, visits various sacred sites, and has extraordinary experiences along the way that make for an entertaining read. His depiction of the dangers, the struggles and the challenges that face the dedicated seeker are portrayed with insightful explanations. The strange manifestations of the astral, the latching on of Elementals, the confrontation with the consuming Dweller on the Threshold, are all described in rich detail. The path is long, enlightenment is far away, and the journey begins when the seeker strips away the delusion that they have already arrived at some point of high achievement.

Ryan has a gift for explaining the complex and abstruse in the most lucid and accessible fashion without losing the true essence of meaning. There is an awakening, stimulating, attuning charge to the writing, the memoir told by someone with decades of practical experience and a sincere heart.

This memoir will appeal to readers with at least a passing knowledge of Theosophy and the esotericism of the East, as found in Hindu and Buddhist philosophy, and a healthy dose of esoteric empathy. *Living on the Edge* is a journey on the inner planes, where unfoldment occurs at that interface of exoteric and esoteric realities. At the end, Ryan provides appendices containing further explanations and meditation techniques, in what amounts to a very sound and useful guide.

Contributed Dr. Isobel Blackthorn  
Queensland, Australia