

WAYS OF APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING THE SEVEN RAYS

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*The seven rays are the sum total of the divine Consciousness, of the universal Mind; They might be regarded as seven intelligent Entities through Whom the plan is working out.*¹

Alice A. Bailey: *Esoteric Psychology, Volume I*

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.

*This is a true definition of a ray.*²

Alice A. Bailey: *Esoteric Psychology, Volume I*

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to inform the reader of the latest developments regarding the study of the seven rays. Following a general introduction and a short description of the rays is a brief sampling of the works of authors besides Alice A. Bailey, who have written about the seven rays. This is followed by a more detailed discussion of the contributions of Kurt Abraham and Michael Robbins, both of whom are actively involved with the teachings on the seven rays, not just as authors, but also as teachers who have founded their own esoteric schools. This article provides a closer look and sampling of their writings. It also describes how, as an addition to a formal approach to the seven rays, a more playful and imaginative method can be adopted.

Introduction

If we look beyond the outer or physical appearance of our everyday lives, we have to acknowledge that we live in a world of energy and force. These energies and forces vary in countless ways with regards to their aspect and their quality. They interact with each other in just as many ways, and in their extremes, either cause destruction and conflict, or tend towards harmony, cooperation and synthesis.

Foremost among the various energies and forces that compose and condition our existence, are the seven major types of Divine energy or force, i.e., the Seven Rays. Each of these great rays acts to further the evolution of humanity and all life, via a “form of teaching truth . . . which is its unique contribution.”³ While these creative energies and forces are responsible for life and all that this term occultly entails, it is important to realize that it is not the rays as such, that are to blame for negative outcomes and effects, but rather the quality of the substance with which they interact.

In learning to consciously work with the particular qualities that these divine forces exhibit, it is the motive behind our response to and use of these energies that we must consider. Do those motives originate from personality levels and can thus be identified as fundamentally selfish; or do they originate from soul levels

About the Author

Iván Kovács is qualified as a fine artist. As a writer he has published art criticism, short stories and poems, and more recently, articles of an esoteric nature. He is a reader of the classics and modern classics, a lover of world cinema, as well as classical and contemporary music. His lifelong interest in Esotericism was rounded off with several years of intensive study with the Arcane School.

and are therefore applied to benefit the group, and as a result further the cause of right human relationships?

Although we have heard the Ancient Greek aphorism “Man, know thyself” so often that it has become something of a spiritual platitude, its significance is nonetheless as valid today as it was when it was first coined. It is only those who have not probed deeply enough into their natures who make light of it, because they are apt to mistake a fraction of themselves for their entire being. When this well-known aphorism is applied to the more subtle aspects of our constitution, it opens up a treasure chest of endless possibilities which, even a few generations ago were only known to a select few, such as the members of the Spiritual Hierarchy and their more intimate co-workers. In our present times, those who desire to make a conscious effort to set foot upon the Spiritual Path can turn to a wealth of information to aid their quest, provided that they make the needed effort and search for it in an intelligent and systematic way.

If we consider the human constitution as a whole, it becomes clear that we are dealing with a delicate instrument capable of both receiving and distributing energies and forces in a variety of ways and on the various levels of our existence. This is brought about by the interaction of the rays and the human energy centers and how they affect the world we live in, not only in its obvious material sense, but as regards the entire spectrum of our culture and civilization, including our highest spiritual aspirations.

Although almost everyone with a sincere interest in self-analysis could benefit from a basic knowledge of the seven rays, it is the student of esotericism and the working disciple who have the most to gain from such a study. Those

who are familiar with Alice A. Bailey’s *Esoteric Psychology, Volume I and II*, and *Discipleship in the New Age, Volume I and II*, know how important a good working knowledge of the rays can be and how the application of that knowledge can benefit their service and their lives.

A Short Overview of the Seven Rays According to the Tibetan and Alice A. Bailey

The seven rays can be said to fall into two groups, namely the three major rays and the four minor rays; the first group often referred to as the Rays of Aspect, and the second group as the Rays of Attribute:

Rays of Aspect

1. The Ray of Will, or Power.
2. The Ray of Love-Wisdom.
3. The Ray of Active Intelligence.

Rays of Attribute

4. Ray of Harmony, Beauty, or Art.
5. Ray of Concrete Knowledge or Science.
6. Ray of Abstract Idealism or Devotion.
7. Ray of Ceremonial Magic.⁴

Though the seven rays affect the macrocosm and the microcosm, a short description of their qualities in terms of their vices and virtues, demonstrate how they affect human personality and character. By these means the reader is enabled to identify with some of the ray qualities, particularly with those that might have a direct bearing with his or her own constitution.

The virtues characterizing each of the seven rays as explained by Alice A. Bailey are summarized in the table below:

Ray	Virtues
First Ray of Power	Strength, courage, steadfastness, truthfulness arising from absolute fearlessness, power of ruling, capacity to grasp great questions in a large-minded way, and of handling men and measures ⁵
Second Ray of Love-	Calm, strength, patience and endurance, love of truth, faithfulness, intu-

Wisdom	ition, clear intelligence, and serene temper ⁶
Third Ray of Higher Mind	Wide views on all abstract questions, sincerity of purpose, clear intellect, capacity for concentration on philosophic studies, patience, caution, absence of the tendency to worry himself or others over trifles ⁷
Fourth Ray of Harmony Through Conflict	Strong affections, sympathy, physical courage, generosity, devotion, quickness of intellect and perception ⁸
Fifth Ray of Lower Mind	Strictly accurate statements, justice (without mercy), perseverance, common-sense, uprightness, independence, keen intellect ⁹
Sixth Ray of Devotion	Devotion, single-mindedness, love, tenderness, intuition, loyalty, reverence ¹⁰
Seventh Ray of Ceremonial Order and Magic	Strength, perseverance, courage, courtesy, extreme care in details, self-reliance ¹¹

The above virtues are contrasted by the vices as associated with the seven rays, which are summarized in the table below:

Ray	Vices
First Ray of Power	Pride, ambition, willfulness, hardness, arrogance, desire to control others, obstinacy, anger ¹²
Second Ray of Love-Wisdom	Over-absorption in study, coldness, indifference to others, contempt of mental limitation in others ¹³
Third Ray of Higher Mind	Intellectual pride, coldness, isolation, inaccuracy in details, absent-mindedness, obstinacy, selfishness, overmuch criticism of others ¹⁴
Fourth Ray of Harmony Through Conflict	Self-centeredness, worrying, inaccuracy, lack of moral courage, strong passions, indolence, extravagance ¹⁵
Fifth Ray of Lower Mind	Harsh criticism, narrowness, arrogance, unforgiving temper, lack of sympathy and reverence, prejudice ¹⁶
Sixth Ray of Devotion	Selfish and jealous love, over-leaning on others, partiality, self-deception, sectarianism, superstition, prejudice, over-rapid conclusions, fiery anger ¹⁷
Seventh Ray of Ceremonial Order and Magic	Formalism, bigotry, pride, narrowness, superficial judgments, self-opinion over-indulged ¹⁸

The virtues to be acquired by persons on each of the seven rays are summarized in the table below:

Ray	Virtues to be acquired
First Ray of Power	Tenderness, humility, sympathy, tolerance, patience ¹⁹
Second Ray of Love-Wisdom	Love, compassion, unselfishness, energy ²⁰

Third Ray of Higher Mind	Sympathy, tolerance, devotion, accuracy, energy and common sense ²¹
Fourth Ray of Harmony Through Conflict	Serenity, confidence, self-control, purity, unselfishness, accuracy, mental and moral balance ²²
Fifth Ray of Lower Mind	Reverence, devotion, sympathy, love, wide-mindedness ²³
Sixth Ray of Devotion	Strength, self-sacrifice, purity, truth, tolerance, serenity, balance and common sense ²⁴
Seventh Ray of Ceremonial Order and Magic	Realization of unity, wide-mindedness, tolerance, humility, gentleness and love ²⁵

A Brief Summary of the Seven Rays as Treated by Authors in the Post-Bailey Period

Although this article seeks to help the reader gain more knowledge with respect to the individual and the rays, its primary aim is not so much concerned with providing comprehensive information about each ray, but more directed at examining those sources which can best aid the reader in such a quest. In this sense this article is simply a pointer to those sources where an in-depth study of the rays has already been made, and aims no further than sampling some of the findings from these sources and pointing out some options regarding such a quest.

To illustrate how poorly the seven rays were perceived and understood prior to the writings of Alice A. Bailey, one only needs to turn to Max Heindel's *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*,²⁶ a book which lies outside the scope of theosophical writing as treated by H. P. Blavatsky, and is more allied to Rudolph Steiner's Anthroposophy. Its short passage about the seven rays is an early attempt to assign different ray qualities to human beings, but goes no further than illustrating the difference between the rays by way of analogy. Heindel points out that the rays are comparable to the seven colors of the spectrum. He then remarks that "for instance, if a red ray were to ally itself with a green ray, inharmony (sic) would result."²⁷ Heindel does not elaborate any further, and the reader remains in the dark about the different ray qualities.

After the death of Alice A. Bailey, and the successful conclusion of her collaboration with the Tibetan Master, Djwahl Khul, several esotericists continued writing about the subject of the seven rays, probably the earliest of these being Geoffrey Hodson, whose book, *The Seven Human Temperaments*,²⁸ was first published in 1952. In this book, Hodson gives examples of how specific rays influence specific individuals and thus divide them into their respective psychological types. An expansive table at the end of the book lists the essential qualities, suitable occupations, basic virtues and vices, the driving impulse, the highest attainment, the method of teaching and achievement, the weaknesses, sources of suffering, and the religion, art, as well as the jewel which is associated with the ray.²⁹

Although Geoffrey Hodson is a Theosophist, and writes from a theosophical viewpoint, most subsequent writers who treat the subject of the seven rays owe their source of inspiration to the Bailey books. It needs to be said that any new conclusions that such newcomers might have reached was only possible because a thorough foundation had already been laid by Bailey and the Tibetan. It nevertheless required innovation and intuition on the part of the newcomers who were able to expand on the existing work.

One author, who has been prodigiously involved in creating esoteric books for more than half a century, and penned more than 100 books, is Douglas Baker. Although his literary roots hark back to the books of Alice A. Bailey, he is an inspired writer in his own right. In

the introduction to his book, *Esoteric Psychology: The Seven Rays*,³⁰ he emphasizes the fact that “the key to the knowledge of Man’s totality for our day is the PSYCHOLOGICAL one.”³¹ He argues that it is by means of an understanding of the seven rays that this knowledge is made practicable, because it provides us with the whole picture of our selves, and what he calls “holistic Man.”³² Baker also points out that the rays can provide us with new methods of healing and teach us how to manipulate soul energy. He identifies the rays with the forces that can indicate the political character and destiny of the nations, and “show us the origin, function and future of individual races and the race of mankind as a whole.”³³

In a companion book, *The Seven Rays: Key to the Mysteries*, Baker discusses the psychological qualities of the rays, as well as their relationship to the various planes of consciousness, the human energy centers, and the color spectrum.³⁴

Michal Eastcott was a co-worker of Roberto Assagioli, the founder of Psychosynthesis, and together they developed the body of work known as the Group for Creative Meditation. In addition, Eastcott has written *I the Story of the Self*,³⁵ as well as *The Seven Rays of Energy*,³⁶ both published in 1980. In the former, she gives a short summary of the rays, while in the latter, she points out how the seven rays can be utilized. However, Eastcott cautions readers not to come to hasty conclusions when attempting to identify their ray types, because individuals are affected by a variety of rays which are difficult to assess, and because “their emphases in our lives may well differ from time to time.”³⁷

Zachary F. Lansdowne is the author of *The Chakras and Esoteric Healing*,³⁸ which was published in 1986, and *The Rays and Esoteric Psychology*,³⁹ which was published in 1989. The former, apart from discussing the use of energy centers for healing, also discusses seven symbolic formulas for seven different healing techniques, and how these formulas and techniques are applied in terms of the seven rays. In the latter book he discusses the “seven techniques of integration” (first mentioned in Alice A. Bailey’s *Esoteric Psychology II*)⁴⁰

which facilitate the integration process of the seven personality types prior to their fusion with the soul.

To regular readers of the *Esoteric Quarterly* Zachary F. Lansdowne has by now become something of a household name, but newcomers to this journal will be happy to find that Lansdowne has also written several articles about the integration process of the various rays, and how they are to be compared with the writings of other traditions. Examples that come to mind are *Emerson’s Essays Compared to Bailey’s Technique of Integration for the Fifth Ray*,⁴¹ and *The Bhagavad Gita Compared to Bailey’s Technique of Integration for the First Ray*.⁴² If the reader takes the trouble to examine what is written about these techniques and the texts they are compared to, he or she will most likely agree how surprising and accurate these correspondences actually are.

Two Schools of Note Regarding the Seven Rays

All esoteric schools which are based on the teachings of the Tibetan, as they have been transmitted by Alice A. Bailey, lay considerable emphasis on a working knowledge of the seven rays. But two schools have made it one of their prime concerns to use the seven rays as a major means to distribute the esoteric teachings. One is the School for the Study of the Seven Rays, the other the Seven Ray Institute and the University of the Seven Rays, under the umbrella body of the Morya Federation.

The founder and Head of the School for the Study of the Seven Rays is Kurt Abraham, and his school offers a three year home study course in the Wisdom Teachings, laying special emphasis on detailed knowledge about the seven rays.

The Morya Federation⁴³ is an online school aimed at group meditation, study and service. It is headed by Michael Robbins, author of a comprehensive work on the seven rays entitled *Tapestry of the Gods*.⁴⁴

These two authors and their work will be looked at in closer detail in the following pages in an effort to show how they have applied

the basic knowledge about the seven rays as presented in the teachings of Master Djwhal Khul, and in what ways they have taken the teaching to new levels of understanding. The books of Alice A. Bailey laid a firm foundation for the teachings about the seven rays, and there are no gaps or shortcomings in the teachings. Kurt Abraham and Michael Robbins simply expanded on the teachings, showing what can be done when the teachings are applied in practical ways.

Kurt Abraham and the Psychology of the Seven Rays

In his appraisal of Kurt Abraham's *Techniques of Soul Alignment*, John Cullen, President of the International Association for Managerial and Organizational Psychosynthesis, writes as follows: "Kurt Abraham is the foremost authority on the esoteric aspects of the Seven Rays. He has written many books on the subject which I have found useful in their application to psychosynthesis typology."⁴⁵

A closer look at Abraham's background and work seems to justify the above claim, especially when one takes into consideration that he has studied the Bailey material for over forty years. In his *Introduction to the Seven Rays*⁴⁶ the author provides key words and qualifying terms by which he defines each of the seven rays. He also encourages the reader to do a self-evaluation by means of a rating scale, and thereby arrive at an evaluation of the relevance or influence of a ray as it might affect the reader's consciousness and behavior. In conclusion, Abraham compares the influence of the outgoing Sixth Ray and incoming Seventh Ray, which figure so dominantly during this period of transition between the Piscean and Aquarian Age.

There are other important issues in this book which help to enhance the reader's understanding of the rays. The chapter dealing with examples of how the three major rays are impacting our lives on a grand scale, entitled *The Three Rays of Aspect and the Threefold Social Order*,⁴⁷ is well worth a closer look, for the practical and demonstrable way in which it explains how the rays influence the world. The

three major rays, namely the First Ray of Will and Purpose, the Second Ray of Love-Wisdom, and the Third Ray of Active Intelligence, are identified as the subjective influences behind the three major domains of the social order, namely the First Ray for Government, the Second Ray for the Spiritual-Cultural Life, and the Third Ray for the Economic Sphere. Abraham explains that the above three domains can only function properly if each domain is allowed to do its function without interference from another⁴⁸. Any interference from one domain with the functioning of another will have some deleterious effect.

Abraham's concluding statement on how the three major rays should be understood and applied can be summed up as follows: For the First Ray - "Empowering others, strengthening others. Making others more self-reliant. Sharing responsibility." For the Second Ray - "Appreciating others. Relating heart-to-heart. Meditatively reflecting on the helpful and invisible contribution of others." For the Third Ray - "Clarifying the other point of view in the effort to intuit the larger, the relative, and the transcendent whole."⁴⁹

When treating the significance of the incoming Seventh Ray, and the outgoing Sixth Ray, Abraham points out that "from a certain perspective the Seventh Ray is perhaps the most 'visible' of the seven qualifying ray energies . . ."⁵⁰ He ascribes this to the fact that the Seventh Ray is one of the four rays of attribute, and because of its strong conditioning powers as regards the physical-etheric plane. However, he also points out that from another perspective, the Seventh Ray is relatively new, because it is the conditioning ray of the Aquarian Age. In contrast the Sixth Ray of Idealism and Devotion, as a conditioning ray of the Piscean Age, has been with us for the past two thousand years, and is thus more familiar to us than the Seventh Ray qualities of organization, relationship, and ceremonial magic.⁵¹

It is by contrasting the qualities of the two above mentioned rays that Abraham demonstrates their differences and distinction, and juxtaposes them as follows:

OUTGOING 6 th RAY	INCOMING 7 th RAY
Separative, selective.....	Unifying
One-pointedness.....	Diversity
Communion of identical.....	Communion of differences
Isolated.....	Urban
Authoritarian.....	Cooperative
Religious.....	Religious, political, artistic, economic, sociological ⁵²

From the above, one can conclude that under the influence of the Seventh Ray things might become more complex, but nevertheless unified, with an emphasis on tolerance and acceptance of diversity, and thus in conformity with the group spirit and the ideal of right human relationships.

An intriguing work by Kurt Abraham, entitled *Great Souls: The Seven Rays at the Soul Level*,⁵³ discusses seven exceptional individuals, each of whom are representative of one of the seven rays. These individuals, corresponding in their given order with each of the seven rays, are Herbert Kitchener, British General; Alice A. Bailey, founder of the Arcane School; A. P. Giannini, founder of Bank of America; Leonardo da Vinci, Renaissance painter; Thomas Edison, American inventor; Alfred Lord Tennyson, British poet; and Marie Curie, Polish scientist.

Rather than giving a skeletal sampling from each of these biographies, the intention is to concentrate on just one individual's characteristics and qualities, namely Alice A. Bailey, for the obvious reason that most readers who will read this text will find references to her and her life intriguing and of special interest.

Basing his psychological analysis of Alice Bailey on her book, *The Unfinished Autobiography*, Abraham alternates his text between direct quotes from Bailey's narration and his own insights. Not only does he concentrate on Bailey's personal life, he also sketches in the historical background of her time, giving the reader a fair idea what it might have been like to grow up in England during the Victorian era.⁵⁴

Concerning the great turning point in Bailey's life, just prior to the time when she found her true vocation, Abraham points out that, superficially observed, and from a personality per-

spective, that stage in her life appears to have culminated in failure. With a failed marriage and no proper career to speak of she is forced to work in a sardine factory, so that she can support herself and her three young children. But from a soul consciousness point of view, her life is busy transforming itself into something very different.⁵⁵

Abraham points out that "this experience of doing the most humble, mundane and unglamorous tasks 'down among the people' helped greatly to bring about Alice's 'unalterable and unshakable faith in the beauty and divinity of humanity.'"⁵⁶ It is an important step and realization in Bailey's life, since it forms the basis of brotherhood and is also the foundation upon which all her spiritual work rests. For someone who is about to become a proponent of occult truths, and the founder of an esoteric school, these realizations are absolutely essential.⁵⁷

Life's lessons come at a price, and it is often when everything seems lost, that a turning point is reached, and in fact, new avenues open up, and everything is to be gained. Having reached rock bottom, and realized that her circumstances had by necessity altered her perspective, Bailey was now ready for those contacts that would aid her in her true purpose as a world disciple. This new phase in her life initiated her 30 year telepathic relationship with the Tibetan Master, Djwhal Khul, by means of which her books would be written and the teachings given out. It also brought about her meeting with Foster Bailey, who aided her with the equally unique task of founding and heading the Arcane School.⁵⁸

It is from this stage onward that her Second Ray soul and her First Ray personality really come into play. Their importance is pointed out by Abraham as follows: "Alice's 1st Ray personality was no small contributor to her service work. It has been said that a 2nd Ray

soul *likes* a 1st Ray personality. The 2-1 (and also 1-2) ray combination is an especially beneficial combination for several reasons.”⁵⁹ Abraham explains that in the case of a Second Ray soul with a First Ray personality, the love-wisdom aspect does not become inactive, nor loses itself in study, and consequently will not shut out the world to live in an ivory tower. Bailey admitted that she had a problem with fear (a Second Ray Problem), but was able to overcome it with the aid of her First Ray personality.⁶⁰

Careful not to come up with hastily drawn conclusions, Abraham finishes his analysis of Alice Bailey’s ray types with cautious speculation. He points out that earlier in his essay he thought that Bailey had a Fourth Ray mind. He refers to Foster Bailey’s declaration that Alice Bailey did not have a Fifth Ray mind, but that she was keenly interested in scientific exploration and in the field of theoretical physics, and that she gave a series of lectures in New York on the subject of the atom, which was later published under the title, *The Consciousness of the Atom*. Abraham suggests that it is possible that Alice Bailey had a First Ray mind. He observes that while she was working in India, she had a great deal of responsibility, which included ever increasing administrative tasks, and that her writing seems to indicate an ability to go directly to the salient point. Concerning her writing, Abraham points out that her writing could not be described as colorful, but is rather brief and to the point. On the other hand, the fact that she had a great sense of humor suggests the Fourth Ray. Her ability to take action, and to be at the head of some teaching group wherever she lived, suggests the First Ray. Abraham affirms that we are sure of Bailey’s soul and personality ray, but the rest is speculation.⁶¹

Although Kurt Abraham’s writing is strongly rooted in the Bailey tradition, his greatest merit is the fact that he is able to make a case for the

seven rays in a practicable way and thereby to satisfy his readers with concrete examples of how the rays can be applied and used in understanding ourselves and the world about us.

Michael Robbins and the *Tapestry of the Gods*

Even a cursory overview of the contents of *Tapestry of the Gods* reveals this work to be of encyclopedic proportions as far as the

[O]ur continued engagement with life is synonymous with a continued engagement with the energies and forces of the seven rays, and thus an ongoing process which is the very driving force underlying life and evolution.

seven rays are concerned. It is a ground-breaking study which can make a rightful claim of picking up the thread where Alice A. Bailey and the Tibetan Master, Djwhal Khul, have left off. Used as a tool for individual psychological assessment, its value is inestimable. Taking into consideration that Esoteric Psychology concerns itself with assessing people not only on a personality level, but also by attempting to identify the rays of the men-

tal, emotional, and physical vehicles, as well as the more subtle influence of the soul ray, it can be far more accurate and explicit.

In his commentary to the *Tapestry of the Gods*, Robert Gerard points out that the beauty of ray theory and practice is due to the fact that from a limited number of seven types of energy, one can still do justice to the uniqueness of an individual human being. This, he explains, is possible because any one of the ray energies has the potential of qualifying an individual on any one of his fivefold vehicles, namely the egoic, the personality, the mental, emotional, or physical vehicle. This five-fold ray formula involves exactly 16,807 possible combinations of rays. Add to this the three major monadic rays, and the number of possible permutations will exceed 50,000.⁶²

In his general introduction to *Tapestry of the Gods*, Robbins affirms that each of us has a unique life purpose, because each one of us is a spiritual archetype that needs to be expressed in time and space. He identifies all of us as integral and inseparable parts of a “great, all-

inclusive ENTITY,” and points out that we are intended to cooperate in this Entity’s creative purposes by manifesting our individual archetypal nature.⁶³

The objective of the first two volumes of *Tapstry of the Gods* is to aid readers to achieve the ideal of their life purposes by means of a detailed understanding of their spiritual archetypes, which is made possible by correctly identifying the specific rays that go into the making of their constitutions. Volume I (Sections I – IV) is subtitled *The Seven Rays: An Esoteric Key to Understanding Human Nature*, and Volume II (Sections V-VII) is subtitled *Psychospiritual Transformation and the Seven Rays*. Together, these two volumes add up to a little more than 1200 pages and are to date probably the most comprehensive listings of the qualities of the seven rays that has been attempted. A closer look at the various sections of these two volumes will make this clear.

Section I lists and discusses the qualities of the seven rays in a general way both in terms of their positive and negative traits. Section II consists of an analysis of the differences and similarities of the ray qualities, and taken two at a time, yields 21 combinations by means of which these similarities and differences are explored and pointed out. Robbins writes that the purpose of Section II is *clarification*, and that one of the major problems in ray analysis is simply the difficulty of telling one ray from another. He draws attention to the fact that any pair of rays has many points of distinction, and a number of points in common, and if these points can be clarified, confusion can be avoided.⁶⁴

Section III discusses and examines in a practical way the five fields of the human energy system, namely the soul field, the personality field, the mental field, the emotional field, and the etheric-physical field. Robbins explains that Section III is not about giving a technical analysis, but about attempting to use a commonsense approach to the nature and functions of the five energy fields.⁶⁵

In his discussion of the fivefold human energy system Robbins points out that as students of the seven rays, our chief purposes should be

the understanding of the ray structure of a human being. This effectively means an understanding of the ray qualities of each of the five energy fields which are usually considered in the ray chart. To be able to do this, one needs to recognize the functioning of one field, and differentiate it from the functioning of another field.⁶⁶ To achieve such a differentiation between the five fields, Section III illustrates some of the key functions, operations and characteristic dynamics of each field. For instance, the Ego as a faculty within the Transpersonal Field is characterized as follows:

1. Source of one’s greatest contribution in service – one’s true vocation.
2. Source of one’s selflessness and altruism.
3. Source of one’s true conscience.
4. Source of one’s most joyous activity.
5. Source of one’s greatest sense of meaningfulness.
6. Source of one’s sense of the sacred.
7. Source of one’s ‘heart’s desire.’⁶⁷

In contrast to the above, the Personality Field is characterized both by Positive Personality Dynamics and Negative Personality Dynamics. The positive dynamics are listed as follows:

1. Primary instrument for expressing the soul or Ego within the three worlds of human evolution.
2. Primary means (and result) of integrating the mental, sentient and etheric-physical fields.
3. Primary means of coordinating and directing physical plane activity.
4. Primary means of establishing the identity of the lower ego, or personal identity.
5. Primary means of establishing genuine self-reliance, distinction from the mass, and originality.
6. Primary means of establishing the preliminary vocation.⁶⁸

The Negative Personality Dynamics are identified as:

1. Primary means of standing in the way of the Higher Self.
2. Primary means of evading or failing to respond to the 'higher calling.'
3. Primary means of limiting expansion and refusing to grow.
4. Primary means of expressing selfishness and separateness.
5. Primary means of self-centering and self-referencing.⁶⁹

Each of the above mentioned points, whether they are identified as characterizing the Transpersonal Field or the Personal Field, are then discussed in some detail, and the same is done in respect of the Lower Mental Field, the Sentient Field, and the Bio-field. The remainder of Section III discusses the differentiations between the Fields and the variable attributes of the three Personality Fields.

Section IV contains a complete analysis of the manner in which every ray affects every field of the human energy system. The only fields left out of the discussion are the Triadic and Monadic fields, because so little is known about them. Robbins admits that many of the combinations discussed are improbable in terms of our present day knowledge, but the analysis proceeds upon the assumption that it is (at least theoretically) possible for *any* of the seven rays to condition *any* of the five fields (and even the 'ultimate field' – the Monadic field). He concedes that much of what is presented in this section is purely speculative, and based upon reasoning rather than direct observation, but the need for a beginning is nevertheless fulfilled.⁷⁰

Section V deals with the seven rays and the dynamics of soul/personality integration. Robbins discusses the seven combinations of identical soul and personality rays, but does not analyze them exhaustively. He examines the interaction between soul and personality before the spiritual phase of evolution, during the stage of conflict between the soul and personality rays, and also from the perspective of the consciousness focused primarily within the soul. He also discusses soul and personality rays in relation to their potential ideal expres-

sion, and with respect to the two integration formulae keyed to the rays in question. These integration formulae are key words relating to the rays, such as *inclusion* for the First Ray, *centralization* for the Second Ray, *stillness* for the Third Ray, etc., and when considered and meditated upon, aid the disciple in the integration process. Robbins also lists some examples of vocational aptitudes and orientations relating to the combination of soul and personality Rays, and finally lists contemporary or historical (and sometimes, fictional or mythological) individuals who, in his opinion, seem to embody the rays under discussion.⁷¹

Section VI deals with the five-fold ray chart and how it is applied in ray analysis. Practical aspects are considered and numerous examples of ray chart analyses are offered. In the first part of Section VI the reader gets the opportunity to work with abstract exercises. Seven different ray charts are presented, and possible methods of interpretation are discussed. Part two deals with character sketches which are hypothetical, in which the author pre-selected certain ray configurations which, at first, are not revealed. Students are allowed to draw their own conclusions, and then compare them to the author's reasoning and analysis. The last part of Section VI deals with an in-depth ray analysis of seven well-known historical figures, each with a presumably different soul ray. These seven are Francis Bacon, Annie Besant, Albert Einstein, Joan of Arc, Michelangelo, Louis Pasteur, and Albert Schweitzer.⁷²

The final section, Section VII, consists of six appendices and a glossary. Appendix I lists some ray tabulations from the Tibetan's teachings as given in the books of Alice A. Bailey, such as Words of Power, Integration Formulae, Fusion Formulae, Discipleship and the Rays, Rays in and out of manifestation, etc. Appendix II deals with the constellations and the planets from the perspective of esoteric Astrology, while Appendix III discusses the meaning of the planets from an esoteric perspective. Appendix IV is devoted to a brief discussion of the Personal Identity Profile (P.I.P. #1), a personality inventory devised to detect the relative ray strengths in the individual energy system. Appendix V contains a

meditation named “Search for the Soul Ray” which is designed to assist students in determining their soul ray. Appendix VI is a recommended reading list on the subject of Esoteric Psychology and the Seven Rays, and consists of titles chosen from Alice A. Bailey’s books, as well as titles by a diversity of other writers. The glossary lists definitions of frequently used esoteric, occult and psycho-spiritual terms.⁷³

The above summary is but an indication of how extensive and exhaustive these two volumes of *Tapestry of the Gods* are. Whether they are treated as textbooks that can provide systematic information about the seven rays, or used as works of reference, their value cannot be underestimated either by beginners nor advanced students of Esoteric Psychology and the Seven Rays.

Some Examples of How to Think Creatively About the Seven Rays

It is not only by reading about the rays that we gain more knowledge about them, but also by contemplating their qualities in imaginative, experimental and hypothetical ways. There are various methods by which one can approach and broaden his or her knowledge about the seven rays, apart from the purely scientific or academic. We can, among others, approach the rays in an imaginative and playful way, giving free rein to our imagination. We can do this by using an “as if” approach such as role playing characters with specific ray qualities; or by means of writing, create imaginary characters fashioned on specific ray types. Another example of such innovative thinking might be played out by imagining how people with differing rays might respond to an identical situation.

Let us, for instance, take any well-made feature film that has all the qualities by which it lives up to its good name. Then let us try and imagine how it might be perceived by representatives of each of the seven rays. If we do this by laying ourselves open to inspiration and insight, we will be able to think about the film from seven different perspectives by basing them on our knowledge of the rays and come

up with something that might assume the following broad outlines:

First Ray individuals will most likely pay attention to the film’s political and ideological issues.

Second Ray persons are likely to question the film according to its educational value, and see it in terms of unfolding human relationships.

Third Ray individuals will be aware of the basic plot and how well it conveys the film’s message and intention.

Fourth Ray persons will inevitably take note of the film’s aesthetic qualities, like background sets, the manner and expression of the characters, as well as their costumes, and the dramatic impact of interesting landscapes, if any.

Fifth Ray individuals will be concerned with the accuracy of details, such as historical facts, convincing imitation of the period that the film tries to convey, and clearly defined portrayals which are true to the characters.

Sixth Ray persons are likely to view the film in terms of its value as a source of inspiration, and how it might apply to their ideals and affect them in an emotionally uplifting way.

Seventh Ray people might judge the film by its intrinsic value as a detailed and well-ordered demonstration of some spiritual or subjective truth, as it becomes manifest in the concrete, physical world, and how well it can serve as a model for the environment and the community.

Conclusion

In the final analysis, the purpose and function of the rays is to give structure to our consciousness and being. The more advanced esoteric students are, the more they are able to assimilate greater expanses of that spiritual vista by which we define our progressively unfolding lives. This rounding out process is systematically brought about by our personal experience and knowledge of the seven rays as they shape and define our richly patterned lives.

Therefore, our continued engagement with life is synonymous with a continued engagement with the energies and forces of the seven rays,

and thus an ongoing process which is the very driving force underlying life and evolution. The better we understand the nature of the seven rays, the better we understand ourselves and our fellow human beings and consequently the richer we become in our wisdom and understanding of the connection between the microcosm and macrocosm. This empowers us to participate with greater purpose in the great hierarchical effort and brings us closer to solving the mystery and meaning of life.

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- 1 Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology, Volume I* (1962; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1979), 59.
 - 2 *Ibid.*, 316.
 - 3 *Ibid.*, 49.
 - 4 Alice A. Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation* (1950; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1979), 358 – 359.
 - 5 Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology, Volume I*, 201.
 - 6 *Ibid.*, 202.
 - 7 *Ibid.*, 204.
 - 8 *Ibid.*, 205.
 - 9 *Ibid.*, 207.
 - 10 *Ibid.*, 208.
 - 11 *Ibid.*, 210.
 - 12 *Ibid.*, 201.
 - 13 *Ibid.*, 202.
 - 14 *Ibid.*, 204.
 - 15 *Ibid.*, 206.
 - 16 *Ibid.*, 207.
 - 17 *Ibid.*, 208-209.
 - 18 *Ibid.*, 210.
 - 19 *Ibid.*, 201.
 - 20 *Ibid.*, 203.
 - 21 *Ibid.*, 204.
 - 22 *Ibid.*, 206.
 - 23 *Ibid.*, 207.
 - 24 *Ibid.*, 209.
 - 25 *Ibid.*, 210.
 - 26 Max Heindel, *The Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception*, (1909; reprint; London: L. N. Fowler & Co., Ltd., 1937).
 - 27 *Ibid.*, 439.
 - 28 Geoffrey Hodson, *The Seven Human Temperaments* (Adyar, Madras, India: Theosophical publishing House, 1952).
 - 29 *Ibid.*
 - 30 Dr Douglas Baker, *Esoteric Psychology: The Seven Rays* (1975; reprint; Essendon: "Little Elephant", 1979).
 - 31 *Ibid.*, 12.

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- 32 *Ibid.*, 12.
 - 33 *Ibid.*, 12.
 - 34 Douglas Baker, *The Seven Rays: Key to the Mysteries* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1977).
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 - 36 Michal Eastcott, *The Seven Rays of Energy* (Turnbridge Wells, Kent, England: Sundial House, 1980).
 - 37 *Ibid.*, 7.
 - 38 Zachary F. Lansdowne, *The Chakras and Esoteric Healing* (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1986).
 - 39 Zachary F. Lansdowne, *The Rays and Esoteric Psychology* (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1989).
 - 40 Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology II*.
 - 41 <http://www.esotericstudies.net/quarterly/Files-080212/EQ080212-Lansdowne.pdf> (accessed September 10, 2012).
 - 42 <http://www.esotericstudies.net/quarterly/Files-070311/EQ070311-Lansdowne.pdf> (accessed September 10, 2012).
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 - 44 Michael D. Robbins, *Tapestry of the Gods, Volume I and II* (1988; reprint; Mariposa: The University of the Seven Rays Publishing House, 1996).
 - 45 Kurt Abraham, *Seven Rays: Frequently Asked Questions* (White City: Lampus Press, 2011) 198.
 - 46 Kurt Abraham, *Introduction to the Seven Rays* (White City: Lampus Press, 1986).
 - 47 *Ibid.*, 50.
 - 48 *Ibid.*, 56.
 - 49 *Ibid.*, 73.
 - 50 *Ibid.*, 74.
 - 51 *Ibid.*, 74.
 - 52 *Ibid.*, 75.
 - 53 Kurt Abraham, *Great Souls: The Seven Rays at the Soul Level* (White City: Lampus Press, 2002).
 - 54 *Ibid.*, 34-38.
 - 55 *Ibid.*, 47.
 - 56 *Ibid.*, 48.
 - 57 *Ibid.*, 48.
 - 58 *Ibid.*, 49-50.
 - 59 *Ibid.*, 54.
 - 60 *Ibid.*, 54.
 - 61 *Ibid.*, 54-55.
 - 62 Michael D. Robbins, *Tapestry of the Gods*, xxx-xxxii.
 - 63 *Ibid.*, 11.

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- ⁶⁴ Ibid., 4.
⁶⁵ Ibid., 5.
⁶⁶ Ibid., 301.
⁶⁷ Ibid., 304.
⁶⁸ Ibid., 310.
⁶⁹ Ibid., 313.

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- ⁷⁰ Ibid., 5.
⁷¹ Michael D. Robbins, *Tapestry of the Gods II*, 17
- 343.
⁷² Ibid. 347-505.
⁷³ Ibid., 511- 598.