

# The Great Bear

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## Abstract

As students of the Alice Bailey teachings know, the constellation of the Great Bear is often mentioned by the Tibetan in his discussions of esoteric cosmology and astrology. The Great Bear is but one of many celestial factors with which students should be familiar for a greater understanding of *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* and *Esoteric Astrology*. Yet, the Great Bear stands out from others in the starry field of the galaxy, functioning for our solar system in an unparalleled way. Examining the nature of the Great Bear from the esoteric perspective, this study proceeds to explain why that's so. The exploration of the Great Bear moves through a consideration of the leading role played by the Great Bear, the Great Bear as an agent of the Will, the occult effects of the Great Bear, the mythology of the Great Bear around the world, the astrological intermediaries of the Great Bear, and the Great Bear in regard to higher stages of evolution. The study concludes with a summary of the twenty-five essential points made throughout the discussion, all of which serve to explain why this polar constellation holds such pride of place in the esoteric teaching and how it has been revered around the globe throughout time.

## The Leading Role Played by the Great Bear

A titan of the north polar region, the constellation of the Great Bear plays an immensely important role in the life processes of the manifested universe of which our solar system is a small part. Known as the Big Dipper to the public, Ursa Major<sup>1</sup> to astronomers, and the Great Bear to students of the Ageless Wisdom,

this constellation might legitimately be said to hold absolute pride of place in the occult cosmology.

Perhaps the first and foremost reason for the prime importance of this constellation is the position it is said to hold in the body of the Cosmic Logos. According to the esoteric astrological doctrine revealed by the Tibetan, the seven well known and visible stars of the Great Bear are the outward manifestations of the seven head centers contained in the body of the Cosmic Logos.<sup>2</sup> In keeping with this directive position, these seven stars of the Great Bear function for our solar system as the monad does for the individual human being,<sup>3</sup> thus rendering the Great Bear an embodiment of the "microcosmic absolute" for our Solar Logos.

Seen from a slightly different angle, the Great Bear fills yet another role in regard to our Solar Logos. According to the Tibetan, the Great Bear is a member of a group of three stellar factors that go to make up what he calls the Spiritual Triad of our Solar Logos.<sup>4</sup> These three stellar factors are the Great Bear, Sirius, and the

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## About the Author

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Pleiades—the three constellations which the Tibetan referred to as “the three major conditioning constellations”<sup>5</sup> for their essential role in ushering into our system the energies of the Three Rays of Aspect, the basic building blocks of all evolutionary manifestation.<sup>6</sup> In keeping with the primal nature of this group of stellar factors, the triangle of Great Bear, Sirius, and the Pleiades also functions as the Spiritual Triad, or atma-buddhi-manas, of our Solar Logos, translating the Divine Will from on high into energies and drives which can be implemented in our solar system. Seen from this view, the Great Bear appears as the atmic vesture of our Solar Logos. Accordingly, the Tibetan indicated that the influence of this group, including the Great Bear, is “dominant in connection with solar incarnational evolution.”<sup>7</sup>

Through this pivotal group of stellar factors there course mighty energies which impulse the various stages of evolution in our solar system.<sup>8</sup> The Great Bear itself plays an important role in this regard, being specifically the entry point into our solar system for all seven ray energies,<sup>9</sup> each visible star in that constellation acting as an energy distribution point for one of the seven rays.<sup>10</sup> In this way, each of the seven visible Ursine stars is also the prototype for one of the Planetary Logoi<sup>11</sup> in our system, who are embodiments of the very Rays themselves. According to the Tibetan, the stellar counterpart of each Planetary Logos functions as the Monad of that entity, so that each of the seven visible stars of the Great Bear is to a Planetary Logos as the Monad is to the human being.<sup>12</sup> Though individually for each star this is so, collectively the seven visible stars of the Great Bear function as the Monad of the Solar Logos. In both cases, the prime nature of the Great Bear is confirmed.

Thus, there is much meaning behind the notion that “the seven stars of the Great Bear are the originating sources of the seven rays of our solar system.”<sup>13</sup> Though this last statement may seem to contradict the notion that the rays have their rise in the seven solar systems of which ours is one, there is likely no real conflict, but rather a difference of perspective.<sup>14</sup>

At any rate, it is evident from this statement on the role of the Great Bear that the Tibetan considered this constellation the prime inlet for the

seven ray energies. Thus, these are the energies which pour forth cyclically from the “conditioning constellations” into the evolutionary enterprise of our Solar Logos, and they do so specifically through the central agency of the Great Bear.

For all these reasons, the Tibetan referred to the Great Bear as:

- 1) the Superior Constellation<sup>15</sup> (due to its determining influence in all things), and
- 2) the prototype of all subsequent septenates<sup>16</sup> in its role as the inlet for the seven ray energies.

As is apparent, there is none higher in regard to our system than the Great Bear.

Perhaps in keeping with the dominant and ubiquitous influence exercised by the Great Bear upon our solar system, this constellation is continuously visible at night from almost all parts of our planet,<sup>17</sup> the watchful Bear ever vigilant and engaged as far as our globe is concerned.

Though the Bear gazes down on our globe from its position near the north celestial pole with an admirable constancy, our view of this great star grouping changes throughout the year. The long tail of the Bear (or the handle of the Dipper) seems to point in different directions at the four seasonal points of the year, a fact reflecting the different views of the sky which the seasons afford.<sup>18</sup> Thus, to the casual naked eye observer, the orientation of the Great Bear can be shockingly different than expected.

Further, the Great Bear is a great deal more than it appears to be, encompassing well over 200 stars beyond the familiar and visible seven.<sup>19</sup> Yet these seven are of arch importance to the esoteric cosmology. In fact, just one of these seven stars plays such an immense role in the distribution of cosmic energies as to defy ready comprehension. According to the esoteric astrological and cosmological doctrine as given by the Tibetan, a single star within the Great Bear has the considerable distinction of bringing forth into our system energies which originated in the Central Spiritual Sun. These energies pass from the Central Spiritual Sun, to the “Conditioning Constellations,” (that is, the Great Bear, Sirius, and the Pleiades), and finally

are relayed to one particular star of the seven well known stars making up the Great Bear.<sup>20</sup>

The energies which thus come forth from this one star of the Great Bear are the origin of all that is visible and objective. Then, the further work of creating manifested form is accomplished by a group of deva lives who have their source in this same star of the Great Bear and who transmit the intention of Deity through sound or word into the matter of our systemic mental, astral, and physical planes, or the three worlds of human endeavor.<sup>21</sup> Though the identity of this immensely powerful star is not divulged, the general impression imparted is again that of a truly sublime role for the Great Bear and its components. In fact, it might simply be stated that the Great Bear is of signal importance because it is a channel for the distribution of energies from the Central Spiritual Sun.

Thus, as prime distributor of the energies of manifestation, the Great Bear is certainly a leading factor among stellar influences. Being first amongst others and leading the way is a First Aspect, Ray One characteristic. As is evident from the location of the Great Bear in the Cosmic Logoic Head center, its role as the monad of our Solar Logos, and as a channel for distribution of energies from the Central Spiritual Sun, the Great Bear as a leading influence fulfills a First Aspect or Ray One function.

Indeed, this is precisely what the Tibetan has indicated about the Great Bear, characterizing the Great Bear as representative of the Father (or First) Aspect,<sup>22</sup> and as a point of reception and distribution for Ray One energies.<sup>23</sup> Hence, the Great Bear as a whole emits Ray One influence, which according to the esoteric occult doctrine, confers a number of important characteristics, including courage, executive ability, and the power to rule and lead<sup>24</sup>— all Ray One characteristics which, as shall shortly be shown, have even been reflected in the world's exoteric mythology concerning this constellation.

### **The Great Bear as an Agent of the Will**

**I**n that the Great Bear is a representative of Ray One, the Ray of Will and Power, it also

represents the Divine Will itself. Thus, to properly appreciate the nature and influence of the Great Bear, an understanding of what the Tibetan called the Will is necessary.

Identifying the Will Aspect as cause itself,<sup>25</sup> the Tibetan characterized Divine or Cosmic will as electricity on the first or logoic plane, the original force which brings about the objective universe,<sup>26</sup> the dynamic electrical energy of Life itself, or of embodied Purpose,<sup>27</sup> and “divine purpose, latent in the Mind of God since the beginning of time and the dawn of creation.”<sup>28</sup> Additionally, the Tibetan Master called the First or Will Aspect by the names Abstract Being, Darkness, and Unity.<sup>29</sup> More specifically, he said, the Will is “that initial impulse or vibration which emanates from the logoic causal body on the cosmic mental plane.”<sup>30</sup> The Great Bear introduces all these elements into our solar system, for it is a prime distributing agent for the Will.

However, the exact nature of Divine or Cosmic Will is beyond the reach of ordinary human comprehension, according to the Tibetan. In his words, “The nature of the will is as yet undefinable for only the Monad responds to its impact, and only after the third initiation does man somewhat grasp the nature of the will.”<sup>31</sup>

In this, the Tibetan offered an important key to the nature of the Will. If only Monadic awareness can fully appreciate the Will, then Monadic being (certainly a Ray One correlate) must be like unto the Will, at least in some degree. Of importance here is the fact that Monadic awareness was characterized by the Tibetan as a state of spiritual bliss. Bliss, the Tibetan said, results from the monad's natural state of universal identification with all energies and the realization of existence beyond time and space.<sup>32</sup>

In this definition, the Tibetan has offered an important clue to not only the nature of the Monad, but also of its purview, the Will, for if only the Monad can know Will, and the Monad's natural state is bliss, then bliss must be inherently associated with perception of the Will.

To state this proposition even more simply and in a formulaic fashion, it might be said that, at least for the human mind, Will is the bliss which arises from a universal identification with all

energies and an inner realization of existence beyond time and space. Hence, this is the nature of the influence arising from the Great Bear, itself an agent of the Will, of the First Aspect, and of Ray One energies. Thus it can be said that the Great Bear, when rightly known, confers “the bliss which arises from universal identification with all energies and an inner realization of existence beyond time and space.”

However, since most of Humanity is far behind the grade of Third Degree Initiate, and hence operating with virtually no conscious Monadic linkage, this blissful Cosmic Will emanated by the Great Bear goes largely unrecognized. Such perception will not accrue to the bulk of Humanity until the final root race, when the nature of Cosmic Will or Purpose shall constitute the ultimate spiritual revelation, according to the Tibetan.<sup>33</sup> Hence, as he said, the widespread registration of Cosmic Will or Purpose by Humanity “lies a very long way ahead of our present point in evolution.”<sup>34</sup>

In the meantime, only the effect of the Will can be known,<sup>35</sup> and this effect takes the form of the Hierarchical Plan,<sup>36</sup> which the Tibetan said is none other than substance of the higher planes impregnated with the energy of Will.<sup>37</sup> Of course, the Will or Power Aspect of Deity is forever branded in the brain matter of esoteric students as the Ray of the Destroyer, the Shiva component of the three fundamental aspects of Deity. Indeed, the act of necessary destruction characterizes the Will, for as the Tibetan indicated, Will destroys anything hindering the free flow of evolution.<sup>38</sup>

Whether Will is manifesting as cause, purpose, Monadic awareness, the sense of the infinite, or necessary destructions and eliminations, its effects descend from higher levels to the waiting form below, “bending forms consciously to divine purpose.”<sup>39</sup> Hence, Will is that inescapable transcendent drive which powers the movement of all within and toward the One.

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According to the esoteric occult doctrine, this Will from on high descends to the waiting worlds of form below through a number of celestial agents or intermediaries, key among them the seven rays, originating in the seven centers of the Cosmic Logos, or The One About Whom Naught may Be Said. From these centers,

which are composed of groups of Solar Logoi or star lives, there stream the rays, the rays in turn being ensouled by the Seven Ray Lords, called by the Tibetan the custodians of the Will Aspect of Deity for our solar system.<sup>40</sup> That the seven rays are all essentially Will cannot be doubted, for the Tibetan made a definite point of presenting the rays in

just this manner in the final pages of Bailey’s *Esoteric Astrology*.<sup>41</sup>

Having their origin (as far as our solar system is concerned) in the centers of the Cosmic Logos, the seven rays then pour into the stars of the constellation under consideration in this section, the Great Bear. Through the seven major stars of the Great Bear, the rays subsequently stream forth toward our Solar Logos and its system, bringing all lives consequently contacted increasingly into line with the Will Aspect of Deity,<sup>42</sup> for the Great Bear is the unparalleled source of Will, Purpose, and Power for our region of the manifested universe. From this stupendous source—the Great Bear—emanate all the ray powers which feed the zodiacal and planetary influences to be experienced from the vantage point of our planet. As a consequence, all astrological influences are in fact vehicles by which Will is transmitted into our system and planet.<sup>43</sup> The Tibetan made this point inescapably evident when he stated that all zodiacal influences are intended to evoke the emergence of the Will Aspect in all units contacted, including Planetary Logoi, monads, souls, and personalities.<sup>44</sup>

Once these Will energies reach our planet, they then course through the kingdoms of our planet via earthly agents of the Will, the first among these being the representative on our globe of the Planetary Logos of our scheme, Sanat Kumara. According to the Tibetan, Will or Purpose enters our planetary life as "...the synthetic thought which pours into the supernal consciousness of the Lord of the World..."<sup>45</sup> From thence, Will energies make their way through a triangle composed of the head of the First Ray division of the Hierarchy known as the Manu, the Christ, and the head of the Third Ray division of the Hierarchy, or the Mahachohan, and thence to the united ashrams of the Hierarchy.<sup>46</sup> Ultimately, these Will energies filter down to the level of the individual, who is, as the Tibetan said, governed by Will and Purpose flowing in from higher levels, particularly the Will of the Solar Logos as it works through the Will of our Planetary Logos.<sup>47</sup>

Finally, at ground level quite literally, Will energies are transferred to the crust of the Earth by the Agnichaitans, fiery devic lives of the mineral world governed by the First Ray department of the Hierarchy, under the direction of the Manu.<sup>48</sup> It is through the agency of the Agnichaitans that the face of the planet is geologically changed, continents raised, and volcanoes fueled.<sup>49</sup> According to the Tibetan, the dramatic expression of the Ray of Will and Power demonstrating through such geological forces is a consequence of the fact that the main potency of the First Ray is to be found in the mineral kingdom.<sup>50</sup> In the final analysis, our entire planet right down to rock acts as an agent of Will, for as the Tibetan stated, the purpose for which Earth exists is the manifestation of the Will of God.<sup>51</sup>

Thus, from the Cosmic Logos and the Great Bear on high, right down to the very mineral substance of which our physical globe is composed, the Will permeates and conditions all. In this process, the Great Bear plays a crucial role, functioning as the prime inlet and distribution point at which the Will translates itself from dimensions beyond time and space into the seven ray influences, which in turn drive and color all cyclic evolutionary developments in our portion of the manifested universe.

## Occult Effects of the Great Bear

So determinative is the influence of the Great Bear upon our solar system that the very thoughtform underlying the existence of our system is shaped by emanations of the Great Bear, together with those of six other stellar factors of equal stature.<sup>52</sup> Undoubtedly, these seven stellar factors are the very ones said to make up the body of manifestation of the Cosmic Logos (or possibly of the Super Cosmic Logos). The combined purposeful focus and meditation of the entities indwelling these seven factors affects the nature and quality of our system. In other words, as they think upon their objectives and purposes, great manasic waves ripple outward, affecting the matter of many planes and bringing into existence those specific forms that will achieve the desired ends.

According to the Tibetan, two stars in the Great Bear are even more influential in this regard than the others. It is the stars (or the Rishis<sup>53</sup> as the Tibetan called them) in the Great Bear that receive and distribute the energies of Rays Five and Seven which have the greatest involvement in the creation of the thoughtform upon which our solar system is built.<sup>54</sup> Given that Ray Five concerns the distillation of abstract thought into definite thoughtforms, and that Ray Seven concerns the condensation of spirit into matter, this enhanced role for the specified (though unnamed) stars only makes sense.

Emanatory effects from the Great Bear affect our solar system in a number of ways, in fact. Along with helping to shape the very thoughtform upon which our system is designed, influences from the Great Bear also play a role in determining the time cycles at work in our system.<sup>55</sup> This is so because the Great Bear is one of the centers of a Greater Being in whom our small system finds place, and it is the life cycles of this Greater Being which determine the times of manifestation and obscurity of those minor lives who dwell within its body of expression. As the life cycles of this Greater Being are registered in its higher centers, they then work downward to influence all the remaining centers, in one of which our solar system finds place.

The fact that the Great Bear has such influence upon the time cycles operative in our solar system is also related to the role of the seven rays, which find their way to our system via the seven visible stars of the Great Bear. This, because the seven ray powers are the key mechanism by which the general cosmic principle of periodicity is transformed into specific phases, such as life periods of solar and planetary logoi, rounds, races, and sub-races.

Cyclic evolutionary impulses also issue forth from the Great Bear in the form of Avatars, or unique embodiments of spiritual potency which take various types of physical form in order to significantly accelerate forward spiritual momentum in some part of the manifested worlds. According to the Tibetan, the Great Bear is a source of such beings, their points of emanation being specifically those of the seven visible Ursine stars which receive and distribute Rays Three<sup>56</sup> and Seven.<sup>57</sup> These Avatars are said to gain entry into our solar system through a triangle of cosmic factors, these factors being the Great Bear, the combined energies of the seven rays, and our Solar Logos.<sup>58</sup> Such Avatars are, according to the esoteric doctrine, related to the Seventh Cosmic Path,<sup>59</sup> the workers upon which are likely engaged in efforts to bring the non-sacred planets to sacred status through the application of the pure ray energies issued forth from the seven visible stars of the Great Bear.

### **The Mythology of the Great Bear Around the World**

The septenary nature of the Great Bear hails not only from esoteric occult philosophy, but also from native peoples and ancient cultures the world around. Almost universally, those who gazed in awe at the night sky to perceive their great ancestral and spiritual beings were equally inclined to see seven stellar entities in what is now called the Great Bear. Specifically, among the ancient Romans and Egyptians, the South American Aztecs, the North American Blackfoot of Montana, the Chumash of California, and in Eurasia, the Siberian Buryats and the Northern Caucasia, this star grouping was perceived to be composed of seven distinct star beings.<sup>60</sup>

Just as likely were ancient peoples to picture this polar star grouping as a bear figure,<sup>61</sup> though many groups saw this constellation as other animals, people, or objects. For example, the ancient Aztecs and Mayas perceived this grouping in the shape of a bird native to their region (the macaw parrot), while the western Siberians saw it as a stag, and the ancient Egyptians as the thigh and leg of a bull.

The Northern Caucasia of Eurasia saw these seven stars as seven brothers, while their Southern Buryat counterparts called them the seven blacksmiths, the seven skulls of these blacksmiths, and seven old men. The neighboring Siberian Khirgiz saw in these same stars seven watchmen guarding the other circumpolar stars, while the nearby Mongols referred to this constellation quite oppositely as seven thieves, though they also called them seven old men. To the Blackfoot Native Americans of Montana, they were the seven sons of the Sun and the Moon, or seven brothers being pursued by a bear. The Chumash of California knew them as seven boys, transformed into seven geese.

The ancient Romans conceptualized the seven stars of what we now call the Great Bear as seven oxen in harness, ploughing concentric furrows in the celestial field around the north pole of the sky. Similarly, the early English peoples thought this star grouping resembled a wagon, or “wain” as they called it, as did many in other European countries. Over in the Americas, the Skidi Pawnee saw in these stars a related figure, interpreting this star grouping to be a stretcher upon which a sick man was carried. And the Ajumawi band of Pit River Indians in northeastern California saw in the Great Bear what they called the World’s Cane, a hooked implement which in their mythology was thought to be instrumental in establishing the very order and structure of the sky and therefore of all creation.<sup>62</sup>

As is clear, the Wagon, the Plough, and the Crane all represent shapes reminiscent of what we now think of as the Big Dipper, while the circular ploughing of the polar oxen reflects the way the Great Bear seems to rotate in space as the view of it changes throughout the night.

Just as the Pawnee felt that World's Cane was the central pivot around which the heavens turned, so also has this polar star grouping been right at the center of other ethnic cosmologies. This has been so throughout time because the Great Bear occupies a northerly position, north being a direction of definite distinction for several of the world's peoples. Further, the different orientations of this star grouping throughout the night can be used as an indicator of the season by those who are intimately familiar with the night sky.<sup>63</sup> Consequently, the stars of what is now called the Great Bear have for eons been emblematic of regular cycles and the continuous forward march of unfolding of time.<sup>64</sup>

In honor of this fact, the ancient Greeks at one time named this constellation "The Curved or Spiral One," both for its dipper-like shape and because it ever turns round and round the celestial north pole.<sup>65</sup> Beyond the obvious and important reference to eternity and cyclic renewal implied in this characterization of the Great Bear stars, there is also a significant esoteric correlate connected with the notion of the spiral. According to the Tibetan, spiral activity or motion is the "Shiva" form of motion,<sup>66</sup> as he called it. Since the Tibetan used the Hindu Shiva to denominate the First Aspect, this means that the Tibetan meant to say that spiral motion is an expression of the First Aspect, Ray One, and the Will—the very qualities said to characterize the Great Bear itself.

Thus, as is readily apparent, even the ancient Greeks rightly intuited the esoteric and occult nature of the Great Bear, for they associated the Ray One spiral form of motion with the stars of this grouping. Only a little imagination is required to see that, to the circling motion of the seven stars around the celestial pole, the Greek mind coupled the idea of forward motion along a celestial axis. In this fashion, they might have imagined the circling motion of the Ursine stars carried onward in space, thus producing the spiral form. So close were the Greeks in their conception to the later esoteric characterization of the Great Bear that justification is suggested for the Tibetan's statement, "There is more real occultism hidden in the names given to the various stars by astronomers down the ages than has yet been realised...."<sup>67</sup> This appears to have been

so in the case of the Great Bear, called by certain of the ancient Greeks with a name quite appropriate to its now revealed occult function.

The importance of the Great Bear in antiquity might be suggested by the fact that ancient star catalogues began with this constellation and its nearby polar companion, the Little Bear,<sup>68</sup> no doubt because these two star groupings were poised so strikingly in the northern sky.<sup>69</sup> Originally conceptualized (for the west) in approximately the fifth century B.C.E by the Greek philosopher and mathematician Thales,<sup>70</sup> the Great Bear was widely thought in antiquity to be the ultimate source of time and created form,<sup>71</sup> a theme imminently compatible with its esoteric function as prime distributor of the energies of manifestation. Legend has it that Pythagoras referred to the Greater and Lesser Bears as the "two hands of the Genitrix,"<sup>72</sup> in other words, the agents which accomplish the manifested work of the Great Maker, or Cosmic Creator. Here is a remarkable parallel to the much later esoteric description of the seven stars of the Great Bear as the "Progenitors," or givers of life to all,<sup>73</sup> and yet another example of the fundamental position held by the Great Bear in various world cosmologies.

The Great Bear was similarly important in ancient Egypt, though there it was pictured as The Bull's Thigh. Still, it was a curved, dipper-like bunch of stars that spun eternally round the northern celestial pole. Because this star grouping was ever visible in the night sky, the ancient Egyptian religion associated it with everlastingness, or immortality.<sup>74</sup> The shape of this constellation (or possibly that of nearby and similar Ursa Minor) was accordingly reproduced in the design of a funerary ritual implement<sup>75</sup> used to liberate the consciousness of the deceased from the physical body, that the spirit might ascend to the stars.<sup>76</sup>

The stars as links to the spiritual world was a notion likewise embraced by Vedic India, the astronomical traditions of which asserted that creation emanated from the stars<sup>77</sup> long before contemporary astrophysics confirmed as much through its various technological advantages. The seven stars of the greater Ursine constellation were known to the Vedic tradition in the Sanskrit language as the *Saptarishi*,<sup>78</sup> or Seven



(*sapta*) Sages (*rishis*), and this name for the stars of the Great Bear was used by the Tibetan as well, who referred to them frequently as the “Seven Rishis,”<sup>79</sup> as did Blavatsky.<sup>80</sup>

According to Blavatsky, the Sanskrit word “rishi” in general means a spiritual adept or an inspired one, but in particular within the context of Vedic literature, this term denotes distinguished spiritual personages through whom the various sacred mantras of the Vedic tradition were revealed.<sup>81</sup> Again highlighting the spiritual mastery and science of sound attributed to the Rishis, Blavatsky further commented that the Sanskrit word rishi literally translated means “bard,” “singer,”

“walker,” and “guide,” terms indicative of one who walks ahead and leads others through the power of sound or music, rishi being derived from a root word meaning “to march ahead.”<sup>82</sup> Further, Blavatsky stated that the term rishi can refer to the original founders of the Vedic religion,<sup>83</sup> as well as to the leaders of early tribal groupings in India.<sup>84</sup> Popular Hindu tradition holds that there were seven such Rishis considered the ancestors of Humanity, and who are linked with the seven stars of what the west calls the Great Bear.<sup>85</sup> This tradition, which associates the original seven rishis with the seven stars of the Great Bear, has its roots in the ancient Rig Veda.<sup>86</sup>

Separating the two possible usages of the term “rishi,” Blavatsky emphatically pointed out the difference between the terrestrial Rishis, on one hand, who founded the Vedic religion, and the intelligences indwelling the stars of the Great Bear on the other.<sup>87</sup> Blavatsky undoubtedly understood the “Seven Ancient Rishis” in the more cosmological sense, calling them “the progenitors of all that lives and breathes on earth,”<sup>88</sup> a description certainly in keeping with the role of the essential seven ray powers

emanated from the “seven rishis” of the Great Bear. She apparently even used this term (the seven rishis) to indicate the seven planetary logoi.<sup>89</sup> All the same, Blavatsky certainly acknowledged the existence of highly evolved human adepts also called “rishis,” recounting

the hallowed legend that such beings do in fact exist and that they can be found to live at extreme altitudes in the Himalayan Mountains.<sup>90</sup> Blavatsky even intimated that these spiritual adepts who dwell in the sacred fastnesses of the Himalayas are in fact the members of the Planetary Hierarchy, themselves the descendants of the Rishis of the Vedic tradition.<sup>91</sup>

Whether terrestrial or celestial, the concept of the seven rishis remains firmly tied to the esoteric perspective.

Thus, the popular Hindu belief that human evolution had its rise in the existence of seven founding fathers who are representative of or linked with the seven stars of the Great Bear emerges as yet another significant instance of agreement between exoteric myth or religion and esoteric truth. Just how closely this parallel runs can be seen in the fact that the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* refers to the seven stars of the constellation Saptarishi (Seven Rishis, or Great Bear) as the seven sense organs of the face of the cosmic person.<sup>92</sup> Thus, while the esoteric occult teaching places the seven visible stars of the Great Bear in the head center of a Cosmic (or possibly Super Cosmic) Logos, the tradition spawned by the Rig Veda places the same stars on the “face” of a “Cosmic Person.” The difference between “head” and “face” is so little as to be insignificant in this context. Virtually the same message is given by both characterizations. Both see the seven stars of this particular constellational grouping as positioned in such a way as to represent the mentation of a great being, cosmic in scope.

***The view of the Great Bear offered by the esoteric occult philosophy of the Tibetan Master and Alice Bailey presents this polar constellation as the fountainhead of powers and energies driving the evolution of our own Solar Logos, and hence, actuating all the life forms throughout his body of expression in the planetary schemes, chains, globes, rounds, and races.***



Other world cosmological views have likewise reflected the leading, head center role attributed to the Great Bear. In fact, many cultures and civilizations have associated this constellation with the notion of governance, leadership, and authority,<sup>93</sup> or the situation of being “at the head” of a group or enterprise.

For example, the Zoroastrian religion envisioned the stars of the Great Bear as a sort of divine military leader, a general in the army of the supreme God.<sup>94</sup> The ancient Egyptians likewise focused upon the governance angle and associated the stars of this constellation with royalty.<sup>95</sup> So also did the ancient Chinese, who saw the Great Bear stars as a celestial emperor, the Lord of the Dark Heaven and the Spirit of the North.<sup>96</sup> Close by, the Altaic Tartars of Southern Siberia saw in this constellation seven khans, or tribal chieftains.<sup>97</sup> From even this brief but suggestive list, the linkage of the Great Bear stars with roles of governance and leadership is evident. However, there is more.

As it turns out, the Great Bear was linked in the minds of peoples throughout the globe with their national and cultural heroes. Many of these epic figures were said to ride in the stars of the Great Bear as though it were a mode of conveyance. In ancient Britain, it was King Arthur who was said to ride in the seven stars of the Great Bear, perceived by the peoples then as a wagon, or “wain;” hence to them the Great Bear was known as “Arthur’s Wain” and “Arthur’s Chariot.”<sup>98</sup> Some have even thought that Arthur’s Round Table was an allusion to the circuit of the Great Bear round and round the pole, seeming to mark out a flat, circle-shaped surface as it goes.<sup>99</sup>

In nearby Ireland, the Great Bear was called King David’s Chariot, in honor of an early Irish ruler.<sup>100</sup> Across the English Channel, the early French attached their beloved Charlemagne to the wagon-shaped polar constellation, and as a result, the neighboring Teutons called this constellation *Karlwagen* (Charles’ Wagon).<sup>101</sup> Not far away, the Danes, Swedes, and Icelanders responded with *Stori Vagn* (Great Wagon), *Odin’s Wagon*, and *Karl’s Vagn*, *Karl* being yet another name for *Thor*, a great Nordic god.<sup>102</sup> Half a world away, the early Chinese likewise saw the Great Bear stars as a mode of

transportation for the ruling elite, perceiving this star grouping as a vehicle for the Emperor of Heaven or for a high government official.<sup>103</sup>

Thus, whether the seven Ursine stars were seen as vehicles for power figures or as the power figures themselves, this star grouping has throughout time been imputed by the world’s people’s to represent leadership, ruling capacity, the power of government, and executive position.<sup>104</sup> These are the very characteristics said by the esoteric tradition to characterize Ray One, the Ray of Will and Power, which is associated with the division of Hierarchy that guides the way to right principles of governance and which ray is distributed by the Great Bear.

In much more modern times, the emblem of the Great Bear has similarly played a significant role in the Ray One matter of right governance and self-determination. In the 1860s during the American Civil War, the “Big Dipper,” (or “Gourd,” as it is also called) became a celestial symbol of freedom to the southern slaves seeking asylum north of the Mason-Dixon line,<sup>105</sup> which at that time divided the United States from the rebel southern states. If an indentured “servant” could pass north of the Mason-Dixon Line, he or she automatically became a free American citizen, unshackled from the torturous indignities of forced labor.

Travelling surreptitiously by night and under the stars to evade the murderous grasp of irate whites, the men and women of African descent had only the stars of the Great Bear to lead them dependably northward in their bid for everything all people hold dear. Thus, they were admonished by their supporters to “Follow the Gourd,” or in other words, to proceed north in the direction of the Big Dipper, that they might drink of the waters of personal and political freedom. They were literally to head toward the starry representative of Ray One, the Great Bear constellation, embodying the Ray One characteristics of right governance, autonomy, and liberty from all that impedes forward evolution, in their struggle for self-determination.<sup>106</sup> In this example lies a convincing justification for the Tibetan’s statement that more real occultism is hidden in popular conceptions of the stars<sup>107</sup> than has been previously thought, for here is to

be seen a direct correlation between the exoteric and esoteric implications of this star grouping.

The Great Bear in its northerly and polar position has thus been emblematic of great spiritual ultimates, such as the origin of creation, cyclicity, renewal, eternal progress, and even political liberty and self-determination. Linked to every fundamental of importance, this constellation has not only led the way in myth and symbolism, but has also managed to set its stamp upon the very language used by the peoples who revered it. For example, the seven stars of this constellation in their northerly position furnished the basis for the Latin word septentrional, which means northerly or northern (which is to say, in the direction of the “seven”).<sup>108</sup> Further, the word “arctic” derives its meaning from this constellation, for the Greek word for bear is *arktos*, hence “arctic” for any frigid climate lying in the northerly direction of the Bear constellation.<sup>109</sup>

Plainly, the Great Bear has ever been highly influential in humankind’s orientation to the sky, just as it has in the esoteric cosmology, where it holds pride of place. Consideration will now turn to the manners in which the influence of this great stellar entity contacts human experience, doing so through its astrological intermediaries.

### **Astrological Intermediaries of the Great Bear**

**R**uling the sky from its polar position, the king of constellations is the stellar origin of all astrological influence, for it is from the Great Bear that the seven ray energies pour forth to energize all the zodiacal constellations, signs, and planets. Because of the fundamentally First Aspect nature of the Great Bear, the seven rays which flow forth from the stars of this constellation are in fact types of Will, or as the Tibetan said, they are the custodians of the Will Aspect of Deity.<sup>110</sup> Thus, the effect of the Great Bear, working through the seven rays and all astrological factors, is, as the Tibetan said, ever to convey into our solar system and eventually into our planetary life, the energy of the Will.<sup>111</sup> In fact, the Tibetan stated that the effect of the seven rays streaming forth from the stars of the Great Bear is ever to bring our planet

increasingly into line with the Will of the Greater Life.<sup>112</sup> This it does generally through all the components of astrological influence, but specifically even more directly through certain factors, which will now be enumerated.

According to the esoteric astrological doctrine, the Great Bear transmits its force directly through several constellations, their representative astrological signs,<sup>113</sup> two planets, and even the Sun. The constellations and their representative signs are Aries, Taurus, Leo, Libra, and Aquarius, the two planets Saturn and Pluto.<sup>114</sup> From the Great Bear, Will energies are disseminated through these factors and ultimately make their way to the level of human existence.

Of the astrological intermediaries that usher the energies of the Great Bear into our systemic and planetary life, Aries is one of the most important. According to the Tibetan, this constellation and sign bring forth Ursine energies in two distinct ways. In the first, the constellation and sign of Aries transmit the energies of the Great Bear through the planet Pluto<sup>115</sup> to our system, stimulating the intent to serve the Divine Plan in advanced units and, collaterally, the “will to power” over others in less evolved units.<sup>116</sup> In the second case, Aries transmitting its power through the Sun brings about a certain focusing of forces in the life of a disciple such that he or she is enabled to pursue the path of initiation with conscious intent and to project his or her consciousness into the planes beyond the strictly personality and form-oriented levels.<sup>117</sup>

Aries is thus a critical influence upon the path of discipleship and initiation, aiding signally in the effort to lift one’s awareness into what the Tibetan calls “the realm of the formless worlds,”<sup>118</sup> or those planes above the mental plane (the final frontier of personality life). These target planes would be the buddhic, atmic, and monadic, and it is Aries influence which provides the necessary impetus to reach such levels.

These important psychospiritual effects of Aries are reflected in the fact that the Full Moon occurring during the astrological sign of Aries initiates the phase in the year known as the Three Linked Spiritual Festivals, these being

the Full Moons which occur during the astrological signs of Aries, Taurus, and Gemini. Aries, which distributes the always executive First Ray of Will and Power, leads the way and starts the process with a powerful application of energies which lifts consciousness radically and simultaneously evokes rapid alignment with the Higher Will. This is one reason that the Full Moon period falling during the astrological sign of Aries should be heeded with special vigilance.

Though Aries factors are of signal importance in transmitting the Will aspect from the Great Bear to our system and planet, other constellations and their representative signs also figure significantly in this matter. Leo, a sign which distributes Ray One just as does Aries, is a case in point. According to the Tibetan, the Will energies of the Great Bear go not only to Aries, but also to Leo, from whence they flow to Saturn and then to Shamballa, our planetary head center. From Shamballa, these Ray One Great Bear energies radiate to the head centers of spiritual seekers and finally to their base of spine centers, establishing the energies of the Divine Will at each level.<sup>119</sup>

Here again, as these Ursine Will energies gain access to our planetary life and consciousness through Leo and then Saturn, they affect the various levels of evolution represented in Humanity in different ways. When such energies eventually reach the advanced spiritual seekers of the world and those who have consciously recognized Hierarchy and the Divine Plan, the Will to serve the Plan is powerfully awakened.<sup>120</sup> However, this same energy of the Will emanating from the Great Bear evokes a different response from persons and organizations who have not yet glimpsed the Greater Life in which they exist. Hence, in average humanity and in certain nations and races, activation by Great Bear influence flowing through Leo and Saturn produces a surge of selfish intent to garner power or dominion over others,<sup>121</sup> a definite misqualification of energies, yet a necessary step in the process of learning by trial and error.

Similar issues arise from the dissemination of Ursine influence through the constellation and sign of Taurus. Just as in the case of Leo and Saturn described in the previous paragraph, Ray

One or Will energy pouring through Taurus bifurcates into two distinct expressions. On the one hand, as it impacts undeveloped groups and individuals, it spawns aggression, the intent to dominate others, and crass materialism.<sup>122</sup> On the other, when Great Bear influence acting through Taurus flows through the advanced and altruistic of the race, the intent to advance the evolutionary plan is stimulated.<sup>123</sup>

The impact of the Great Bear also enters our planetary life through the agencies of Libra, working through the Sun. Because neither Libra nor the Sun was normally associated with the First Ray of Will and Power by the Tibetan, this linkage of the Great Bear with these two factors is largely unexpected. Nonetheless, according to the Tibetan, Great Bear energies do work through Libra and the Sun to bring about "...that focusing in the life of the disciple which makes it possible for him to function consciously and with intention upon the path of initiation."<sup>124</sup> Libra in this case works on the individual through a constant presentation of the various pairs of opposites to produce detachment from both pain and pleasure. Thus balanced and brought to a broadened perspective, the individual may function free of the pairs of opposites. The influence of the Great Bear stands behind this process, bringing about the necessary destruction of attachments to the form nature, and doing so in this case via the agency of Libra and all that it connotes.

The involvement of the Sun in this distribution sequence is important as well. Though the Sun was most frequently described by the Tibetan as a distributor of Ray Two energies, he also linked it with the Great Bear and First Aspect (or First Ray) energies.<sup>125</sup> Considering this fact in connection with the role of Libra in the distribution of Great Bear energies, it would appear that when the Sun is in the astrological sign of Libra (either in the natal chart or by annual transit), the power of the Great Bear to liberate from the pairs of opposites may be increased. Further, combining the indications above regarding the Great Bear and Aries with that concerning the Great Bear and Libra, it would appear that the equinoctial axis (as represented by the signs Aries and Libra) functions as a point

of enhanced reception of Great Bear energies through the Sun.

This is so because the equinoxes themselves demarcate a special relationship between the Earth and the Sun, these being the moments in the Earth's orbit around the Sun when the rays of the Sun strike the face of our planet the most directly. Thus, at the equinoxes when the Sun is astrologically at zero degrees of Aries and Libra, seekers interested in intensifying their progress toward effective service and initiatory progress should make all due effort to align with the solar forces incoming at those points, carrying as they do the special energies of the Great Bear. This being said, it should also be acknowledged that Great Bear energies pour through the constellations and signs of Aries and Libra year-round, as well.

Along with Aries, Leo, Taurus, and Libra, the constellation and sign of Aquarius also function as distributors of Great Bear influence. Again according to the Tibetan, it is through Aquarius that the universal consciousness characteristic of the Great Bear is expressed.<sup>126</sup> This association of Aquarius with essentially Ray One energy is, as in the case of Libra, largely unexpected, since this sign is most frequently said to distribute Ray Five in *Esoteric Astrology*. However, the linkage of Ray One with Aquarius makes plain good sense, as its polar opposite (Leo) distributes Rays One and Five, just as Aquarius would do with the addition of the First Ray. This type of symmetry can be found in other sign pairs, such as Taurus and Scorpio (both distributing Ray Four and only Ray Four), and Virgo and Pisces (both distributing Rays Two and Six). Thus, it would appear that associating Ray One in general with Aquarius can certainly be justified, since it would match its complementary sign in this regard. The same could be said for Libra, which if accorded Ray One energies, would partly match Aries, distributor of Rays One and Seven. Thus, through consideration of the information given by the Tibetan regarding the Great Bear, the esoteric astrological system appears to gain completion in certain particulars.

### **The Great Bear and Stages of Higher Evolution**

As ubiquitous and important as the influence of the Great Bear has proven to be, the influence of this constellation is negligible upon average Humanity. According to the Tibetan, it is not until the individual has attained to the Third Initiation that the Great Bear becomes a relevant factor in a seeker's evolution.<sup>127</sup> This is so because the Third Initiation marks the point at which Monadic contact can be made by the individual, a linkage required in order truly to sense the fixed star dimension in which the Great Bear is found. Once such a linkage has been forged, the nature of the Monad and the Great Bear can be registered.

According to the Tibetan, a Fifth Degree initiate presumably qualified to speak on such matters, the nature of spiritual being inherent in the Monad is bliss,<sup>128</sup> a bliss which is not based on circumstances in the three worlds of personality endeavor, but which is based instead upon the inner realization of existence beyond time and space.<sup>129</sup> Thus, it is likely that the true character of Great Bear influence, when registered by an appropriately prepared mind, is also of the nature of bliss arising from an inner realization of existence beyond time and space.

In keeping with the expansive vista offered by the influence of the Great Bear, this constellation is associated with the Seventh Cosmic Path, the Path of Absolute Sonship,<sup>130</sup> which path was said by the Tibetan to exert an influence through all the sacred planets in our solar system to advance the evolutionary pace of the non-sacred planets and to produce a relationship between our system and the universe.<sup>131</sup> Thus, the Great Bear provides the entire evolutionary effort in our system with a view into the far greater cosmic life, a role certainly appropriate to this distant and immense congerie of solar logic life.

### **Conclusion**

The view of the Great Bear offered by the esoteric occult philosophy of the Tibetan Master and Alice Bailey presents this polar constellation as the fountainhead of powers and energies driving the evolution of our own Solar Logos, and hence actuating all the life forms throughout his body of expression in the planetary schemes, chains, globes, rounds, and races. Specifically, the esoteric occult cosmological

doctrine reveals that the constellation popularly known as Ursa Major, the Big Dipper, and the Great Bear is in fact a stunning powerhouse of primordial energies, for, as the discussion has shown, the Great Bear:

- 1) constitutes the seven head centers of the Cosmic Logos,
- 2) functions as the Monad of our Solar Logos, and together with Sirius and the Pleiades constitutes the spiritual triad of our Solar Logos,
- 3) drives the process of Solar Logoic incarnation,
- 4) stands as the source of all seven rays for our solar system,
- 5) distributes each of the seven rays through one of its seven stars,
- 6) contains in its seven stars the seven ray prototypes of each Planetary Logos in our system,
- 7) contains the seven stars which individually function as the Monads of the Planetary Logoi in our solar system,
- 8) is known as the Superior Constellation,
- 9) is the prototype for all subsequent septenates,
- 10) receives impetus from the Central Spiritual Sun,
- 11) fulfills a First Ray function,
- 12) represents and distributes Divine Will,
- 13) communicates the bliss consequent on the realization of existence beyond time and space,
- 14) works through all astrological influences to transmit Divine Will and awaken all levels and units of consciousness to the Will,
- 15) shapes the thoughtform and physical structure of our solar system,
- 16) is represented on Earth by the mineral kingdom,
- 17) determines certain time cycles related to geological changes,
- 18) is a source of Avatars,
- 19) was perceived by diverse indigenous cultures in ways consistent with the esoteric teachings,
- 20) is connected to the Rishis and founding progenitors of Humanity,
- 21) operates through the astrological intermediaries Aries, Taurus, Leo, Libra, Aquarius, Saturn, and Pluto, (and likely Capricorn and Vulcan as well), all of which factors serve to awaken the Will to cooperate with the Divine Plan in the evolved, while evoking focused selfish intent in the unevolved,
- 22) is likely distributed powerfully at the Aries and Libra equinoxes,
- 23) becomes a relevant consideration for seekers at the Third Initiation,
- 24) confers the bliss inherent in the Monad caused by inner realization of existence beyond time and space, and
- 25) is associated with the Seventh Cosmic Path, that of Absolute Sonship.

All that the Great Bear connotes simply takes our breath, does it not?

Thus, as this discussion has demonstrated, to gaze at night at the Great Bear stationed commandingly at the north celestial pole is to contemplate much more than anyone might have thought. It is to peer straight into the face of solar systemic origins and to court the bliss which arises from the realization of existence beyond time and space.

<sup>1</sup> Ursa is Latin for bear, while major is Latin for greater; hence, Greater Bear, meaning the larger of two polar constellations associated with bear imagery.

<sup>2</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1925), 182.

<sup>3</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1951), 416, 420.

<sup>4</sup> Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 1058.

<sup>5</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 481.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 595.

<sup>7</sup> Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 1058.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 1052.

<sup>9</sup> Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 85, 421 – 422, 589.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 602.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 85, 589; *Cosmic Fire*, 273. This point is also made on 146 of *Cosmic Fire*, which reproduces a statement from the now out of print version of *The Secret Doctrine*, v. 2, 668, in which Blavatsky wrote that the Seven Existences who function through the seven stars of the Great Bear are the prototypes or animating

sources of the Seven Heavenly Men, which are of course the Seven Planetary Logoi.

12 Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 260, 273. The Tibetan stated this principle another way on 1162 of *Cosmic Fire*, where he indicated that a Planetary Logos receives logoiic force from the Great Bear on the cosmic mental planes. This is to say yet again that the seven visible stars of the Great Bear contain the First Aspect component of the seven Planetary Logoi and thus discharge the equivalent of Monadic Will energies to the Planetary Logoi. However, it should also be noted that the Great Bear was presented in *Initiation, Human and Solar* as the soul (not monad) of our Planetary Logos. This would seem to be a contradiction, though it still positions the Great Bear, or perhaps one of its individual stars, in the position of a higher self to our Planetary Logos. All the same, as the many associations of the Great Bear with a Ray One function shall demonstrate, it seems most consistent to associate the Ursine constellation with a Monadic function. Thus, it may be reasonable to set aside the passage from *Initiation* as an early general notion amended later in more extensive remarks on the subject.

13 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 85, 421 – 422.

14 This divergence in perspective can be explained in a rather simple fashion if the hypothesis is accepted that the centers of the Super Cosmic Logos are the more remote sources of the seven rays. In this view, the seven rays would arise from seven constellations which function as the centers of the Super Cosmic Logos. From there, the seven rays would be transmitted each to one of the seven stars of the Great Bear, from thence to gain entry into our solar system. However, there are at least two complications with this model, which otherwise is entirely consistent with the septenary organization of all logoi. The first is that the Great Bear would fill two roles, one as the Head Center of the Super Cosmic Logos, and then at a lower level of organization, the seven stars of the Great Bear would then constitute the seven individual centers of the Cosmic Logos. The second is this: since the Sun of our solar system is not normally considered to be one of the stars of the Great Bear, this too introduces a dilemma, since the origin of the seven rays is said in some passages to be the seven solar systems of which ours is one. This last fact argues for the rise of the seven rays in some configuration of stars existing independently of the Great Bear, even though the Ursine constellation is spoken of as the origin of the rays for our system.

Unfortunately, complete specificity on this point is not contained in the current dispensation of the Ageless Wisdom, and thus the matter must remain somewhat of an open question. Nonetheless, there is no doubt that the Tibetan meant to say that the seven rays enter our solar system through the seven stars of the Great Bear, and this is the relevant point to be held in mind at this point in the discussion.

15 Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 990.

16 Ibid., 718. Blavatsky also referred to this idea in *The Secret Doctrine*, v. 1, 407 – 408.

17 E.C. Krupp, *Beyond the Blue Horizon: Myths and Legends of the Sun, Moon, Stars, and Planets* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 227.

18 Ibid., 237 – 238.

19 R.H. Allen, *Star Names, Their Lore and Meaning* (New York: Dover Publications, 2000 reprint of 1899 original edition), 419.

20 Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 920.

21 Ibid.

22 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 430.

23 Ibid., 416.

24 Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology I*, New York: Lucis Publishing, 1962), 201 – 202.

25 Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 798.

26 Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 311.

27 Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1950), 129.

28 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 590.

29 Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 316.

30 Ibid., 311; *Telepathy*, 129.

31 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 603.

32 Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1922), 77; *Discipleship in the New Age I* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1944), 181, 420, 557.

33 Bailey, *Telepathy*, 120.

34 Ibid.

35 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 602 – 604.

36 Bailey, *Telepathy*, 121.

37 Ibid., 118.

38 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 584.

39 Ibid., 583.

40 Ibid., 603.

41 Ibid., 595 – 601; summarized 602; restated 605.

42 Ibid., 609.

43 Ibid., 579 – 634.

44 Ibid., 22. This point is further developed 579 – 634.

45 Bailey, *Telepathy*. 121.

46 Ibid., 119 – 120.

47 Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 803.

- 48 Ibid., 640.  
 49 Ibid.  
 50 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology I*, 44.  
 51 Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1960), 417.  
 52 Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 552 – 553.  
 53 A full exploration of this term follows in this section on the Great Bear.  
 54 Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 553.  
 55 Ibid., 795.  
 56 Ibid., 723.  
 57 Ibid., 725.  
 58 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 423.  
 59 Ibid.  
 60 Krupp, *Beyond*, 227, 232, 236 – 237.  
 61 Allen, *Star Names*, 419. One prominent example is the ancient Greek conceptualization of this star grouping, which the Greeks saw as a female bear who had originally been a nymph accosted by Zeus, consequently persecuted by Hera, and ultimately thrown to the heavens for protection by a remorseful Zeus.  
 62 All the material describing the various conceptualizations of the Great Bear has been summarized from Krupp, *Beyond*, 13 – 14, 227, 232, 236 – 237.  
 63 Krupp, *Beyond*, 228 – 229.  
 64 Ibid., 239.  
 65 Allen, *Star Names*, 433.  
 66 Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 1034.  
 67 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 300.  
 68 Allen, *Star Names*, 15.  
 69 Ibid., 419.  
 70 Ibid.  
 71 Valencia Stratton, *The Celestial Ship of the North* (Publisher Unknown, 1927), v. 1, 15.  
 72 Ibid.  
 73 This phraseology is used in a footnote on 692 of Bailey’s *Cosmic Fire*. Given that some have thought that Pythagoras was an earlier incarnation of Alice Bailey’s Master, Koot Humi, the similarity between the Pythagorean characterization of the Great Bear and that of the twentieth century dispensation of the Ageless Wisdom is entirely understandable, both having emanated from essentially the same source.  
 74 Krupp, *Beyond*, 234 – 235.  
 75 Ibid. Expert opinion is divided over the question of which of the two Ursine constellations was the original pattern for the Egyptian funerary adze, as discussed by Robert Bauval and Adrian Gilbert in *The Orion Mystery: Unlocking the Secrets of the Pyramids* (New York: Penguin Random House, 1995), 206 – 209. The general shape of the two star groupings is similar enough that either would be suggestive. Bauval and Gilbert appear to accept the more modern hypothesis that the constellation upon which the adze was patterned is not the Great Bear, but the Lesser or Little Bear, Ursa Minor. Nonetheless, this issue is mentioned here in deference to the fact that the stars of the Great Bear might be implicated.  
 76 Bauval and Gilbert, *The Orion Mystery*, 210.  
 77 Subhash Kak, *The Astronomical Code of the Rgveda*, (Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 2000), 14.  
 78 Krupp, *Beyond*, 234.  
 79 The Tibetan used the term “rishi” in at least three senses. First, he used it broadly to describe members of the Planetary Hierarchy, examples of which usage can be found in Bailey’s *A Treatise on White Magic*, 153, and *Esoteric Psychology I*, 313. Second, he used the term “rishi” very infrequently, as he did in Bailey’s *Cosmic Fire*, 270, to signify the Planetary Logoi, who are of course representatives of the seven ray powers emanated from the Great Bear. The third sense in which the Tibetan used the term “rishis” refers to the spiritual intelligences inhabiting the seven stars of the Great Bear. This third sense is the one employed far more frequently by the Tibetan, for proof of which see the following: *Cosmic Fire*, 146, 273, 431, 515, 553, 630, 657, 703, 718, 743, 801, 990, 1157, 1162; and *Esoteric Astrology*, 85, 201, 269, 270, 419, 422, 589, 640. In all these passages, the Tibetan referred to the intelligences of the seven stars in the Great Bear as the “Seven Rishis.”  
 80 H.P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine I* (Adhyar: Theosophical University Press, 1888), 198, 453. Yet another instance of this usage might be found in *The Collected Writings of H.P. Blavatsky*, ed. Boris de Zirkoff, (Wheaton: Quest Books, 1966), v. XIV, 337, which records Blavatsky’s statement that “Brahma’s head is ornamented with seven rays, and he is followed by the seven Rishis...,” which statement might be interpreted to refer to the role of the Great Bear in receiving and distributing the seven rays.  
 81 H.P. Blavatsky, *Theosophical Glossary* (1982; reprint; Los Angeles: The Theosophical Publishing Company 1930), 278.  
 82 Zirkoff, *Collected Writings*, v. V, 60.  
 83 Ibid., 232.  
 84 Zirkoff, *Collected Writings*, XIV, 252 footnote.  
 85 This notion was recently stated in an informal 1990s newsletter to the American devotees of Shri Shri Shiva Balayogi. Blavatsky also stated



- that exoteric Hinduism associates the seven founding rishis with the Great Bear constellation, said to be their dwelling place. See Zirkoff, *Collected Writings*, v. X, p. 346.
- 86 Kak, *Astronomical Code*, 15, 64, 80 - 81. According to Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*, v. II, 606, the Rig Veda was written by the earliest initiates of the present race (which is the Fifth, or Aryan Race), and that this anciently composed doctrine contains essentially the same teaching on the races and continents as does the Ageless Wisdom. An example of this similarity is plainly obvious in the teaching on the nature of the constellation called by the Westerner the Great Bear, and by the Hindu, "Saptarishi."
- 87 Zirkoff, *Collected Writings*, v. XIV, 334.
- 88 Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, v. II, 605.
- 89 See footnotes in *Cosmic Fire*, 250, 270.
- 90 Zirkoff, *Collected Writings*, v. II, 121.
- 91 *Ibid.*, v. VIII, 90. Interestingly, this usage of the term tallies squarely with the Tibetan's use of the term "Rishis" to mean members of the Planetary Hierarchy.
- 92 Kak, *Astronomical Code*, 81.
- 93 Krupp, *Beyond*, 221.
- 94 *Ibid.*, 232.
- 95 *Ibid.*, 235.
- 96 *Ibid.*, 232.
- 97 *Ibid.*, 227.
- 98 Allen, *Star Names*, 426; Krupp, *Beyond*, 230;
- 99 Allen, *Star Names*, 425. A connection between the Great Bear, Arthurian legend, and the Mysteries of the Holy Grail is also mentioned in Peter Dawkins, *Arcadia* (Warkwickshire: Arcadia Journal, 1988).
- 100 Allen, *Star Names*, 426.
- 101 Krupp, *Beyond*, 230.
- 102 Allen, *Star Names*, 427; Krupp, *Beyond*, 230.
- 103 Krupp, *Beyond*, 230.
- 104 The fact that many European peoples associated the seven stars of the Great Bear with the image of a wagon or chariot might suggest some linkage of this constellation with the Seventh Card of the Tarot, also called The Chariot. Yet another name for this card, The Victor, smacks of strong Ray One themes just such as might be expected from the influence of a Ray One constellation.
- 105 Krupp, *Beyond*, 232.
- 106 In this quest for personal and political freedom, a great principle was embodied, for according to the Ageless Wisdom, "Freedom is an essentially spiritual attribute, underlying the entire evolutionary process...." Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 428.
- 107 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 300.
- 108 Krupp, *Beyond*, 232.
- 109 Of course, the word arctic in modern English refers to not only lands near the north pole on our planet, but those near the south pole as well, the commonality being the frigidity of the climate to be found in those locations.
- 110 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 603.
- 111 *Ibid.*
- 112 *Ibid.*, 609.
- 113 Any zodiacal sign is a thirty-degree portion of the ecliptic, the sequence of all twelve signs beginning with the point in space against which the Sun is to be seen at the northern hemisphere's Spring Equinox. Though any such thirty degree portion of the ecliptic does not coincide in space with the location of the stars in the constellation of the same name, this discrepancy presents no problem within the esoteric astrology of Alice Bailey and the Tibetan, for Djwal Khul held that the sidereal constellations are the energy sources for the zodiacal signs, which point was made in *White Magic*, 437, and in *Esoteric Astrology*, 193, 299, 410.
- 114 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 349, 376, 377, 416, 427, 428, 466. Certainly, there are other astrological factors associated with Ray One, these being Capricorn and Vulcan. Though they are not mentioned in these passages specifically, it seems the better part of reason to assume that Capricorn and Vulcan also mediate Great Bear energies, and hence bring forth the same necessary destructions and eliminations in the process of establishing the intent of the Greater Life.
- 115 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 416.
- 116 *Ibid.*, 376.
- 117 *Ibid.*, 466.
- 118 *Ibid.*
- 119 *Ibid.*, 427 - 428.
- 120 *Ibid.*, 376.
- 121 This might be deduced from the general implications of the discussion found in *Esoteric Astrology* on 376.
- 122 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 376 - 378.
- 123 *Ibid.*, 377, 378.
- 124 *Ibid.*, 466.
- 125 Bailey, *Cosmic Fire*, 96.
- 126 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 349.
- 127 *Ibid.*, 29, 449.
- 128 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age I*, 181, 557.
- 129 Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 77.
- 130 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 422.
- 131 *Ibid.*, 423.