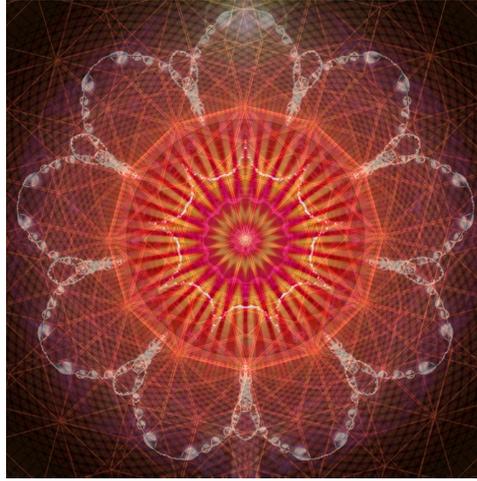


Summer 2020, Volume 15, Number 4



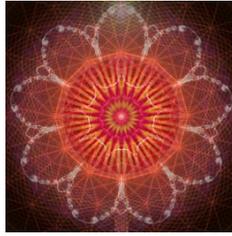
The Esoteric Quarterly

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

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



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The Esoteric Quarterly

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

Perspectives on Consciousness

The mysterious why and how of consciousness has become one of the central questions of our time. Among philosophers, psychologists, and researchers there is a tremendous amount of controversy as to whether consciousness is the result of subjective experiences or neurophysiological processes. In general, most have arrived at the basic assumption that consciousness is a function of brain activity. From an esoteric perspective, however, consciousness is considered to be a fundamental quality of the universe, the matrix or substrate of all that exists and a precondition for the material world of space and time. The esoteric emphasis on consciousness represents an effort to understand not only its nature and origins in the world but also the critical issue of how consciousness evolves.

Each one of the articles in this edition touches upon the theme of consciousness from a different perspective. One explores a specific cosmic influence and its profound effect on consciousness. A second article deals with a particular set of teachings that have the power to transform and expand consciousness. Yet another explores the consciousness of space. A final article investigates the two dominant philosophies dealing with human perception or consciousness.

Our first offering is from Maureen Temple Richmond. In this article, Richmond's focal point is the night sky's brightest visible star, Sirius, a star that holds an unparalleled place of spiritual significance in the esoteric astrological doctrine. The nature of this highly evolved entity is examined along with its role in astronomy, history, myth, and esotericism. The author's in-depth explication of Sirius details, among other things, its role as the central spiritual sun to our entire solar system, the cause of periodicity, the agent of universal love, and buddhi, the initiator of consciousness for high Logocic beings, avatars, and disciples here on earth, and the role it plays in the expression of

freedom. As such, Sirius is shown to be "the propeller of vast evolutionary life waves," thereby affirming its ancient Egyptian name as "the Great Provider."

Our next article, from Isobel Blackthorn articulates some of the key aspects of Bailey's teachings and their *heiroeidetic* function—a term used to describe "something" such as knowledge, music, art, and literature—which has initiatory power or the ability to transmute consciousness and, therefore, actions. Blackthorn touches upon the aspects of inclusiveness, wholeness, and interconnectedness, all of which are central to Bailey's teachings and contribute to a global consciousness by turning us "away from the acquisitive and divisive tendencies of our personalities." She goes on to say that "By engaging with and applying the teachings in daily life, the seeker may reach a threshold of awareness, beyond which global consciousness could be realized."

José Becerra continues with the second article in a three-part series titled *The Psychocentric Revelation, Part II: Space as a Living Entity*. In this article, Becerra suggests that deeply ingrained scientific beliefs camouflaged as facts must be challenged. In particular, he questions whether the so-called "nothingness of space" is a reality, or if space is etheric in essence and possesses consciousness. And if it is etheric, does this point to the interwoven and interdependent connectedness of all life? To this end, the author examines the subject of etheric space, an etheric body, and its relationship to health and healing, as well as the "scientific foundation of brotherhood as part of the search for higher and progressively subtler levels of causation."

Nicolas Laos contributes an article that seeks to reconcile the contradictory philosophical outlooks of *realism* and *idealism*. In an effort to bridge the chasm between the objective and subjective worlds, he addresses the issue of

whether the primacy of reality can be firmly attributed to the external world or the experiencing consciousness. To that end, Laos provides an evaluative review of the concepts of reality that were propounded by philosophers in the last 2500 years, beginning with different movements of realism and idealism in ancient Greece and extending through to medieval, late modern, and contemporary philosophy. The article concludes with a section on the synthesis of realism and idealism, in which the author outlines a “tri-synthetic mixture of reason, intuition, and mysticism... that can underpin the overcoming of the antithesis between realism and idealism.”

The “Poem of the Quarter” #357, is from *Gitanjali*, a collection of 103 prose poems by Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941), the Bengali polymath, poet, musician, artist, Ayurveda-researcher from the Indian subcontinent, and first non-white to be awarded a Nobel Prize (for Literature in 1913). The *Gitanjali* was inspired by medieval Indian lyrics of devotion in which the principal subject is love for, and union with, the divine. Though other poems describe the “ecstatic glory of the divine,” the internal conflict between spiritual longings and earthly desires as well as imagery from the natural world. Tagore’s mystical vision bridges the gap between East and West and provides a universal perspective that transcends any one theological doctrine.

Our “Pictures of the Quarter” *Aspirations* and *Incarnate*, are from Kimberly Kelly Santini. The paintings featured here were created intuitively using allegory as a gateway to abstractions that Santini calls “Daydreams.” Her compositions are filled with intriguing passages built from linear elements and layers of color. The artist, who resides in Lake Orion, Michigan is formally educated as a painter with a BFA in Painting and BA in Art History. For additional information on her work visit: www.kimberlysantini.com or contact her directly at: ksantini@turtledovedesigns.com.

This issue includes a book review for *The Esoteric Apprentice*. Written by Steven Chernikeeff, this book provides a first-hand

account of a 20-year experiment in occult group work in “Twelve Formation” based on the teachings of Djwhal Khul via Alice A. Bailey. This should be of interest to those who are interested in “esoteric practice aimed at human understanding and world betterment.”

Donna M. Brown
Editor-in-Chief

Publication Policies

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

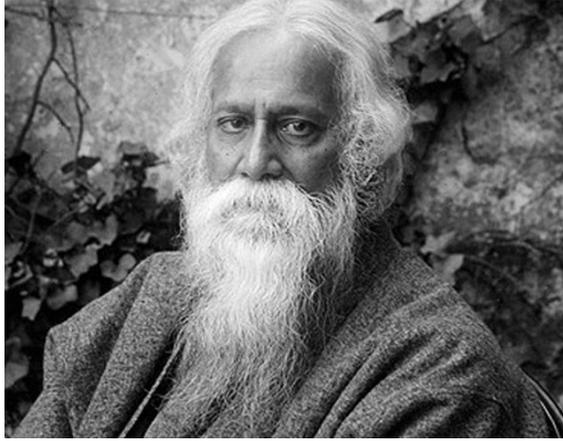
Publication of an article does not necessarily imply that the Editorial Board agrees with the views expressed. Nor do we have the means to verify all facts stated in published articles.

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

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

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

Poem of the Quarter



**357. From “Gitanjali”
by Rabindranath Tagore**

I

THOU hast made me known to friends whom I knew not. Thou hast given me seats in homes not my own. Thou hast brought the distant near and made a brother of the stranger. I am uneasy at heart when I have to leave my accustomed shelter; I forgot that there abides the old in the new, and that there also thou abidest.

Through birth and death, in this world or in others, wherever thou leadest me it is thou, the same, the one companion of my endless life whoever linkest my heart with bonds of joy to the unfamiliar. When one knows thee, then alien there is none, then no door is shut. Oh, grant me my prayer that I may never lose the bliss of the touch of the One in the play of the many.

II

No more noisy, loud words from me, such is my master’s will. Henceforth I deal in whispers. The speech of my heart will be carried on in murmurings of a song.

Men hasten to the King’s market. All the buyers and sellers are there. But I have my untimely leave in the middle of the day, in the thick of work.

Let then the flowers come out in my garden, though it is not their time, and let the midday bees strike up their lazy hum.

Full many an hour have I spent in the strife of the good and the evil, but now it is the pleasure of my playmate of the empty days to draw my heart on to him, and I know not why is this sudden call to what useless inconsequence!

III

On the day when the lotus bloomed, alas, my mind was straying, and I knew it not. My basket was empty and the flower remained unheeded.

Only now and again a sadness fell upon me, and I started up from my dream and felt a sweet trace of a strange smell in the south wind.

That vague fragrance made my heart ache with longing, and it seemed to me that it was the eager breath of the summer seeking for its completion.

I knew not then that it was so near, that it was mine, and this perfect sweetness had blossomed in the depth of my own heart.

IV

By all means they try to hold me secure who love me in this world. But it is otherwise with thy love, which is greater than theirs, and thou keepest me free. Lest I forget them they never venture to leave me alone. But day passes by after day and thou art not seen.

If I call not thee in my prayers, if I keep not thee in my heart-thy love for me still waits for my love.

V

I was not aware of the moment when I first crossed the threshold of this life. What was the power that made me open out into this vast mystery like a bud in the forest at midnight? When in the morning I looked upon the light I felt in a moment that I was no stranger in this world, that the inscrutable without name and form had taken me in its arms in the form of my own mother. Even so, in death the same unknown will appear as ever known to me. And because I love this life, I know I shall love death as well. The child cries out when from the right breast the mother takes it away to find in the very next moment its consolation in the left one.

VI

Thou art the sky and thou art the nest as well. Oh, thou beautiful, there in the nest it is thy love that encloses the soul with colors and sounds and odors. There comes the morning with the golden basket in her right hand bearing the wreath of beauty, silently to crown the earth. And there comes the evening over the lonely meadows deserted by herds, through trackless paths, carrying cool draughts of peace in her golden pitcher from the western ocean of rest.

But there, where spreads the infinite sky for the soul to take her flight in, reigns the stainless white radiance. There is no day nor night, nor form nor color, and never, never a word.

Pictures of the Quarter



Aspirations | Kimberly Kelly Santini | Acrylic on Canvas 30 x 30 x15



Incarnate | Kimberly Kelly Santini | Acrylic on Canvas 30 x 30 x 2

Quotes of the Quarter

For the occultist, symbols have a real meaning. A symbol that is merely a symbol, merely a copy or image, has no meaning: there is only significance in what can become a reality, in what can become a living force. If symbols act upon the spirit of humanity in such a way that intuitive forces are set free, then we are dealing with a real symbol.

Rudolf Steiner, from a lecture given in Berlin December 2, 1904, published in English in *The Temple Legend, Freemasonry and Related Occult Movements* (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1985).

There will suddenly dawn upon the disciple's waiting mind (which still remains the agent of reception) the answer to his problem, the clue that is needed to bring relief to humanity, the information desired which, when applied, will unlock some door in the realm of science, psychology or religion. This door, when opened, will bring relief or release to many. As before I have told you, the intuition is never concerned with individual problems or enquiries, as so many self-centred aspirants think. It is purely impersonal and only applicable to humanity in a synthetic sense.

Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1950), 182.

Astrology must be something social In true Astrology only which is universally human is considered and not the satisfaction of the egoism of the human being.

Elizabeth Vreede, "The World of Stars and Human Destiny," from *Anthroposophy and Astrology: The Astronomical Letters of Elizabeth Vreede* (East Sussex: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1926).

Time is a state of consciousness! It does not exist, we are told at higher levels of reality. But to say that it arises out of ignorance is incorrect, for it is an integral part of the

evolutionary process. Time, at least "Time as we know it," is transcended only when its necessary function as the organization of sequence, the step-by-step progression of the evolution of consciousness on the Path of Return, is no longer needed. Time is a portal through which the now is united with eternity.

Dorje Jinpa, *The Secrets of the Heart* (Talent, OR: 2018), 56.

This universe breeds life and consciousness because consciousness is its source, because the stuff of the universe is ultimately mind-stuff. What we recognize as the material universe, the universe of space and time and elementary particles and energies, is actually an *avatar*, the materialization of primal consciousness. In that case there is no waiting for consciousness to arise. It is *always* there, at the beginning as at the end. What we wait for in the evolution of life is only the culminating avatar, the emergence of self-conscious *bodies* that can articulate consciousness, that can give it a voice, a culture, literature and art, and science.

George Wald, ed. by Kishore Gandhi, in "Life and Mind in the Universe," from *The Evolution of Consciousness* (New York: Paragon Press, 1983), 23.

Now a man who understands life only through the evidence of his senses is not a *psychological* man. He is a sensual man. His mind is based on the senses. This is called elsewhere "the mind of the flesh." (Col. II.18). In such a case he thinks from his feet—and has no head—he thinks from what "shoes" cover his feet. This is his form of truth.... He thinks literally.... But to become a Man, one must begin to think, apart from literal sense.... Why, for example, is it said so often in the esoteric literature, as in the Scriptures, that a man must *remove his shoes* before entering a sacred place? It means that a sensual mind cannot understand psychological truth. To put matters

in other terms: the physical man cannot comprehend the spiritual man.

Maurice Nicoll, *The Mark* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1985), 3.

Mercurius is the divine winged Hermes... manifest in matter, the god of revelation, lord of thought and sovereign psychopomp. The fluid metal, *argentum vivus*—"living silver," quicksilver—was the wonderful substance... which glistens and animates within. When the alchemist speaks of Mercurius, on the face of it he means quicksilver, but inwardly he means the world-creating spirit concealed in matter.

Carl G. Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy: Collected Works* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), 280-281.

The simple archetype I hit upon long ago. No organic belief wholly corresponds to the underlying idea. The higher idea lurks behind each. That is my God; that is the God we all seek and hope to set our countenance upon; but we can only divine Him, not see Him.

Johann Wolfgang Goethe, in Alice Raphael's *Goethe & The Philosopher Stone* (New York: Garrett Publications, 1965), 246.

Modern consciousness research has shown that the ancient sacred scriptures, including the eschatological texts, are not irrelevant superstition and primitive imagination. Instead they seem to be accurate descriptions of the experiential territories traversed in non-ordinary states of consciousness. They are often based on countless personal experiences and on many centuries of countless observations. Experiential confrontation and knowledge of the realms they describe is a matter of extreme relevance since the degree to which we become comfortable and familiar with them can have far reaching consequences for the quality of our life as well as for the way we die.

Stanislav Grof, *Books of the Dead: Manuals for Living and Dying* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1994).

A Symbol is an embodiment of an idea so that it can be dealt with by differing conscious entities, or even between different conscious levels of the same Entity. Thus a Symbol is a means of exchange much like coinage or any mutually acceptable currency. Symbolism may be considered as the currency of consciousness.

William G. Gray, *The Ladder of Lights* (York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser Inc., 198), 11.

Sufism uses the quintessential form of prayer, the *dhikr* or invocation, in which all otherness and separation from the Divine is removed and one achieves *tawhid* or unity. Though this process of transforming man's psyche appears gradual at first, the *dhikr* ... becomes man's real nature and the reality by which he identifies himself. With the help of the *dhikr*, as combined with appropriate forms of meditation, or *fikr*, the man first gains an integrated soul, pure and whole like gold, and then in the *dhikr* he offers his soul to God in the form of a supreme sacrifice. Finally in annihilation (*fana*) and subsistence (*baqâ*) he realizes that he was never separated from God even from the outset.

Seeyed Hossein Nasr, *Sufi Essays* (Chicago: KAZI Publications, 1999), 49.

The Inanna mythologems of descent and return reintroduce the two great goddesses, primal feminine energy patterns and their partners, and the possibility of an individual human response to bring them into incarnated, personal life. The story represents a model for health and for healing the split between above and below, between the collective ideal and the powerful bipolar, transformative, processual reality underlying the feminine wholeness pattern. The images of the myth can orient us on the path as we suffer a return to the goddess and renewal, following the footsets of Inanna and Geshtinanna.

Sylvia Brinton Perera, *Descent to the Goddess: A Way of Initiation for Women* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1981), 94.

Mary: Adept, Queen, Mother, Priestess



John F. Nash

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Introduction

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 - 3. Mary in Early Christian Writings**
 - 4. Marian Doctrine and Beyond**
 - 5. Marian Devotion and Intercession**
 - 6. Mary Reveals Herself to the World**
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This book is about Mary, the mother of Jesus. It is Mary's story, gleaned from scripture, early Christian writings, Christian doctrine and devotional practices, modern esoteric teachings, and information from visions, apparitions, and other contacts. In a few cases we have Mary's own words. Material from these diverse sources coalesces into a remarkably coherent account of Mary's life in Palestine, her role in the Redemption, her present position, and her ongoing ministry.

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

Author of *Sirius*

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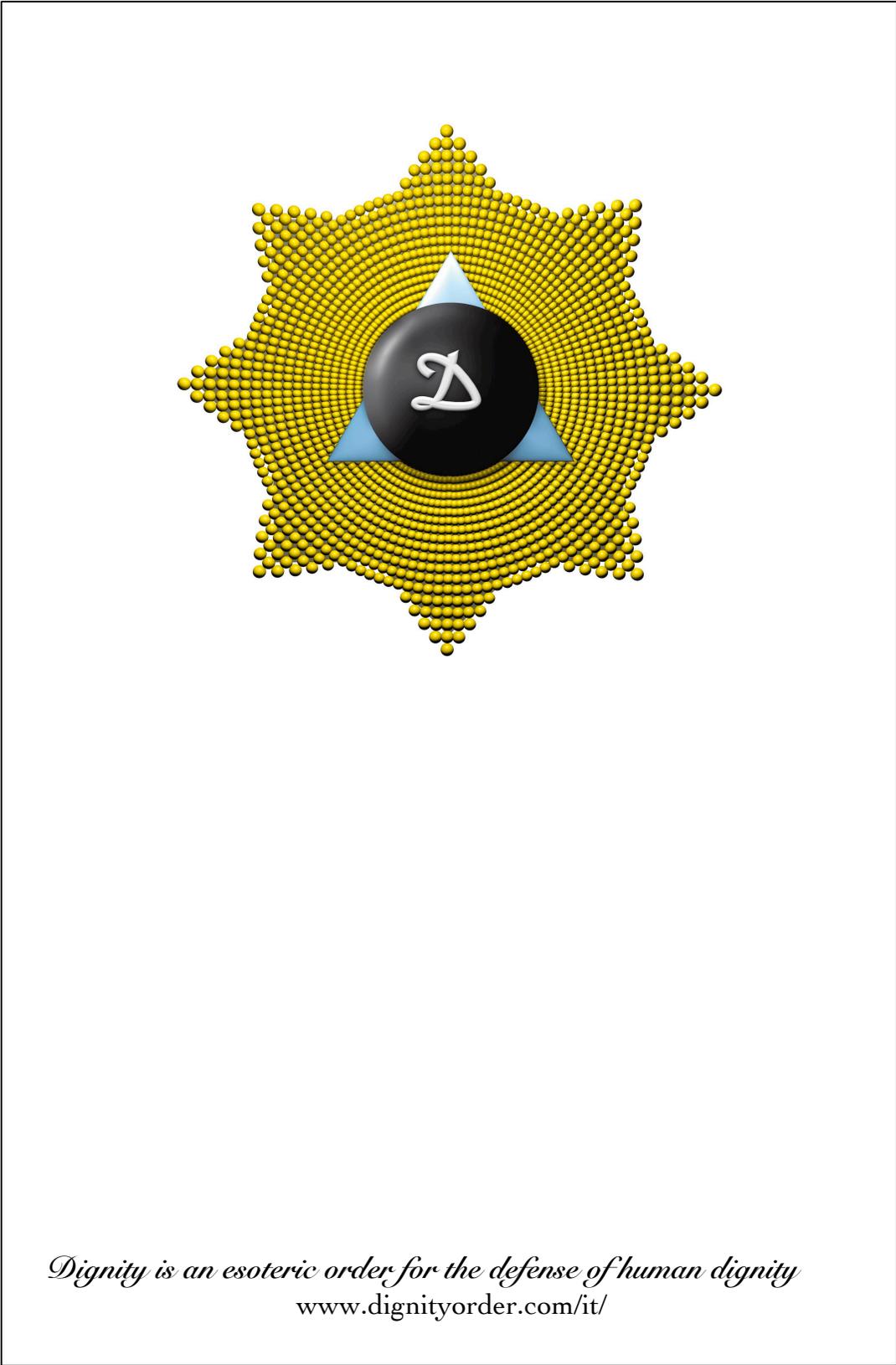
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Sirius in Myth, History, and Esotericism

Maureen Temple Richmond

Abstract

The esoteric philosophy of Alice A. Bailey claims that the star Sirius fulfills an unparalleled spiritual function, embodying aspects of Deity which place this star in a class of its own. Long before Bailey's writings on Sirius were published, ancient cultures revered the star Sirius similarly. This study examines the nature of Sirius according to the esoteric teaching, first placing the study of this star in the context of world mythology. In particular, the role of Sirius in the religion and monumental architecture of ancient Egypt is explored, as well the star's central astronomical function in Egyptian culture, allowing Egyptian knowers to predict the flooding of the Nile. The discussion delves deep into the religious beliefs of ancient Egypt as well, demonstrating that the star Sirius was viewed by that culture as intimately connected with ancient funerary practices and multiple deities. With ancient history as background, the narrative then turns to the many facets and faces of Sirius as portrayed in the Bailey writings, where Sirius is described as the heart center of a Cosmic Logos, origin of the Law of Karma for our solar system, the parent of our solar system, a potent source of buddhi, the home of avatars, the star of initiation for logoi and for humans, and the emanating source for the principle of freedom. The exploration of the nature of Sirius concludes with a listing of the astrological intermediaries said by Bailey to conduct Sirian energies into our solar system and planetary life, as well as a listing of ray characteristics associated with this star. Enthusiasts of esoteric cosmology and astrology will find much of use in this compendium of main points made about Sirius in the Bailey writings, while those with interests in ancient history and culture will also come away with gems.

Introduction

There is in all of the Alice Bailey writings perhaps no star of greater significance than

Sirius. Known to astronomers as Alpha Canis Major, it's the brightest star in the constellation of the Greater Dog, the starry pooch who lies dutifully and loyally at the foot of the great hunter, Orion. But in the esoteric astrological doctrine, Sirius holds a position of distinction for reasons others than just its place as hunter's best friend.

This star holds, according to the esoteric astrological doctrine, an undeniably central place of importance for a number of compelling reasons. It is, the tradition states, an agent of universal love, the origin of karmic law and the cause of periodicity, a member of the all-important Prototypical Triangle, the parent of our solar system and the very soul of our Solar Logos, a point of emanation for cosmic and other avatars, the source of the Fourth Cosmic Path, the home of our planetary Hierarchy and the point in the heavens from which the work of our Hierarchy is directed, the origin of the mysteries of initiation, and the Star of Initiation for seekers on our planet.

All this and more is the estate to which Alpha Canis Major lays claim, and this because it derives its primary identity and quality from its place within the heart center of a great Cosmic Logoic Life. From within the heartbeat of that inconceivably immense being, this star emits those rhythmic influences which lead to that

About the Author

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

which is known in our dimension as cyclic phenomena, expressive of karmic law. Sirius is thus a factor of extraordinary significance in the esoteric astrological doctrine.

The importance of Sirius in the esoteric astrological doctrine is reflected in the way it was discussed by the Tibetan. Unlike Aldebaran, Dubhe, Merak, and to some extent, Polaris, all of which were discussed under the cover of other names, the star Sirius is boldly proclaimed throughout the Bailey writings, appearing by name in the complete corpus no less than 170 times, 70 of those mentions occurring in *Esoteric Astrology* alone. There it was introduced early as a member of the all-important Prototypical Triangle,¹ a collective unit composed of the Great Bear, Sirius, and the Pleiades, the three members of which together provide all the energies necessary for manifested existence in our region of the manifested universe. Given the fundamental importance of this star to the esoteric doctrine, a tour of its significance is in order.

Astronomical Identification of Sirius

As if in keeping with the prominence of its place in the esoteric teaching, Sirius just happens to be the brightest star in the night sky, some 40 times as luminous as our own local star, the Sun.² Sirius is likewise easily located in the night sky. Viewed from the northern hemisphere, Sirius is located in the winter southern sky, just southeast of Orion. There, Sirius sits in the Greater Dog star grouping, the eastern edge of which borders on the Milky Way.³ Sirius itself is located just to the lower left of the three conspicuous stars forming the belt of Orion, and is most readily visible in the northern hemisphere from approximately November to April. In the southern hemisphere, Sirius is seen in the northern sky during the summer, particularly well in the months December through February. At 8.3 light-years away, it is one of the members of the Milky Way Galaxy which is relatively near to our solar system.⁴

As early as 1844, astronomers suspected that Sirius was a member of a binary star system (a point not specifically addressed by the Tibetan),

and was thought to have a smaller companion known as Sirius B. This fact was verified in 1862 and further validated by spectral analysis in 1915.⁵ Binary systems consist of two stars, a larger and a smaller, which orbit a common center of mass in elliptical orbits.⁶ The star lighter in weight has a larger, elliptical orbit; the smaller, more massive star has a smaller one. In the case of the Sirian binary system, the internal orbital period is 49.97 years.⁷

All binary systems also orbit the center of our galaxy. Thus, as the two stars orbit both their common center of mass and the galactic center, they trace out intertwining spirals.⁸ This type of arrangement is now considered to be quite ordinary, about half of all star systems being of this nature.⁹ Triple star systems are also known, and the Sirian system may yet prove to be one of these. Evidence to this effect comes from the research of French astronomers Daniel Benest and J.L Duvent, who in 1995 concluded after exhaustive research that Sirius is 90% likely to belong to a triple star system.¹⁰ Since the Tibetan Master did not specify otherwise, it may be safely taken that his comments with regard to Sirius pertain to either Sirius A or to the entire grouping of solar entities to which Sirius A may belong.

Modern astronomers now think that most of the stars in our galaxy exist in some type of collective relationship with other stars, being not solitary, but bound by the force of gravity to at least one and sometimes many companion stars.¹¹ Indeed, in this notion, contemporary astronomers echo what the Tibetan so often emphasized in *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*—that groupings of stars (or Solar Logoi) form living, coherent units within even greater coherent units. In fact, the Tibetan Master defined a constellation as a meaningful relationship amongst Solar Logoi, rather than as a visual convenience, as is the popular notion. Stating that a constellation consists of two or more solar systems and that "...these systems are held together as a coherent whole by the powerful interrelation of the suns, whose magnetic rapport is so balanced that 'occultly' they tread the Path together within the radius of each other's power...",¹² he emphasized that it is the attractions binding suns together in group formation which make a constellation what it is.

This notion is but another presentation of the key occult dictum that all lives exist within greater lives, serving the purposes of the greater intent while also seeking their own legitimate objectives. The Tibetan spoke of Sirius in just this fashion as well, referring to it as a constellation, which word undeniably implies membership in a stellar grouping.¹³ In this, esoteric occultism and accepted scientific theory converge, in both the cases of stars in general and of Sirius in particular. From both viewpoints, the factor of relationship among stars emerges clearly. Thus, Sirius finds place in a collection of Solar Logoi, contributing to its collective grouping a considerable luminosity as the brightest star in the night sky, as seen from Earth.

Sirius Around the World

The extraordinary magnitude of light emanating from the region of Sirius is thus as obvious today as it was in ancient times. In fact, it is thought by some that this exceeding brilliance is responsible for the origin of the name given to Sirius,¹⁴ likely derived from a Greek word close in both sound and meaning to the English word for searing. The original Greek term, *seirios*, means “sparkling” or “scorching,” and refers to the facts that Sirius is the brightest star in the sky and rises with the Sun during the hottest part of the year. This bright and hot theme associated with Sirius is reflected in the fact that Sirius may have been at one time the first form of a fire deity.¹⁵

The Greeks also had other names for the star we now call Sirius. Sometimes they referred to it simply as *astron*, a term which is the root word for our English term, astronomy. The Greeks also labeled Sirius with various forms of the term Dog-Star, because of the star’s placement in the constellation Canis, which is Latin for Dog, and sometimes called it “The Dog of Orion” for its obvious position near the feet of the great hunter of the sky.¹⁶ Various other cultures and peoples of the Mediterranean area also had names for Sirius with the word dog involved.¹⁷

However, the Greeks and their neighbors most likely inherited these ideas from the Egyptians, for it appears that the linkage of the star Sirius with the dog figure originally arose in Egypt.¹⁸ There Sirius was from the earliest of times

represented in hieroglyphics by a dog¹⁹ and associated with the god Anubis, a highly important member of the Egyptian pantheon depicted with the head of a jackal,²⁰ a small wild dog related to the wolf.

The jackal (or dog), symbol for Anubis, represented Sirius in Egyptian hieroglyphics perhaps as early as 3285 B.C.²¹ The star Sirius may have even been called by the name Anubis in Egypt at some point.²² It was through this linkage of Anubis the Jackal-Headed god and the star Sirius that Sirius came to be called the Star of the Dog, or the Dog-Star. Eventually, this imagery imparted its name to the entire star grouping within which Sirius is perceived. Hence, that star grouping became known as the constellation of the Dog, or Canis, using the Latin in which certain constellations are designated. Today astronomy recognizes two dog constellations, the Greater and the Lesser, or Canis Majoris and Canis Minoris. Sirius is to be found in the Greater Dog, as mentioned above.

This affiliation of Sirius with the dog figure has given rise to the folk notion of the Dog Days, a period of about forty days each year in July and August when Sirius and the Sun rise over the eastern horizon at about the same time.²³ This period of time is so-called simply because it is an interval in which the Dog-Star is prominent by association with the Sun. But the Dog Days have come to be conceived of popularly as a period of misery and distress caused by the oppressive heat of summer hanging over the land in the northern hemisphere at that time. Likewise, the phrase “Dog Days” has also come to mean any difficult period in general.

The origin of this terminology is largely lost to contemporary society, being thought widely to have originated in the behavior of domesticated dogs, which are presumed to be infected with rabies more readily in the late summer of the year. As can be seen, the actual meaning of the term “Dog Days” has nothing whatsoever to do with canine illnesses and their threat to humans. Instead, it has only to do with astronomical alignments.

But in this mistaken association of troublesome canines with Sirius, the western world is not alone. The Chinese called Sirius the “Heavenly

Wolf,” and felt that attacks from thieves (which is what some wolves are in the animal world) were presaged when Sirius shone with particular brilliance.²⁴ As we shall see, this connection of the influence of Sirius with danger from dogs (or wolves, which are canines) has colored the astrological characterization of this great star. This is but one of many pedestrian notions projected onto the nature of Sirius, amounting to a needless trivialization of this noble star.

However mistreated and mistrusted it is as the Dog, Sirius has also been conceived of differently throughout the world. From East to West, Sirius has gone under various names, some linguistically related to one another. By and large, these names reflect the views of different cultures regarding the shapes and mythologies of constellations in the neighborhood of Sirius as viewed from Earth.²⁵

For example, the Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Chinese, and Indian cultures all at one time or another perceived Sirius to be part of a constellation suggesting the shape of an archer and a bow,²⁶ a notion easily accepted by anyone who has studied portions of next-door neighbor Orion, which can be seen as a distinct arrow shape. Hence, some of these cultures called Sirius the Bow-Star. In connection with this theme, certain Hindu names for Sirius play upon the arrow-like appearance of part of Orion and call nearby Sirius “the Deerslayer,” “the Hunter Who Shot the Arrow,” and other names connected with the bow and arrow theme.²⁷

The Euphrateans, Persians, Phoenicians, and the peoples of Vedic India called Sirius “the Leader,”²⁸ while the Romans knew Sirius as *Janitor Lethaeus*, or the “Keeper of Hell,”²⁹ both of which titles are perhaps reminiscent of Anubis, Egyptian god who led the deceased through the underworld.³⁰ The Egyptians themselves revered Sirius under several other names as well, including Sothis, Sothi, Sept, Sepet, Sopdet, Sot, and Sed,³¹ though Sothis was a Greek version of the name for this star.

No less than the primary document of Zoroastrianism, the *Zend-Avesta*, says that the Supreme God established as Master and Overseer of all the stars the star Sirius, called Tishtriya by the Zoroastrians.³² This mystical prominence is

echoed in the number of ancient temples oriented to Sirius. The great archeoastronomer Sir Norman Lockyer felt that there were at least seven Egyptian temples oriented to Sirius.³³ One of these was an Isis temple positioned in such a way that the star Sirius was featured when it rose in conjunction with the Sun.³⁴

Sirius is also represented on the walls of a step-temple at Sakkara, which dates from 2700 B.C. and is likewise thought to have been erected in honor of Sirius.³⁵ And at Denderah, great prominence is accorded to Sirius on the square zodiac there, where Sirius is symbolized by the cow-goddess, Hathor.³⁶ It appears that structures honoring Sirius in various ways were found all over the ancient world at one time, with Sirius sanctuaries existing not only in Egypt, but also in Persia, Greece, and Rome.³⁷

Further, in Greece, the overhead passage of Sirius was celebrated during initiations into the Eleusinian Mysteries at the temple of Ceres at Eleusis.³⁸ In addition, it is thought by some that Greek mythology is replete with symbolic and numerological allusions to Sirian characteristics.³⁹ During the days of the Roman Empire, the prominent astronomical alignments of Sirius were often used to set dates for the high festivals of many popular religions and mystery cults.⁴⁰ And the mystery teachings of both Egypt and Babylon contained information on Sirius.⁴¹

As these examples demonstrate, Sirius was often to be found deeply enmeshed in ancient religious and spiritual expressions, whether these were the positioning of sacred buildings, the timing of sacred celebrations, or initiation into mystic traditions. Moreover, every great religion of antiquity may well have been linked in some way with this star, if the pronouncements of H.P. Blavatsky on this matter are to be taken at face value.⁴² Yet, of all the ancient contexts and cultures in which Sirius held such a prominent position, the Egyptian is perhaps the most outstanding.

In fact, it might be argued that Sirius was the most important star in the sky to the Egyptians,⁴³ for their civil and religious systems were based centrally upon astronomical alignments involving this star. The Egyptian yearly calendar was originally calculated upon the basis of the

Nile floods, but the dates for that event were found to vary.⁴⁴ It was discovered that a more reliable indicator existed in the yearly rising of Sirius with the Sun (or the heliacal rising of Sirius), which also took place at about the time of the Nile flooding. In about 2800 B.C.,⁴⁵ the heliacal rising of Sirius became the basis upon which the beginning of the Egyptian New Year was determined. This method of time reckoning has come to be called the Sothic Cycle, after Sothis, the Greek version of the Egyptian name for Sirius.⁴⁶ The Babylonians used this yearly heliacal rising of Sirius to determine the beginning date for their calendars as well.⁴⁷ The Sothic Cycle itself is a 1,461 year period during which time the dates on which the sidereal and civil calendars begin are seen to first coincide, then on account of precessional sky changes eventually diverge as much as possible, ultimately to match up again.⁴⁸

Of great importance to the ancient Egyptians was the fact that the heliacal rising of Sirius occurred nearly simultaneously with the yearly flooding of the Nile.⁴⁹ Hence, this astronomical phenomena enabled them to predict with confidence the timing of the annual Nile flood, upon which their entire economy and life support system depended. Thus, Sirius was key in signifying when to expect the yearly inundation. Perhaps, as a result, Sirius was called by the neighboring Phoenicians “Hannabeah,” or “the Barker,”⁵⁰ possibly in reference to the barking of a dog as it warns of danger.⁵¹ Certainly, there was some danger inherent in the arrival of flood time, which danger was greatly diminished by proper knowledge of when to expect such an occurrence. Thus, knowledge of the time cycle structured upon the heliacal rising of Sirius was crucial to both physical survival and successful civic management for the ancient Egyptians. Attunement to the cycles of Sirius was indispensable in this enterprise, as it enabled

Egyptian culture to successfully manage and profit from the yearly Nile flood.

Interestingly, the association of Sirius with an abundance of water appears elsewhere than Egypt in the ancient world as well. In fact, it is possible that Sirius was associated with deluges

in general, perhaps because of its connection in Egypt with the Nile flood.⁵² The Egyptians, surrounded by desert land, considered such an inundation beneficial,⁵³ but the Romans in cooler climes farther to the north looked upon Sirius as a troublemaker who brought highly destructive weather.⁵⁴

Further association of Sirius with water themes occurs in the *Zend-Avesta*, the primary

sacred scripture of the Zoroastrian religion. There, Sirius is called by the Persian name, Tishtriya. Not far away in Vedic India, Sirius was likewise known by the names Tishiya, Tishiga, Tistrija, Tistar, and even Tishtrya,⁵⁵ a point that argues heavily for the flow of linguistic and astronomical information between the two cultures, but that is another issue. To return to the *Zend-Avesta*, Tishtriya is held there to be the author of rain and the enemy of the daemon of dryness.⁵⁶ According to the *Zend-Avesta*, the Supreme God once compelled Tishtriya (or Sirius) to conjure a massive flood in retribution for human wickedness and corruption.⁵⁷ Thus, Tishtriya- Sirius may well have been perceived by the Zoroastrians as the agent of karma. At the very least, it is apparent that the Zoroastrian religion associated Tishtriya-Sirius with rain-making and the appearance of great waters.

Sirius was also associated in the ancient world with large bodies of water in general, though these were perhaps substitutes for an archetypal whirlpool.⁵⁸ The whirlpool itself has been taken to signify all whirling, spiralic configurations, such as tornadoes, hurricanes, galaxies in motion, and the creative process in general, all themes

... the Tibetan Master...indicated that each Cosmic Path leads to one of the centers in the One About Whom Naught May Be Said. One of these Paths... leads to Sirius. These two statements taken together plainly indicate that Sirius is one of the centers of a Cosmic Logos, the One About Whom Naught May Be Said.

with which Sirius may be associated as well. It is of interest to note that ancient peoples may have connected spiral motion with Sirius, for this motion is now recognized by astrophysicists as characteristic of the paths of stars in a binary system, such as the one formed of Sirius A and B.

But whatever the connections of Sirius with threatening or unruly forces of nature, to the Egyptians, Sirius connoted order, as it made possible the organization and use of time. Perhaps as early as approximately 3000 B.C., the Egyptians observed the fact that the year is about three hundred and sixty-five days long.⁵⁹ They dedicated the final five days of their calendrical year to a feast celebrating Sirius,⁶⁰ so that the year ended and began with reference to Sirius. As a result, Sirius likely functioned as a time deity, or watcher over the year. In fact, one of the pyramid texts calls Sothis (or Sirius) the Year itself.⁶¹ Anubis, symbol of Sirius, is certainly thought to have been connected with time.⁶² This role for Sirius as a time-keeper or time marker is of great significance, and has led to speculation that Sirius was the real kosmokrator, or cosmic time measurer, of the ancient world.⁶³

The ancient world certainly had its sights on this star. In about 3285 B.C., Sirius had become a major star of orientation for the Egyptians, replacing Gamma Draconis. At the same time, the Egyptians had begun to worship the star Sirius,⁶⁴ once thought to have been the only individual star revered by the Egyptian culture,⁶⁵ though certain constellations, such as Orion and the Great Bear, were known to have been significant as well.⁶⁶

However, late twentieth-century research has revealed that not just one, but many stars in a certain part of the sky were singled out by the builders of the Egyptian pyramids as sacred. Destinations for the souls of the departed, these were all consequently held in reverential regard by the ancient Egyptian culture. Specifically, it was the stars in a region of the sky called by the ancient Egyptians “the Duat” or “afterworld” which they revered. The Duat included part of the constellation Orion and the star of interest here, Sirius.⁶⁷ This region of the sky was considered to be spiritually activated and capable of properly receiving the souls of the departed only at the time of the summer solstice, when

Orion and Sirius appeared on the eastern horizon in the final moments of dark sky before the Sun would rise.⁶⁸ Note that Sirius played a significant role in visually announcing the onset of this period. Here again, is indication of the importance of Sirius to the ancient Egyptian world.

The star Sirius is mentioned specifically in *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* as a point to which the souls of the deceased go,⁶⁹ as are four stars of the Great Bear,⁷⁰ a constellation nowhere near the Duat, but in fact right at the celestial north pole. In general, the Egyptian doctrine held that the deceased became one with the stars,⁷¹ with certain of them specified, as described. It might be said then that to the Egyptian mind, union with certain stars meant immortality, a fact reflected in the plea of Horus for the deceased, “May his soul rest among the stars that never set!”⁷² The stars that never set are, of course, those nearest the celestial North pole, the polar or circumpolar stars. Perhaps there were other such invocations for the stars of the Duat.

However, that Sirius was associated by the Egyptians with the afterlife is certain, which connection was revealed plainly in their burial customs. They adopted seventy days as the amount of time spent in the embalming of the dead, the same amount of time that Sirius is invisible each year due to its proximity to the rising Sun.⁷³ Thus, following a death, the Egyptians set aside seventy days for the careful, ritualistic treating and wrapping of the body of the deceased, a process held in the highest regard. It was astronomical fact regarding Sirius which was instrumental in establishing this practice, for the Egyptians regarded the seventy-day invisibility of Sirius as the archetype of experience in the after-death state. Sirius thus was connected with themes of death and rebirth in ancient Egyptian thought.⁷⁴

The importance of Sirius resulted from not only the utilitarian need to order and organize time, but also from the significance of Sirius in the religious arcana of ancient Egypt. The Egyptians looked upon Sirius as a sacred star, union with which conferred immortality. Here is one of the main reasons why Sirius claimed the position of great prominence which it did in Egyptian

culture. In this role, Sirius was associated by the Egyptians with several of their gods and goddesses, including Osiris, Isis, Horus, Hathor, Anubis, and Thoth.⁷⁵

Osiris was the main Egyptian god, symbolizing the power of resurrection and immortality, the belief in which was widespread from the earliest times in Egypt.⁷⁶ The soul of Osiris was thought to dwell in the constellation Orion,⁷⁷ with which constellation Osiris was therefore identified, in addition to Sirius. The hieroglyphic which represented Osiris was constituted of the symbols for the throne and eye,⁷⁸ giving rise to the fact that the earliest symbol for Osiris was the Eye of God.⁷⁹ This is a fact which has ramifications in Masonic symbolism, in which frequently appears the Eye of God; and as shall shortly be discussed, Masonry is esoterically connected to Sirius just as Osiris was exoterically so.

Isis was the main Egyptian goddess and the female counterpart of Osiris, the greatest of goddesses from the earliest to the latest Egyptian dynasties.⁸⁰ She was a beneficent goddess and mother who personified the feminine creative power, and whose influence and love pervaded all heaven, the Earth, and the abode of the dead.⁸¹ Isis was also known as the goddess of the Earth, the goddess of the Underworld, the power which caused the Nile Flood, producer of fertility, giver of life, goddess of cultivated fields, goddess of the harvest, and goddess of food.⁸² As the goddess of the underworld, she was said to assist in transforming the bodies of the dead into those in which they would inhabit the realm of Osiris,⁸³ such bodies perhaps being an allusion to some type of immortal vehicle like the soul or causal body. The symbol of Isis in the heavens was considered by the ancient Egyptians to be the star Sept, which is one of their names for Sirius,⁸⁴ and this star was thought to be the resting place for the soul of Isis.⁸⁵

It is worth noting the nature of the other god and goddess figures associated with Sirius. These include Horus, Hathor, Anubis, and Thoth.

Horus was the son of Isis and Osiris, and a Sun deity himself,⁸⁶ frequently represented with a walking god figure with the head of a hawk.⁸⁷ Hathor was an aspect of Isis,⁸⁸ depicted as a cow lying in a boat with a star between her horns.⁸⁹

Jackal-headed Anubis was the god of the underworld, the guide of the deceased in the after death state.⁹⁰ He was charged with tending the scales whereupon were weighed the hearts of the dead, making sure that the cross-beam was entirely even and true.⁹¹ In this symbolism is suggested the Scales of Justice or Karma, a theme strongly connected with Sirius in the esotericism of Master Djwhal Khul.

Thoth, often depicted as the ibis-headed god, was thought to be the personification of the reason and mental power of the great Egyptian over-god, Ra.⁹² Sometimes Thoth was described as the mind, reason, and understanding of Ra, these three terms resulting in a title of Thrice Great, or Trismegistus in the Greek language.⁹³ This great intellectual power called Thoth was of astounding perspicacity, for Thoth was considered to have been the inventor and god of all the arts and sciences, to have made the original calculations establishing the heavens, stars, and Earth, to be the master of all physical and moral law, to be the master of books, the scribe of the gods, and to have knowledge of divine speech.⁹⁴ In fact, it was Thoth who spoke the word whereby the wishes of Ra were carried into effect.⁹⁵

Thoth it was who reckoned the times and seasons, and who directed the motions of the heavenly bodies.⁹⁶ The aspect of Thoth as director of the heavens is of particular importance, for the knowledge and application of astronomical cycles became part of the ancient Egyptian initiatory tradition.⁹⁷ In this context, then, a line can be drawn from an Egyptian god linked with Sirius directly to knowledge which forms part of an esoteric initiatory tradition. Stated most simply, it might be said that Sirius equals Thoth, who equals knowledge regarding astronomical cycles, or in short, Sirius equals knowledge of astronomical cycles. Likewise, in the esoteric tradition Sirius is associated with the concept of cyclicity or periodicity, as shall be shown below.

Great Thoth was also considered to be the force which kept hostile forces in equilibrium,⁹⁸ appearing in one of his forms as the dog-headed ape who sits atop the scales of justice or karma and ensures their correct balance.⁹⁹ Certainly this aspect of Thoth is reminiscent of Anubis, who also tends the scales and has the head of a jackal,

or small dog. In the judgment scene in *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, Thoth takes the role of a recording angel, functioning in much the same way as what Blavatsky and the Tibetans call the Lipika Lords, karmic record keepers who like Thoth are closely connected with Sirius.¹⁰⁰ Hence, both the Anubis and Thoth figures suggest that the Egyptians had a doctrine in some respects similar to certain of the esoteric tenets given out by Djwhal Khul through Alice Bailey, and all attest to a linkage between Sirius and the forces of karmic law.

Thus, through the various god and goddess figures associated with Sirius by the Egyptians, we find that they linked this star with what were to them the most profound themes of their spiritual philosophy - the continuity of life after the present physical embodiment, the certainty that the hearts (or souls) of the dead must be weighed in the scales of divine judgment, and the importance of astronomical cycles. Since life after death implies immortality, and the scales of justice imply karma, these two beliefs might rightly be labeled the doctrines of reincarnation and karma. The third we might dare to call the theory of celestial influence.

In the simplest of terms, it can be said that the Egyptians linked the nature of Sirius with doctrines which also form the foundation of all esoteric teaching—the reality of the soul and its recurrent embodiments, the centrality of karma as a decisive agent in the life of the inner man, and the relevance of celestial influence to the experience of human consciousness. And since Sirius was the astronomical foundation of the entire Egyptian religious system,¹⁰¹ these themes of reincarnation, karma, and the relevance of celestial influence can be said to have held pride of place in ancient Egyptian culture.

The last of these three factors played a particularly prominent role in the architecture which was constructed in commemoration of great principles in ancient Egypt. According to the twentieth-twenty-first century researchers Robert Bauval and Graham Hancock, the monumental architecture of Egypt was designed to embody profound references to and alignments with celestial bodies. These references and alignments were built into the pyramids and the

Sphinx at the Giza complex, Bauval and Hancock concluded, by a brotherhood of initiates and temple builders called the “Followers of Horus,”¹⁰² Horus being the hawk-headed Sun deity who as son of Isis and Osiris was also linked to the star Sirius.

These initiate-priests and temple builders, called the Followers of Horus, Bauval and Hancock discovered, were deeply preoccupied with tracking time cycles established by basic astronomical dynamics. In particular, the Followers of Horus observed not only the solar year but also the precessional cycle, the latter being a period of just less than 26,000 during which the vernal equinox point migrates all the way around the ecliptic, as seen from Earth. In regard to this cycle, the temple building initiates of ancient Egypt appear to have recognized a 25,920 year, precessional cycle, composed of 12 subperiods, or astrological ages, each lasting for 2160 years.¹⁰³

The precessional cycle itself was the core of the Egyptian mystery initiations, according to Blavatsky, who wrote in *The Secret Doctrine* that a programme of mysteries and a series of initiations based specifically upon the precessional cycle was in the possession of the builders of the Egyptian pyramids. The pyramids themselves she praised as “...the everlasting record and the indestructible symbol of these Mysteries and Initiations on Earth, as the courses of the stars are in Heaven.”¹⁰⁴ The precise content of these mysteries, Blavatsky stated, was directly related to the precessional cycle, the period for which she gave as 25,868 years, diverging only slightly from the 25,920 year measurement mentioned above. At any rate, it was this very cycle which was found at the core of the Egyptian mysteries, Blavatsky claimed. In fact, the Egyptian course of initiations, she stated, “was a reproduction in miniature of that great series of cosmic changes to which astronomers have given the name of tropical or sidereal year...”¹⁰⁵ and to which she attached the figure of 25,868 earth years, plainly the same time period referred to as the precessional cycle.

It was in the late 1800s that Blavatsky articulated this, her position on the pyramids and their builders, maintaining that the latter were in

possession of extensive and sophisticated astronomical knowledge, some one hundred years before Bauval and Hancock came to the same conclusion on the basis of detailed research into Egyptian religious texts, architectural features of the Giza complex and other monuments in Egypt, together with computer generated maps of star positions in antiquity. All these taken together led Bauval and Hancock to develop a theory that the entire arrangement of Egyptian monumental architecture and the religion from which it sprang were suffused with great astronomical sophistication, demonstrating a comprehensive grasp of the precessional cycle and the changes in the sky positions of various stars and constellations as wrought by that important celestial dynamic. Given this, the accent placed upon Sirius by this culture is all the more convincing, based as it undoubtedly is on factors other than a simplistic admiration for a bright spot in the night sky. Egypt knew something specific and special about the influence of Sirius, and it was this that they memorialized in various ways.

One of the ways in which the ancient Egyptian temple builders expressed their insight into the nature of this star was discovered by Bauval and Hancock, who found that a conjunction of the Sun and the star Regulus (Regulus, not Sirius) in the sidereal constellation of Leo furnished an indispensable key to the ancient Egyptian candidate for initiation. This stellar phenomena symbolically indicated the point at which the candidate must physically stand to properly begin the sequence of the initiatory ritual, which had to start right between the paws of the Sphinx, in imitation of the conjoining of stellar light from the Sun and Regulus in the same position within the celestial Lion, or sidereal Leo.

Regulus is also called the “Heart of the Lion.” Interestingly, Regulus or Cor Leonis was also particularly linked by the Tibetan with Sirius.

It is from Sirius which emanates impulses which cause our solar system to sense its higher destiny and purpose, and to be subjected to those karmic trials, and tribulations which require it to prove its mettle, just in the same way that the personality is confronted by the soul with karmic issues and situations.

Regulus, he said, contains and distributes the influence of Sirius, for the influences of Sirius, the Tibetan stated, are three and they are “focused in Regulus.”¹⁰⁶ This is an unusual situation, in which the forces of one star work through another. Normally, the forces of individual stars work through constellations, signs, and then planets.¹⁰⁷ However, in this case, it is one star working through another—Sirius working through Regulus. Immediately the question arises as to why Sirius in Canis Major works through Regulus over in another part of the sky, in the constellation of Leo. This is perhaps a specific instance of the

general principle brought into play by the Tibetan early in *Esoteric Astrology* when he alluded to an ancient science which treated of the relationships of suns one to another.¹⁰⁸ There is a mystery here which is not entirely elucidated by the present release of the Ageless Wisdom, although it does fall under the general classification of relationships amongst stars, a topic certainly covered by the Tibetan in several contexts.

At any rate, it is said that the forces of Sirius are focused in Regulus. And recall, the sky position of Regulus in ancient times at the summer solstice provided the pictorial key for the candidate for initiation into the Egyptian mysteries, indicating the precise position within the Giza complex from which the seeker should begin his perambulations.¹⁰⁹ Thus, it can be said that the Egyptian initiatory ritual sequence began with a physical arrangement patterned on the placement of Regulus, which star just happens to carry the influence of the very “Star of Initiation” itself, for Sirius is called “The Star of Initiation” in the esoteric astrological doctrine.¹¹⁰

The parallels between the ancient Egyptian initiatory rites and the modern version of the esoteric astrological doctrine are consequently very close. This fact argues strongly for a continuity of tradition from then to now, a sameness of doctrine and source, or in other

words, that the Egyptian temple builders —the Followers of Horus—were none other than a branch of the same Planetary Hierarchy which is the source of the current release of the Ageless Wisdom. Thus, the Egyptian temple builders designed into their constructions certain references to Sirius.

What the Ageless Wisdom holds to be true about the star Sirius is, however, rather remote from the notions associated with this star in the every-day world of the past. And so were the exalted notions associated with Sirius in the Egyptian religion removed from popular conceptions of this star. Examples of the difference between the sublime and mundane perceptions of this star can be seen in the following.

In the ancient world, Sirius was a main tool used for the making of predictions. Weather conditions at the time of its heliacal rising, together with the quality of light perceived to be coming from Sirius, were thought to indicate the nature of the year ahead for agricultural harvests, demographic and political developments, relations with nearby countries, and issues of health and illness for the general populace.¹¹¹ It appears that star-priests of the Syrian, Zoroastrian, and even the Egyptian cultures used indications from Sirius in this way.¹¹² Later, the condition of Sirius at its heliacal rising was combined with the astrological sign in which the Moon was placed and with transiting planetary aspects to arrive at similar predictions.¹¹³

The influence of Sirius in this context was thought to range all the way from ominous and tragic on one hand to propitious and blissful on the other.¹¹⁴ However, there seems to have been a general ill feeling about the star, for in early astrology and poetry there was much evil influence attributed to Sirius, as it was in Virgil’s *Aenid*.¹¹⁵ In the first century A.D., the Roman astrologer Manilius wrote of Sirius in verse, “...from his nature flow the most afflicting powers that rule below.”¹¹⁶ And in the second century A.D., the Alexandrian astrologer Ptolemy accorded the nature of Mars and Jupiter to Sirius,¹¹⁷ which is to say he found the star a mixed bag of warlike and regal (or perhaps pompous) characteristics.

Though this was the portrait painted of Sirius in early astrology, Sirius in later astrology became the signifier of wealth and prestige.¹¹⁸ For example, in medieval magic, the influence of Sirius was thought to incline toward honor, goodwill, the power to pacify nobles and to gain the favor of others, and to converse with airy spirits.¹¹⁹ In this view of Sirius, the main theme has to do with the ability to secure the elevation of one’s social or political standing. This image of Sirius seems to have come from the theory that the influence of any fixed star of great magnitude connotes honor and preferment when conjunct the angles (or Ascendant, Midheaven, Descendant, or Imum Coeli) of a natal chart.¹²⁰ By this criterion, Sirius as the brightest of the fixed stars would certainly be propitious.

In modern astrological literature, Sirian influence is regarded as a mixture of benign and dangerous characteristics. According to one source, the placement of the following factors in the same degree as the zodiacal intercept of Sirius brings these results in the natal chart.¹²¹

Conjunct the Midheaven.....fame and high office

Conjunct the Sun.....success

Conjunct the Moon.....business success

Conjunct Mercury.....business success

Conjunct Venus.....ease and comfort

Conjunct Mars.....courage

Conjunct Jupiter.....business success

Conjunct Saturn.....high position through friends

Conjunct Uranus.....prominence in “Uranian matters”

Conjunct Neptune.....intuition

Although it is perhaps heartening to see what most people would consider positive effects resulting from Sirian influence, it is also clear that on the whole these effects imputed to Sirius are

nothing but an amplification of a basic planetary characteristic. But even that is devoted solely to the advancement of the personality life (with perhaps the exception of the effects of Sirius mixed with Uranus and Neptune). Further, the entire tabulation above is based on the use of zodiacal intercepts for the purpose of establishing a place in the zodiac for Sirius, even though Sirius is too far away from the zodiacal belt for such measurements to be wholly reliable. Thus, this entire approach may very well be misleading and is certainly far afield from the nature of Sirian influence as described by the Tibetan.

As has been shown, perceptions of Sirius around the world have been varied, ranging from weather predictor and flood indicator to home for the souls of gods, goddesses, and the deceased on their way to immortality. With this colorful tapestry as background, the esoteric characterization of Sirius may now proceed.

The Esoteric Characterization of Sirius

The complexity of perspectives with which Sirius has been viewed popularly is rivaled only by the supernumerary functions attributed to this star in the esoteric astrological doctrine. As alluded to in the introductory paragraphs, the role assigned to this star within the esoteric view of cosmological process is nothing short of stunning.

All this is so because of a basic principle resounding throughout the esoteric teaching: all lives exist within greater lives. In this case, the functions and powers expressed by Sirius are derived from its position within a certain Greater Logos. That this is true of Sirius can be patched together from a number of statements made by the Tibetan, who scattered hints about this star and related matters all throughout the information he transmitted to Alice Bailey.

The story on Sirius begins with a statement made by the Tibetan Master concerning the Seven Cosmic Paths. There he indicated that each Cosmic Path leads to one of the seven centers in the One About Whom Naught May Be Said.¹²² One of these Paths, he further stated, leads to Sirius.¹²³ These two statements taken together

plainly indicate that Sirius is one of the centers of a Cosmic Logos, the One About Whom Naught May Be Said. Several passages given by the Tibetan seem to say that Sirius alone constitutes this center,¹²⁴ while others seem to suggest that Sirius together with our solar system (and perhaps others) make up this center, the heart center of a Greater Logos.¹²⁵ The Tibetan definitely stated that our solar system is associated with the heart center of a Greater Logos,¹²⁶ and since our solar system and the Sirian system are said to travel together as some kind of unit,¹²⁷ they are likely found in this same cosmic heart center. Certainty in this matter is not possible from these statements alone, but the framework of what the Tibetan partly revealed on this subject begins to stand out with just this information.

However, to settle the question more conclusively, recourse to the Law of Correspondences must be had. Thus, in attempting to discern the nature of Sirius, it is important to bear in mind that the Tibetan associated Sirius with our Planetary Hierarchy, and the Planetary Hierarchy with the heart center of our planet.¹²⁸ Further, Hierarchy is strongly influenced by the Second Ray,¹²⁹ so Sirius is likely to be as well. Since all heart centers are Ray Two correlates, this information supports the notion that Sirius is a heart center correlate, strongly conditioned by the Second Ray. Here is one more reason to feel comfortable with the contention that Sirius is located within a cosmic heart center, since in some cases, the lesser can give the key to the greater.¹³⁰

That Sirius is fundamentally linked with the Second Aspect and the Second Ray is supported by further evidence.

First might be adduced the role of the star Sirius in the Prototypical Triangle, the grouping of three celestial factors said by the Tibetan to be the source of all the energies of manifestation pouring into our region of evolution. In this grouping, Sirius plainly fulfills the function of the Second Aspect, dealing in Love-Wisdom and mediating between the Great Bear as an agent of the Will or the First Aspect, and the Pleiades as an agent of Active Intelligence, or the Third Aspect.¹³¹ Sirius sits squarely in the middle of

these two extremes, representing the binding power of the Second Ray and Aspect.

Second, the energies of Sirius were said by the Tibetan to function as the agencies of the Cosmic Christ,¹³² the Cosmic Christ being itself yet another term or word for the Second Aspect of Deity.¹³³ The Second Aspect is of course equivalent to soul or consciousness, which mediates between spirit or life on one hand, and matter or form on the other, and Sirius is linked by the Tibetan specifically with soul and consciousness.¹³⁴

Thus, as is apparent, there can be little doubt that Sirius expresses the energies and functions of the Second Aspect, which by extension implies a Second Ray nature, the same ray which is characteristically associated with the heart center,¹³⁵ thus making Sirius a good candidate for membership in a great cosmic heart center of some type.

Indeed, it is this very position in the heart center of a great being which defines Sirius and the energies which it radiates. This is what stands behind all that the esoteric astrological doctrine has to say about this particular star, which according to the Tibetan's words, is a source of universal love, or buddhi, "the principle," he said, "found at the heart of every atom."¹³⁶ The "heart" of things is evident here, emphasizing the point that the energies of Sirius feed this aspect of existence. Said the Tibetan on this point, "A stream of energy coming from...Sirius...enters directly into the Hierarchy and carries with it the principle of buddhi, of cosmic love..."¹³⁷ Hierarchy being the heart center of our planet, this statement but amplifies the connection of Sirius with heart-centered energies. In sum, it seems imminently prudent to allow that Sirius is indeed a component of a great cosmic heart center of some type.

As a component in a great cosmic heart center, Sirius distributes what the Tibetan Master calls buddhi. It is therefore necessary to understand this term if the nature of Sirian influence is to be grasped. Buddhi in its broadest sense can be interpreted in three ways: as pure love, intuition, and discernment.

First, the Tibetan equated the term buddhi with the words pure love or love-wisdom.¹³⁸ Such a characterization immediately draws attention to an important distinction. It points up the fact that there exists a significant difference between personalized forms of sentiment on one hand, and some other kind of love on the other. Though personal sentiment is certainly referred to as love in everyday parlance, the other kind of love suggested by the idea of a pure love is something altogether different. It might be defined as a universal beneficence powered by a genuine recognition of the sentience and inherent divinity to be found throughout creation, and this existing in such abundance and equality for all units and forms that it functions entirely free of any taint from self-referent motives or subconscious drives for individual advantage.

The glaring contrast between so-called human love and this type of spiritual regard is evident enough without much more elaboration. The former has a great deal to do with the human need for validation through association; the latter, independent of that hunger, has to do with the fundamental fact of universal unity and the attitudinal result of full alignment with that reality. Therefore, the following inferences may be drawn. As an expression of pure love or love-wisdom, the buddhic principle embodies the more spacious awareness of non-partial, universally radiated beneficence. Buddhi is the quality of consciousness thus generated, and the buddhic plane is the vibrational level within the manifested universe at which such a state prevails.

As a further clue to what he meant by the term buddhi, the Tibetan equated this term with the word "intuition."¹³⁹ Intuition is a word the mainstream popularity of which has vastly increased in modern times. Its appeal has largely been advanced by the now world-wide New Age Movement, which has rightly championed the existence of aspects of mind other than that which produces strictly linear logic. The word intuition has consequently found its way into everyday use. In this context, intuition as a word usually signifies an ability to extract information seemingly out of the air, to know the true inner

character or attitudes of others, to know what is best for one's own unfoldment, the ability to detect future trends, the most logical way in which equipment might be expected to function (i.e., "intuitive software"), or even conventional wisdom (i.e., a "counterintuitive stock purchase," one that goes against prevailing beliefs). These and other related senses in which the term is used are all completely valid uses of the word in their own times and places and are attempts to describe an emerging sensitivity to multiple levels of being and sensing.

A somewhat similar definition for the intuition was long ago offered by the Tibetan, who described the intuition as "...the ability to arrive at knowledge through the activity of some innate sense, apart from the reasoning or logical processes. It comes into activity when the resources of the lower mind have been used, explored and exhausted. Then, and then only, the true intuition begins to function. It is the sense of synthesis, the ability to think in wholes, and to touch the world of causes."¹⁴⁰ In this definition of the intuition, there is reflected the popular notion of intuition as the capacity to gather information or conclusions without a laborious intellectual process. However, the Tibetan took this concept one step farther and said that the intuition ultimately leads to a broader vision, or holism, which perceives distinct items only as integral parts of the systems in which they are embedded.

In fact, in other passages of text, the Tibetan enlarged upon just this sense for the definition of intuition. Speaking of the intuition in *The Rays and the Initiations*, the Tibetan stated that intuition is "...the word we use to describe a direct contact with the Mind of God..."¹⁴¹ Such a contact, we are told, reveals the purposes underlying all Hierarchical efforts. In this sense, the intuition is nothing short of an ability to envision the Hierarchical Plan and the Shamballic Purpose behind it. Right to this very point, the Tibetan stated in *Discipleship in the New Age II*, "...for the initiate, the intuition is ever the revelation of the purpose of Shamballa and the working out ...of the divine Plan."¹⁴² As is apparent, such a definition for intuition far outstrips the usual contemporary understanding of this term, even as used in the more enlightened senses.

The Tibetan's use of the word intuition and what it implies goes beyond popular connotations of this word in yet another way. Whereas the popular use of the term includes everything from psychic hunches about purely personal matters to a description of the way technology might be expected to work, a definite concern with the greater context in which a unit exists is the distinguishing feature of the intuitional function as the Tibetan has described it. And since intuition is equivalent to buddhi, this is also true of buddhi. The Tibetan forthrightly clarified this issue, explaining in *Esoteric Astrology* that buddhi itself is awareness of the universe, the whole, and the group.¹⁴³ Therefore it might legitimately be said that according to the Tibetan, the buddhic faculty (or intuition) is the very perception of the relationship between the individual and its greater environment, which perception in esoteric thought is simply called group consciousness. So true is this that the Tibetan even pointed out that buddhi is the principle which not only promotes the integration of units into the group, but which blends groups together with other groups.¹⁴⁴ He called it "the unifying principle of groups."

All in all, it is fairly evident that the way in which the Tibetan used the word intuition differs somewhat from its present popular usage. As a result, it is not enough to say simply that buddhi is equivalent to intuition and leave it at that. To do so would invite the formation of large gaps in understanding through which might leap the doubly mischievous creatures, assumption and misconception.

Nonetheless, it should be reiterated that the Tibetan did equate the term buddhi with the word intuition.¹⁴⁵ In fact, the Tibetan offered a number of parallel terms for our consideration. He tells us that intuition, pure reason, and complete knowledge illumined by the loving purpose of the divine mind are terms all equally descriptive of buddhi and interchangeable in meaning.¹⁴⁶ From this can be gathered the cognitive nature of buddhi, a level of perception that grasps divine pattern and purpose, or in other words, knows what the divine process is doing and why.

In this role, according to the Tibetan the intuition is "...the appreciation by the mind of some factor

in creation, some law of manifestation and some aspect of truth, known by the soul, emanating from the world of ideas, and being of the nature of those energies which produce all that is known and seen.”¹⁴⁷

Clearly, the intuition functions to reveal specific knowledge, though that knowledge can only be apprehended within the context of wholeness. Ultimately, the energy of the intuition leads to the acquisition of complete knowledge illumined by the loving purpose of the divine mind, and this, too, is a realization characteristic of buddhi. Thus, buddhi is not only universal beneficence, as discussed in the previous section, but also a cognitive faculty which reveals specific content about the nature of the whole.

The further development of this theme concerning buddhi as a quality of knowing leads along a path winding back into the historical and literary context from which the Alice Bailey writings arose, for the use of the term buddhi hails from the Theosophical movement which preceded the Bailey works, and beyond.

The word buddhi arises from the Sanskrit root “budh,” meaning “to know.” From this root come related terms, all of which are likely to be encountered by esoteric students and all of which are likely to color, incorrectly or not, one's notion of the term buddhi. Terms etymologically related to buddhi (and its own formal definition) follow, as explained in H.P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*, which source was identified by the Tibetan as the first of three planned releases of Hierarchical teaching.¹⁴⁸

In *The Secret Doctrine*, v. 1 pp. xviii – xix,¹⁴⁹ we find the following.

budh Sanskrit root meaning “to know”

bodha possession of divine intellect or understanding

buddha acquirement of divine intellect by personal effort and merits

buddhi faculty of cognizing the channel through which divine knowledge arrives; discernment of good and evil; divine conscience; spiritual soul; vehicle of atma

bodhi trance condition during which the culmination of spiritual knowledge is reached; Samadhi

Buddhism name given in more recent history to the religious system of ethics preached by Gautama Buddha, so named after his title,

Buddha name given in more recent history to the religious system of ethics preached by Gautama Buddha, so named after his title, Buddha, meaning enlightened

Adhi Budha name given by earliest Aryans to the Unknow Deity; absolute wisdom; in the form Adi – bhuta, the primeval uncreated cause of all.

As can be seen, this information presents a fertile field for study and contemplation, but for present purposes, Blavatsky's definition of buddhi alone may justly claim attention. Therein are a number of terms which more or less parallel the meaning of buddhi and intuition as given by the Tibetan: spiritual soul, channel through which divine knowledge arrives, spiritual vehicle of atma (or representative of the next higher principle, the spiritual will, which could easily signify the Purpose of Shamballa as revealed by the intuition and as discussed in the previous section).

Yet amongst all these familiar faces stands out a rather different and additional countenance, for here Blavatsky also offered “discernment of good and evil” and “divine conscience” as equally acceptable senses in which buddhi may be used. The words “discernment” and “conscience” immediately conjure up something quite other than the blissful universal beneficence and endless relational power conferred on buddhi in the previous two sections. Suddenly, here are two equivalents for buddhi which look like they might have to do with making distinctions between this and that, instead of erasing differences in the name of group cohesion. What might this be about?

What it concerns is the revelation of yet another facet of the complex jewel called buddhi, or the intuition. As it turns out, buddhi-intuition as it was understood in the Tibetan's mind and in that

of Blavatsky embraced not only the unifying forces described previously, but also the power to make important distinctions, or in other words, value judgments. Here is a notable characteristic which distinguishes aspects of the esoteric philosophy of the Tibetan from that of the broader New Age spiritual community, in which there exists a relatively overt prejudice against the whole notion of forming judgments. Frequently in popular spiritual circles is heard the injunction that one should not judge. Apparently, this pop wisdom is not entirely upheld or condoned by the esoteric philosophy of the Tibetan, which assigns to buddhi, a relatively high function in the spectrum of the planes, just this very capacity.

That this is so is suggested in a passage wherein the Tibetan equated intuition with “discrimination,”¹⁵⁰ a word which surely suggests the making of careful distinctions of some type or another. The proper role for the mental act of discriminating (or noting basic differences in qualities) was outlined by the Tibetan in a passage in which he showed that the making of distinctions in fact leads directly to the development of intuition, or buddhi. “Discrimination,” he stated, “is the educatory process to which the Self subjects itself in the process of developing intuition...”¹⁵¹ Seen in this light, then, the ability to tell the difference between this and that has a legitimate place in right spiritual unfoldment. According to the Tibetan, it is the fourth principle, or buddhi, which makes such discriminations possible. Speaking of the fourth archetypal pattern in terms of the Fourth Ray, the Tibetan Master stated, “It is this fourth ray energy which makes apparent the distinction (so often misunderstood by man) between good and evil.”¹⁵²

This is essentially what Blavatsky’s definition of buddhi revealed as well. Just as the Tibetan used the term “discrimination” in conjunction with buddhi, Blavatsky translated buddhi as “discernment,” literally as the discernment of good versus evil, or the power to tell the difference between that which is spiritually true and wholesome and that which is not. This capacity to cut through a complex set of issues and to neatly identify the right from the wrong is as much the working of buddhi, esoteric authority has revealed, as is the entirely composed and

blissful union with the All otherwise associated with this state of consciousness.

And all this emanates from the star Sirius, the energies from which not only promote perfect union, but which also confer the ability to separate the wheat from the chaff. It is this sort of transcendent knowing blended with the power to accurately judge which emanates from the heart center of a great cosmic being via the star Sirius, which as a Second Ray manifestation is particularly suited to carrying the vibrational signal of the numerically compatible Fourth Ray and Fourth principle, of which buddhi is the representative. Hence, although a Second Aspect manifestation itself, Sirius is a source of all that the fourth principle (or buddhi) connotes—pure love, intuition, and discernment.

Given that this universal love-wisdom is the nature of influence from Sirius, it is easy to accept the contention of the esoteric doctrine that this star functions also as the soul of our Solar Logos,¹⁵³ being its higher component and its source of cosmic mind (or manas) derived from the cosmic mental plane,¹⁵⁴ just as the soul channels down the energies of higher mind to the incarnated human personality. And just as the soul is the intermediate source (following from the monad) from which the incarnated personality emanated in the first place, so also is the star Sirius in its role as the soul of our Solar Logos said to be the “parent” or point of origin for our entire systemic life.¹⁵⁵ In other words, the sum total of the great life form used by our Solar Logos together with its inner spiritual purpose have come forth from Sirius.

From this fundamental relationship between Sirius and our solar system arises a dynamic of great importance within the workings of evolution as they unfold throughout the body of manifestation used by our Solar Logos in the pursuits of its purposes. Just as the influence of the soul upon the personality causes the personality to face the nature of its choices past and present, the influence of Sirius upon our system is said to express itself as the Law of Karma, which Law as it affects our system originates in the star Sirius.¹⁵⁶ It is from Sirius which emanate impulses which cause our solar system to sense its higher destiny and purpose,

and to be subjected to those karmic trials and tribulations which require it to prove its mettle, just in the same way that the personality is confronted by the soul with karmic issues and situations. In the case of our solar system, the issues and situations are of course far more comprehensive and complex than those found at the level of one human personality, but the general principle remains the same. In the same way that the soul challenges the personality to rise to higher and higher levels of spiritual functioning, the emanations of Sirius challenge our entire solar system to seek its ideal level of functioning.

This it does through periodic applications of cosmic soul force, just as the human soul leads the incarnated personality through rhythmic applications of energies from the egoic lotus (or causal body). In fact, Sirius is said by the esoteric astrological doctrine to be the very cause of periodicity for our solar system,¹⁵⁷ which means that Sirius is the author of all cyclicity, such as is demonstrated in the orbits of the planets around the Sun and in all the many grades and types of recurrent astronomical and astrological phenomena. This is so because Sirius is an agent of the Second Aspect, which aspect deals fundamentally with the Law of Attraction, and it is the Law of Attraction which establishes the bond between two celestial bodies which makes an orbital or periodic relationship possible. Such a relationship is based on an attraction which holds one unit to the other, while still allowing for movement. The movement may be simply one point moving around a constant center, or it may be a complex interaction of two or more bodies circling a common point. Whatever the type of arrangement, so long as it produces repeating phenomena at regular intervals, it's driven by the Law of Attraction emanating from Sirius, the very star associated by the ancient Egyptian religion with the cycle of death and rebirth, the great stellar agent of the Second Divine Aspect, and the origin of Karmic Law for our system.

Sirius is the origin for even more of matters and elements profound in nature. According to the Tibetan Master, this star is one of just a few places in the firmament from which issue Cosmic Avatars, exalted entities who are concerned with, as the Tibetan stated, "the intelligent coordination

of the starry Heavens."¹⁵⁸ Such beings are as far advanced along the evolutionary path compared to the human stage as the human stage is to that of the lives which inhabit atoms. Such Cosmic Avatars have reached their evolutionary stage, the Tibetan indicated, over periods of time measuring in the thousands of Ages of Brahma,¹⁵⁹ each Age of Brahma comprising 100 Years of Brahma, or 311,040,000,000,000 earth years apiece.¹⁶⁰ Thousands of such periods of time have elapsed during the course of evolution taken by entities who become Cosmic Avatars, and once they have reached such a state, the star Sirius is one of the few points in the heavens with which they associate themselves. They then come forth when summoned by cyclic law to vastly accelerate evolution in some portion of the manifested universe. For example, Cosmic Avatars come forth from Sirius and participate in the initiation of Solar Logoi. This has happened to our system, according to the Tibetan Master, but only once. The energy then imparted conveyed in one massive surge of inspiration all the seed ideas and multilevel powers required for the entirety of evolution due to occur in this system.¹⁶¹ This is what avatars from Sirius can do. Little wonder, then, that this star is called "The Star of Initiation."

Certain ray avatars are also associated with Sirius. Such is the case with an avatar who is to visit our solar system and represent the Seventh Ray at some point in the twenty-first century.¹⁶² This avatar will appear and affect not just the system generally but our planet particularly, "...producing those conditions which will permit of the reappearance upon Earth of the Mysteries of Initiation,"¹⁶³ and will demonstrate the essence of the Seventh Ray, or "the law, order and rhythm of the creative process as it works out on the physical plane, blending spirit and matter."¹⁶⁴ Like the Cosmic Avatar who once visited our system, this ray avatar is also fundamentally connected with Sirius.

Given that a great cosmic avatar from Sirius bequeathed the entire evolutionary impulse working out in our solar system, it is perhaps not very surprising that the teachings and procedures whereby human aspirants are vastly accelerated in their own evolution were also brought from Sirius. Yes, according to the Tibetan Master, the

Mysteries of Initiation as they are practiced on our planet were given to our Planetary Hierarchy by the Great White Lodge of Sirius.¹⁶⁵ These were encoded into the Masonic Tradition, which therefore stands as a representative of Sirian influence,¹⁶⁶ just as does our Planetary Hierarchy, for our Planetary Hierarchy itself is but an extension of the Sirian Lodge and its mystery teachings, being literally controlled and guided by the spiritual emanations coming from this great Star of Initiation.¹⁶⁷

Not only does the Planetary Hierarchy owe its initial inspiration to Sirius, but also does the entire Human Kingdom, for Sirian influence contributed to the mix of energies which made the rise of the Human Kingdom possible 18 and ½ million years ago.¹⁶⁸ Thus, from the level of Solar Logos on down to that of the Human Kingdom, the influence of Sirius has sparked dramatic occurrences in the unfoldment of the Divine Plan.

This same intensive stimulation from Sirius is at work in all processes of initiation from that of the Solar Logos on down to striving units in the Human Kingdom. As regards initiation in the Human Kingdom, the first and foremost power active in the processes of initiation is energy or force emanating from the star Sirius, for, “Sirius acts as the transmitter...whence emanate those influences which produce self-consciousness in man.”¹⁶⁹ Self-consciousness being the precursor to self-discipline and the sense of responsibility for one’s actions, this influence from Sirius is of course indispensable in the journey from perceived helplessness to the sense of spiritual enterprise demonstrated by advanced initiates.

The quantum leap forward known as initiation is thus facilitated by flows of energy from Sirius. Again, according to the Tibetan Master, advancement of evolutionary pace by virtue of impact from a source of stimulation outside of our solar system is characteristic of this, the second solar system in the sequence of three. This method is to persist until the end of the present solar system and will continue to feature the role of Sirius in this regard until systemic pralaya descends.¹⁷⁰

In this method of individualization and initiation in which force extraneous to the evolving unit

figures substantially in advancements of consciousness, force conductors called Rods of Power or Rods of Initiation are instrumental in achieving the results intended under the Divine Plan.¹⁷¹ It is these Rods of Power and of Initiation which carry the force from outside sources to the evolving unit and its own force centers, whether that unit is a human being, a Planetary Logos, or a Solar Logos. These Rods of Initiation are of four types, composed of:

- 1) Cosmic Rods of Power, used by a Cosmic Logos for the initiations of a Solar Logos,
- 2) Systemic Rods of Power, used by a Solar Logos for the initiations of a Planetary Logos,
- 3) Planetary Rods of Power, used by a Planetary Logos
or initiations 3 - 7 undergone by members of the Fourth and Fifth Kingdoms, and
- 4) Hierarchical Rods of Power, used by an occult Hierarchy, for initiations 1 and 2 and administered by the Christ.¹⁷²

These Rods of Power are utilized to stimulate the appropriate force centers in the unit undergoing initiation. In the initiation of a Solar Logos, the centers stimulated are the seven planetary schemes, which function as the equivalent of etheric centers in the body of manifestation of a Solar Logos. In the initiation of a Planetary Logos, it is the seven chains of the planetary scheme which receive the stimulation. In the initiation of a member of the Fourth or Fifth Kingdoms, it is the higher correspondences to the etheric centers which feel the force of the Rod of Initiation. In each case, the targeted center awakens to greater vibratory activity through the agency of stimulation from an outside force.

It was extraneous force from Sirius, the Tibetan has said, which greatly advanced the rate of evolution of our Solar Logos at one point.¹⁷³ This extraneous force now has a permanent representative in our solar system in the form of a Rod of Initiation bequeathed by the Lord of Sirius to our Solar Logos.¹⁷⁴ Used in the initiation of Planetary Logoi, this Rod carries a voltage of pure fohatic force from cosmic levels,¹⁷⁵ fohat being the fire of matter plus electric fire.¹⁷⁶ This Rod of Initiation is charged with pure electrical

force from Sirius,¹⁷⁷ and is recharged once every period of a solar system from its originating source.¹⁷⁸ Thus, it is Sirian force coursing through this Rod of Initiation and wielded by our Solar Logos which accomplishes critical developments in the advancement of Planetary Logoi.

Called by the Tibetan Master a great talisman of Sirian force, this Rod of Power used by the Solar Logos to activate the centers of the Planetary Logoi has at least three purposes. First, it can be used in dire and threatening circumstances, something that has never happened, though its emergency use was seriously considered in Atlantean days and in the third year of World War I. Second, this Rod is intended for use in the initiation of Planetary Logoi on cosmic levels. Third, it is to be used for initiation of groups, though of what sort the Tibetan did not say.¹⁷⁹ These purposes provide a rough idea of the power invested in such a Rod, a force conductor sufficient to advance whole planetary schemes and turn back developments of an untoward and destructive nature threatening some portion of the worlds.

A corresponding Rod of Initiation is held by our Planetary Logos. This Planetary Rod of Initiation is empowered once each world period from the Rod of the Solar Logos,¹⁸⁰ the solar rod having been empowered by Sirian force. Hence, the Rod of Power and Initiation wielded by Sanat Kumara as our Planetary Logos also carries Sirian force, which pours through the Solar Rod to the Planetary Rod at its charging once each manvantaric cycle. When this Planetary Rod is applied to the centers of the initiate rising through the ranks of the Fourth Kingdom, "...at the moment of application of the Rod, the initiate consciously realises the meaning of the Law of Attraction in form building, and in the synthesis of the three fires."¹⁸¹ Thus, what the Planetary Rod of Initiation imparts is essentially stepped down Sirian force, and it is this adapted Sirian force which brings about clear knowledge of the Law of Attraction and its workings as an agent of cohesion and integration, revealing the interrelation of spirit, soul and body, or electric, solar, and frictional fire.

The central role of Sirian influence in the initiatory process is reflected in the fact that Sirian force is deliberately used by the Masters in training disciples for several of the initiations carried out in regard to the Human Kingdom.¹⁸² For example, although the energy of Sirius (like that of all the non-zodiacal stars and constellations) is not consciously felt until the Third Initiation, it is nonetheless employed in preparing disciples for the Second Initiation,¹⁸³ at which point it undoubtedly contributes to the transformations of attitude and emotion required at the Baptism Initiation.

Sirian energy is also used in the training which precedes the Fourth Initiation,¹⁸⁴ a step on the infinite initiatory path which sees the resolution of the mystery of polarity and the shift into intuitive functioning. Clearly the unifying, buddhic nature of Sirian influence is of consequence in this transformation. Sirian influence likewise is brought to bear in preparation for the Sixth Initiation,¹⁸⁵ ruled by the Third Ray and the point at which the Master decides which of the Seven Ways of Higher Evolution shall be trodden.¹⁸⁶

Although applied for different purposes in each case, it is the Sirian influence which plays such a vital role in each of these three initiations. And though this is true in a rather specific way for these three initiations, it is also true in a general way for the entire initiatory path, for Sirius is the great Star of Initiation.

Sensitivity to Sirian influence is consequently one of the standards or markers by which initiatory status is judged. This fact is alluded to by the Tibetan in remarks he makes regarding the initiatory status of Planetary Logoi, or the Beings who inhabit planetary schemes as their bodies of manifestation. According to the Tibetan Master, a Planetary Logos of three cosmic initiations begins to register response to the quality of the life which informs Sirius, while a Planetary Logos of five cosmic initiations is vitally responsive to the life of Sirius.¹⁸⁷ In other words, the Logos of a sacred planet registers the nature of Sirian life much more completely than does the Logos of a non-sacred planet. Though Planetary Logoi are immensely advanced beyond the

human stage, this comparison still demonstrates the centrality of sensitivity to Sirian influence in the scheme of evolution. It also speaks plainly about the highly advanced nature of Sirian influence, which, if only partially sensed by the Logos of a non-sacred planet, must be even less well known to the highest of human initiates. And yet Sirian influence is relevant to both Logoi and Humanity.

To this point the Tibetan addressed himself when he stated, “One great fact to be borne in mind is that the initiations of the planet or of the solar system are but the preparatory initiations of admission into the greater Lodge on Sirius.”¹⁸⁸ In particular, the Third Initiation on our planet is considered the first true or Hierarchical initiation, as it qualifies the candidate to become an aspirant to the Sirian Lodge.¹⁸⁹ The Tibetan Master further explained that the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Initiations on our planet are equivalent to the entry degrees of the Sirian Lodge,¹⁹⁰ the Fifth or Decision Initiation itself being the first true Sirian initiation.¹⁹¹

What is imparted progressively from Sirius to the advancing unit along the path of initiation can be summed up as the principle of freedom. As the Tibetan has stated, “The principle of freedom...represents an aspect of the influence which Sirius exerts on our solar system and particularly on our planet. This principle of freedom is one of the attributes of Deity...of which humanity knows as yet little.”¹⁹² This principle of freedom expresses itself in a number of ways, the Tibetan indicated, all of which cluster around the release of consciousness from excessive identification with form. In some cases this works out simply as the drive for political self-determination, in others as that which enables the representative of the Planetary Logos on our globe to carry out his mission amongst units of lesser evolutionary status.¹⁹³ In any case, from Sirius there emanates a “pulling away from form,” as the Tibetan has called it, which underlies, as he said, all evolutionary progress.¹⁹⁴ Here, yet again, is one of the essential characteristics of Sirian influence, according to the esoteric doctrine.

Thus, as has been shown, the esoteric characterization of the star Sirius covers a wide

array of factors. For convenience they are summarized here.

The star Sirius is:

- 1) located in the heart center of a great Cosmic Logos
- 2) an agent of universal love
- 3) a source of buddhi
- 4) the soul of our Solar Logos
- 5) the parent of our solar system
- 6) the origin point of karmic law
- 7) the cause of periodicity
- 8) a source of cosmic and other avatars
- 9) that which established the mysteries of initiation on our planet
- 10) a factor in the rise of the Human Kingdom
- 11) the prototype of the Great White Lodge on Earth and its source of inspiration
- 12) behind the founding of the Masonic Tradition.

And the energies of Sirius are:

- 13) potent in processes of initiation
- 14) transmitted through various rods of power
- 15) used by Hierarchy as preparation for the 2nd, 4th, and 6th initiations
- 16) consciously registered only at and after the 3rd initiation
- 17) expressed as the principle of freedom.

The Astrological Intermediaries of Sirius

The various effects of influence from the star Sirius make their way to our planetary life, according to the Tibetan, through six constellations and their representative signs, through the same number of planetary bodies, and through an aspect of the Sun itself. The six constellations and signs conveying Sirian influence are Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Scorpio, Capricorn, and Pisces. The planets are Mercury, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. Each shall be discussed.

Gemini, according to the Tibetan, “forms a point of entrance for cosmic energy from Sirius.”¹⁹⁵ This cosmic energy from Sirius is of course cosmic soul energy, the great Second Aspect of Deity, forming the consciousness factor in all things. This cosmic energy from Sirius is likewise an expression of the Second Aspect itself, and therefore of the Second Ray, that of Love-Wisdom. This is the same ray which characterizes the present endeavor of the Solar Logos, Who in this the second of three systems aims to perfect the Love Aspect. Thus, the Tibetan’s statement that the underlying love of Deity primarily reaches our solar system through Gemini¹⁹⁶ (which sign also distributes Ray Two) certainly shows that Sirius, our Sun, and Gemini are all on the same wavelength, all resonant to the Love Aspect of Deity.

Because the love aspect expresses through the Law of Attraction, it is apparent that, under the influence of Sirius, Gemini does the much-needed work in our solar system of bringing together disparate parts and finding the interrelation between apparent opposites. This theme can be seen in the glyph for this sign, or the two upright columns united by the horizontal upper and lower bars. Such activity may work out in human affairs in myriad ways, the lower expressions such as sexual promiscuity and lack of discrimination being in greater evidence earlier on the human path, the higher expressions such as capacity for literary endeavor, diplomatic communication skills, and healing work at abstract levels being in greater evidence later on the path of discipleship and initiation.

The constellation and sign of Cancer were also said by the Tibetan to conduct the energy of Sirius into our solar system. Cancer was said to work in tandem with the constellation and sign of Capricorn in this matter.¹⁹⁷ The conspicuous pairing of these two, known as the Gates of

Zodiac for their reference to incarnation and initiation respectively,¹⁹⁸ appears to be a strong suggestion that the energies of Sirius also work through these processes of incarnation and initiation to gain its evolutionary objectives. This it may do in the first instance through the phenomena of periodicity, with which Cancer is

known to be associated in its relationship to times and tides, periods of gestation, repetitive occurrences, and cyclicity in general. This it may do equally through the basic pulse of incarnation into material form and release from incarnation in material form, also represented respectively by Cancer and Capricorn. In the third instance, Sirius likely works through Capricorn to gain its evolutionary objectives in the processes of initiation with which this sign is connected,¹⁹⁹ Sirius being

the great Star of Initiation.²⁰⁰

Further, as Capricorn is traditionally associated with executive authority and government in general, this sign might be said to advance the interests of the Sirian principle of freedom, supporting with its First Ray energies the drive for political self-determination and right governance. In the more abstract or metaphysical sphere, the First Ray energies of Capricorn facilitate the pulling away from form which emanates from Sirius and which characterizes the effect of the principle of freedom on the soul or psyche of the seeker. Here is likely one of the many reasons that Capricorn is associated with initiation, which process most assuredly entails detachment from form, level by level, plane by plane, as the sequence of initiations unfolds.

Speaking of both Cancer and Capricorn and calling them the two great Gates of the zodiac, the Tibetan Master stated that Cancer opens the door into incarnation or mass life, while Capricorn opens the door into the life of the spirit and the life of the Kingdom of God, which is to say, the

... the Mysteries of Initiation as they are practiced on our planet were given to our Planetary Hierarchy by the Great White Lodge of Sirius. These were encoded into the Masonic Tradition, which therefore stands as a representative of Sirian influence, just as does our Planetary Hierarchy itself is but an extension of the Sirian Lodge and its mystery teachings...

life and purposes of our Planetary Hierarchy.²⁰¹ Here the well-known form-giving tendencies of Cancer are easily evident, as are the notoriously hard lessons of Capricorn, the gate which leads to the higher life. From the former, the Human Kingdom obtains its vehicles and its capacity to respond to the rhythms of environing conditions; from the latter, it obtains sobriety and maturity through the facing of karmic situations. And it is Sirian power which flows through both the former and the latter, the zodiacal lives known as Cancer and Capricorn. In this way, the influence of Sirius gains entrance to our domain through the cycle of incarnations (symbolized and energized by Cancer) and initiations (symbolized and energized by Capricorn) through which the soul must pass on its journey to greater understanding and facility with systemic and cosmic laws. This it does through experience under both Cancer and Capricorn, agents of Sirian influence. Sirian influence also reaches Humanity by way of the Pleiades, a non-zodiacal constellation associated by the Tibetan with the constellation and sign of Cancer,²⁰² and said by him to be one of the starry groupings through which Sirius projects its energy to our solar system,²⁰³ one of many avenues for Sirian power.

Leo is the next. That the Great Feline of the zodiac should be associated with the Star of Initiation is hardly a surprise, given the association of Regulus in Leo with Sirius, and the association of Leo and the lion-bodied Sphinx with the Egyptian mysteries of initiation. And so it is. As the Tibetan has revealed, the constellation and sign of Leo help conduct the influence of Sirius into our solar system,²⁰⁴ passing it on to the planet Jupiter (which distributes Ray Two) and then to our Planetary Hierarchy in a distribution sequence clearly involved with the transmission of Second Ray energies.

Leo is also embedded in yet another energy distribution sequence bringing Sirian influence into our solar system and planetary life. This one starts with Sirius, which star then pours some of its influence through the constellation and sign of Leo, which then is channeled to the planet Uranus on its way to our region of experience.²⁰⁵ The sum effect of this distribution channel enables mankind to take the First or Birth Initiation and

awaken to the Christ or soul principle within. It is the function of Leo within this context to aid the human unit in becoming properly self-conscious,²⁰⁶ or aware of itself as a power for good or for ill, just as energies from the star Sirius also promote that essential first stage in growth.²⁰⁷ Thus, Leo amplifies what Sirius states in the first case, being an agent of its touch.

While Leo absorbs and transmits the energies of Sirius needed for early stages on the path, Scorpio picks them up and relays them to units on a somewhat later stage of the path. The constellation and sign of Scorpio are indeed agents of Sirian force, working together with that star and the planet Mars to accomplish two impressive developments, according to the Tibetan. First, the energies of Sirius, Scorpio, and Mars combine to produce the manifestation of Hierarchy itself,²⁰⁸ and second, the energies of Sirius, Scorpio, and Mars blend to form streams of energy which lead Humanity towards discipleship and initiation.²⁰⁹ The role of Scorpio in these developments is to color and condition the fundamental energies of Sirius in particular ways. Given that Sirius is in the first place the Star of Initiation and the point from which our Planetary Hierarchy is guided, Scorpio has only to reflect these features already embedded in the Sirian energy stream, perhaps adding a dash of its predilection for bringing the hidden to light. In regard to advancing disciples and initiates, Scorpio provides Sirian initiatory power in the form of grave psychospiritual crises and catharses,²¹⁰ which are as much like unto actual death and rebirth as anything but the real thing can be, requiring much detachment and relinquishment, as the effects of Scorpio are prone to do. Scorpio also imparts the required resolve.

Pisces is the sixth of the constellations and their representative signs which conduct the influence of Sirius into our system and planetary life. According to the Tibetan Master, some of the energies emanating from Sirius pass from that star unto the constellation and sign of Pisces, from thence to the planet Uranus, next to our planetary heart center (which is of course Hierarchy), and ultimately to the heart center of a disciple, and later, to his or her solar plexus,²¹¹ thus expressing as soul love and even as personal

desire.²¹² In this sequence, Pisces bridges between Sirius on high in a cosmic heart center and the human unit below on planet Earth, so that “the cosmic heart, the heart systemic and the little heart of man begin to beat as one.”²¹³ As this cosmic heart beat reverberates with ever increasing strength in the human unit, that cosmic rhythm eventually overtakes and blends with the lower note of the solar plexus, thus eradicating strident selfishness and destroying vulnerability to the illusions of the astral plane, with both of which the solar plexus is otherwise connected.²¹⁴ This accomplished, the human unit below and the cosmic heart center above are united, which linkage is facilitated by the mediating power of Pisces, bringing forth the energies of Sirius. Since Sirius is of a dominant Second Aspect disposition, and Pisces is said to distribute Rays Two and Six, it is apparent that Pisces gets its ray nature at least in part from the Sirian energies which stand behind it.

Of the planets which conduct Sirian influence into our systemic and planetary life, Mercury is the first of astrological order to be observed. Mercury is found within an energy distribution sequence originating in Sirius, proceeding to Leo, moving through Mercury and then the planet Saturn to link the stellar inspirations of Sirius directly with the mind and then the brain of the aspirant for initiation.²¹⁵ It is the role of Mercury to touch the mind of the aspiring human unit, and the role of Saturn to translate this touch into physical brain awareness of greater realities, both of which roles are consistent with the well-known astrological character of these planetary factors. Mercury has long been recognized as messenger of the gods on high and hence an emblem of the mind nature, while Saturn has equally long been recognized as connected with the mineral kingdom below and therefore all things literal and tangible, such as is the brain to the mind.

The planet Saturn also grounds Sirian energies into the solar system in its role as the final member of the distribution sequence originating in Sirius, passing through Cancer and Capricorn, and then to the planet Saturn on its way to our planetary life.²¹⁶ In this role, Saturn brings cosmic manas or mind force from distant sources into contact with the Human Kingdom.²¹⁷

While both Mercury and Saturn fall in the group of planets designated as sacred planets by the Tibetan, the next planet which translates Sirian influence into our region of evolution is by contrast one of the unruliest of the non-sacred type. Boisterous and impulsive as it is, Mars nonetheless gets into the act of conducting Sirian influence into our systemic and planetary life. This it does in concert with Scorpio, as discussed above. The passion-ridden tendencies of Mars no doubt contribute to the contrasting mix of energies which results in gripping tests of character and spiritual determination under the combination of Sirius, Scorpio, and Mars, which together present issues and set the stage for a dramatic struggle between the downward and the upward ways.²¹⁸ This struggle ends finally in the death of many a previously potent desire, both Mars and Scorpio being linked with annihilation and destruction,²¹⁹ usually of attitude and habit more than physical form, though aspects of the form nature may be involved as well, for Mars is linked with the entire lower nature.²²⁰

Jupiter is yet another planetary body which conducts Sirian influence into our systemic and planetary life. This Jupiter does as a member of a distribution sequence which channels energies from Sirius to the constellation and representative sign of Leo, from thence to Jupiter, finally to arrive within and condition our Planetary Hierarchy.²²¹ Given that Sirius is fundamentally expressive of the Second Aspect, and that the three rulers of Leo are the Sun (which distributes the Second Ray), the function of Jupiter in this distribution sequence is undoubtedly the relay and amplification of Ray Two energies, which it passes on to the Hierarchy, itself an expression of the Love-Wisdom Aspect. The entire sequence is constituted of energy sources which promote the relational capacities of the Second Aspect and Second Ray, establishing points of attraction which demonstrate the nature of universal love. The influence of congenial Jupiter agrees with and intensifies this message, underscoring that which emanates from Sirius.

Uranus, too, acts as an agent of Sirian influence, holding place in a distribution sequence which ushers energies from the star Sirius through the constellation and representative sign of Pisces,

then through the planet Uranus, on to Hierarchy (or the planetary heart center), the disciple's heart center, and eventually to the solar plexus of the individual,²²² just as described previously under the influence of Pisces as an astrological intermediary for the star Sirius.

Uranus is a bit of an oddity in this sequence (a comfortable role for this planetary body linked with all things eccentric in exoteric astrology), for Uranus is associated with Rays One,²²³ Three,²²⁴ and Seven, while the remaining elements of the distribution sequence are conditioned by Rays Two (Pisces, Hierarchy, the disciple's heart center) and Six (Pisces, the solar plexus). Nonetheless, here sits Uranus of odd-numbered rays in intimate communion with factors conditioned by even-numbered rays. This is perhaps on account of the fact that in spite of its ray coloring, Uranus is closely associated with the intuition and with group consciousness in the esoteric astrological doctrine,²²⁵ which two characteristics are particularly associated with buddhi, a significant constituent of Sirian influence. Thus, it may be said that the planet Uranus resonates to and amplifies this component of the Sirian energy stream.

Uranus contributes to the Sirius-Pisces-Uranus-Hierarchy-disciple's heart center sequence its own inherent and most frequently mentioned Ray Seven coloring, imparting the qualities of the Ray of Ceremonial law and Order through Hierarchy to all disciples and persons of goodwill who are attempting to establish, as the Tibetan described it, "...a new world order, based on a spiritual drive and aspiration, mental freedom, loving understanding, and a physical plane rhythm which provides the opportunity for full creative expression."²²⁶ These are the characteristics of progressive and Seventh Ray Uranus itself, which instills a drive for improved conditions and, as the Tibetan stated, "initiates a new order of life and conditions...and the desire to change the old order and the old orientation into the new."²²⁷ Such a Uranian drive may manifest either subjectively or objectively, but manifest it will, as its Ray Seven characteristics innately tend toward physical plane appearance and a direct precipitation of the latent into tangible form.²²⁸ As such, it is a particularly potent representative of Sirian influence, breaking through established

routines of materialistic thinking to introduce intuitive concepts concerning those themes with which Sirius is fundamentally linked — Hierarchy, processes of initiation, the Laws of Karma and Periodicity, group consciousness, universal relationship, and more.

The influence of Sirius finds contact with our system through yet another planetary body, which although not mentioned specifically by the Tibetan as a distributor of Sirian influence, must be included, for it is linked definitely with the buddhic principle. The planet is Neptune, about which the Tibetan Master said the following. "No man begins to co-ordinate the buddhic vehicles until he comes under Neptunian influence in some life or another. When this is the case, his personality horoscope will show Neptunian influence dominating somewhere."²²⁹ In other words, the influence of Neptune encourages the development of buddhi, which as described above may be characterized as universal love, intuition, and spiritual discernment, and these characteristics only are cultivated, according to the Tibetan, when the astrological horoscope reveals a prominent influence of Neptune in some way. That this linkage between the fourth principle (buddhi) and Neptune is so definite strongly argues that Neptune distributes the Fourth Ray, in addition to the Sixth Ray so often mentioned in connection with this planet.

The esoteric astrological doctrine associates Neptune at its best with innate sensitivity leading to higher vision,²³⁰ a characteristic surely in keeping with buddhi as universal (but not possessive) love, intuition, and spiritual discernment. As the Tibetan stated, the clue that such qualities are under development in the individual will show up in the personal horoscope, which might show Neptune conjunct the Ascendant, Midheaven, Descendant, or Imum Coeli, Neptune ruling important signs in the chart, or Neptune involved in conspicuous geometrical patterns (or aspects) with other planetary bodies. Any or all of these arrangements would suffice to emphasize the presence and power of Neptune, thus indicating the intention of the soul to unfold the buddhic faculty during the life associated with that chart. Thus, this very thing should be looked for by

students and counseling esoteric astrologers in evaluating the charts of aspirants, disciples, and even initiates. Emphasis upon Neptune, in other words, is a strong sign that the buddhic faculty may be unfolded, which is also to say that Sirian influence may be particularly well received.

However, such can only be true of the relatively advanced subject, for the energies of Sirius are not consciously registered until around the time of the Third Initiation. Mass Humanity therefore will not extract the same benefit from Neptunian influence, which it tends to use instead in destructive ways, such as over-indulgence in fantasy life, escapism, use of drugs and alcohol, and numerous other ways in which energy is dissipated and wasted. The contrasting ways in which Neptunian influence might be used by disciples as against the same by mass Humanity might be highlighted in the case of spiritual discernment. Whereas disciples may derive buddhi from Neptunian influence and thereby become the more adept at discriminating between truth and falsehood, mass Humanity under the sway of Neptune generally falls ever more hypnotized under the spell of various glammers and illusions, thoroughly bedazzled and bewildered by all that glitters and only appears to be gold, so to speak.

Thus, a prominently placed Neptune in the astrological chart can only be considered a distributor of Sirian influence in the charts of those persons who are prepared by previous evolutionary efforts to receive it that way. Nonetheless, in the most general sense, the planet Neptune must be considered a representative of Sirian influence simply because it is associated with the rise and cultivation of buddhi in the individual, and buddhi is a central component of the Sirian energy stream. Neptune is certainly involved with the flow of buddhi into our system, from wherever it may originate, including the star Sirius. This much is certain from the Tibetan's statement concerning Neptune in *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*. It only stands to reason that buddhi from Sirius reaches our planetary life and the individual seeker through the influence of Neptune.

Yet another factor related to Neptune conducts Sirian energy into our systemic and planetary life.

This is the Heart of the Sun, the energies of which are said to express themselves through Neptune.²³¹ The Heart of the Sun itself is however a direct channel for energies from Sirius, which from that star pours through the Heart of the Sun to reach our Planetary Hierarchy,²³² the distribution sequence being Sirius-Heart of the Sun-Hierarchy.

The Heart of the Sun is of course the soul aspect of our Solar Logos,²³³ undoubtedly a Second Aspect phenomena and therefore related to all things thereby implied—the Second Ray, the soul, consciousness, relationship, and the Law of Attraction. This Second Aspect functionary—the Heart of the Sun—speaks through the planet Neptune (which fact argues strongly that the planet Neptune distributes not only the Sixth but also the Second Ray, in addition to the Fourth, as mentioned above). In the Tibetan's words, “The ‘heart of the sun’ employs Neptune as its agent.”²³⁴ This it may do through the agencies of all that the Rays Two, Four, and Six connote in terms of forces that unite, harmonize, and sanctify.

At any rate, both Neptune and the Heart of the Sun carry and radiate the energies of Sirius, just as does our Planetary Hierarchy, which is guided on high from that star. As the Tibetan has said, “The entire work of the Great White Lodge is controlled from Sirius; the Ashrams are subjected to its cyclic inflow; the higher initiations are taken under its stimulation, for the principle of buddhi, of pure love...must be active in the heart of every initiate....”²³⁵ This pure love and buddhi flow directly from Sirius to the Heart of the Sun and then to Hierarchy, all these factors being largely conditioned by the Second Ray, and from thence to all those who would advance along the Way of Discipleship and Initiation. Thus, to the list of planetary bodies which conduct Sirian influence into our system, each in its own way and for definite purposes, there must be added the soul aspect of our own local star, to which level of being the Tibetan has given the name, the Heart of the Sun.

Rays Distributed by Sirius

As might be gathered from the foregoing discussion of the astrological intermediaries through which Sirian influence is transmitted, all

seven ray vibrations find expression through this star, though the Second Ray is surely the most prevalent of the seven vibrations found in the influence of Sirius. That Sirius distributes all seven of the rays was indicated plainly enough by the Tibetan, who stated that Sirius works in a “sevenfold manner,” or through all of the seven rays and their various manifestations, particularly the seven ashrams of Hierarchy.²³⁶ Evidence to this effect has accumulated throughout the foregoing discussion of the various astrological intermediaries of Sirius. For ease of reference, these intermediaries are summarized below, with their associated ray characteristics.

The Astrological Intermediaries of Sirius Summarized

Sign or Planet Associated	Ray or Rays
Gemini	2
Cancer	3, 7
Leo	1, 5
Scorpio	4
Capricorn	1, 3, 7
Pisces	2, 6
Mercury	4
Mars	6
Jupiter	2
Saturn	1, 3
Uranus	1, 3, 7
Neptune	2, 4, 6
Heart of Sun	2

As a quick glance at this tabulation makes clear, every single one of the rays is represented here, and abundantly so, except in the case of Ray Five, which is only represented once, but still represented. It would seem that this full spectrum

of ray influences through which Sirius communicates simply goes to show that Sirius is at home with everybody, perhaps the ultimate role model for the idea of universal relationship.

Conclusion: Sirius as Ancient Deity, Initiator, and Planetary Influence

As this study has shown, the star Sirius holds a special place of importance in the Ageless Wisdom for many compelling reasons. First, this brightest of stars in the night sky has since antiquity been associated with powerful deity figures and with the ultimate principles of human and cosmic existence, particularly as the place of Sirius in the religion and monumental architecture of ancient Egypt testifies. Second, Sirius compels attention because of its characterization by the Tibetan Teacher in the works of Alice Bailey as located in the heart center of a cosmic Logos and for its consequent status as an unparalleled source of buddhi. Third, Sirius merits pride of place in esoteric philosophy due to its legendary role in the initiation of consciousness, whether of high Logoic beings or of individual disciples on Earth, propelling vast schemes of evolutionary life waves and fueling the work of great avatars. Within that context, Sirius functions as the home of highly evolved esoteric entities including our Planetary Hierarchy, much as this star was thought to do by the ancient Egyptians, who conceptualized Sirius as the home of their most sacred deities. And finally, Sirius speaks to us audibly through the galactic star haze because its energies find their ways to our planet through a network of astrological intermediaries, all of which serve to bring Sirian influence right into our solar system and planetary life. For all these reasons, Sirius stands close, though it resides afar, teaching timeless lessons about transcendence, higher orders of being, and the paths leading back to our ancient stellar homes.

¹ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology* (New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1951), 32.
² Julius D.W. Staal, *The New Patterns in the Sky: Myths and Legends of the Stars*, (Newark, Ohio: McDonald and Woodward, 1988), 88.

³ R.H. Allen, *Star Names, Their Lore and Meaning* (reprint; 2000; New York: Dover Publications, 1899), 117.
⁴ *Ibid.*, 128.
⁵ *Facts on File Dictionary* (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 1996), 345, 415.

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- 6 *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Astronomy* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1980), 90.
- 7 *Facts on File*, 345.
- 8 *Cambridge*, 90.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 88.
- 10 *Sky and Telescope*, December 1995 (Vol. 90, Issue 6), 14.
- 11 *Cambridge*, 88.
- 12 Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology I*, (New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1962), 152.
- 13 Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, (New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1925), 904.
- 14 Allen, *Star Names*, 120; Vivian Robson, *The Fixed Stars and Constellations in Astrology* (Abingdon, MD: Astrology Classics, 2005), 208.
- 15 Valencia Straitton, *Celestial Ship of the North* (Publisher Unknown, 1927), v. 1, 212.
- 16 Allen, *Star Names*, 117, 120.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 123.
- 18 Robert K. G. Temple, *The Sirius Mystery* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976), 64.
- 19 Allen, *Star Names*, 123.
- 20 E.A. Wallis Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, v.2, (Chicago: Dover Publications, 1969), 261.
- 21 Allen, *Star Names*, 123.
- 22 Albert Pike, *Morals and Dogma* (Richmond, VA: 1871), 481.
- 23 Nicholas DeVore, *DeVore's Encyclopedia of Astrology* (New York The Philosophical Library, 1947), 128.
- 24 Allen, *Star Names*, 124.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 120 – 129.
- 26 G. De Santillana and H. von Dechend, *Hamlet's Mill* (Boston: Gambit, 1969), 216, 320, 321, 357, 358.
- 27 Allen, *Star Names*, 119, 122.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 120 .
- 29 *Ibid.*, 118.
- 30 Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, v.. 2, 261, 262.
- 31 Allen, *Star Names*, 124.
- 32 Jack Lindsay, *Origins of Astrology* (London: Fredrick Muller, 1971) 167.
- 33 Allen, *Star Names*, 123.
- 34 Peter Tompkins, *The Secrets of the Great Pyramid* (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 168.
- 35 Allen, *Star Names*, 123.
- 36 *Ibid.*, 123, 124.
- 37 Ebertin-Hoffman, *Fixed Stars and Their Interpretation* (Tempe AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 2009), 38.
- 38 Allen, *Star Names*, 125.
- 39 Temple, *The Sirius Mystery*, 179.
- 40 Jack Lindsay, *Origins of Astrology*, 373.
- 41 Temple, *The Sirius Mystery*, 247.
- 42 H.P. Blavatsky, *Theosophical Glossary* (New York: The Theosophical Publishing Society, 1952), 300.
- 43 Lindsay, *Origins of Astrology*, 148; Temple, *The Sirius Mystery*, 79.
- 44 Lindsay, *Origins of Astrology*, 154.
- 45 *Ibid.*, 156.
- 46 Allen, *Star Names*, 124; Vivian Robson, *The Fixed Stars and Constellations in Astrology*, 208.
- 47 Lindsay, *Origins of Astrology*, 165.
- 48 E.H. Krupp, *Beyond the Blue Horizon* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991), 222.
- 49 R.R. Clayson, *Egypt's Ancient Heritage* (San Jose, CA: AMORC: 1977, 34; E.H. Krupp, *Beyond the Blue Horizon*, 218.
- 50 Allen, *Star Names*, 125.
- 51 This notion was suggested by Albert Pike in the Masonic classic, *Morals and Dogma*, 446.
- 52 Valencia Straitton, *The Celestial Ship of the North*, v. 1 (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger, 1992), 210.
- 53 Allen, *Star Names*, 124.
- 54 Lindsay, *Origins of Astrology*, 300, 414.
- 55 Allen, *Star Names*, 122.
- 56 Lindsay, *Origins of Astrology*, 167.
- 57 *Ibid.*, 168.
- 58 De Santillana and von Dechend, *Hamlet's Mill*, 358.
- 59 John A. Wilson, *The Culture of Ancient Egypt* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 61; Lindsay, *Origins of Astrology*, 156.
- 60 Clayson, *Egypt's Ancient Heritage*, 133.
- 61 Lindsay, *Origins of Astrology*, 148.
- 62 Wallis Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, v.2, 264, 265; Temple, *The Sirius Mystery*, 69.
- 63 De Santillana and von Dechend, *Hamlet's Mill*, 286.
- 64 Allen, *Star Names*, 123.
- 65 *Ibid.*
- 66 Lindsay, *Origins of Astrology*, 148, 149.
- 67 For a thorough exploration of this theme, see Robert Bauval and Graham Hancock, *The Mystery of the Sphinx*, particularly p. 21 (New York: Crown Publishers, 1996).
- 68 Bauval and Hancock, *The Mystery of the Sphinx*, 138.
- 69 E.A. Wallis Budge, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* (New York: Dover Publications, 1967), cv.
- 70 *Ibid.*, lxxxvi.
- 71 *Ibid.*, lxxiii.
- 72 Geoffrey Barborka, *The Divine Plan* (Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1972), 409.

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- 73 Temple, *The Sirius Mystery*, 164.
- 74 Krupp, *Beyond the Blue Horizon*, 221.
- 75 Robert Bauval and Adrian Gilbert, *The Orion Mystery* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1994), 220 on Horus; H.P. Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary*, 300; Jack Lindsay, *Origins of Astrology*, 147, 148; Sir James Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, (New York: Avenel Books, 1981), 430; Temple, *The Sirius Mystery*, 63, 79, 179; Allen, *Star Names*, 124; Albert Pike, *Morals and Dogma*, 376.
- 76 Wallis Budge, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, 113, 123, 126.
- 77 Wallis Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, v. 2, 215.
- 78 Ibid., 113.
- 79 Temple, *The Sirius Mystery*, 79.
- 80 Ibid. 63.
- 81 Wallis Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, v. 2, 203.
- 82 Ibid. 216.
- 83 Ibid.
- 84 Ibid., 215.
- 85 Allen, *Star Names*, 124.
- 86 Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary*,. 145.
- 87 Bauval and Hancock, *The Mystery of the Sphinx*, 16, 20.
- 88 Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary*, 136.
- 89 Lindsay, *Origins of Astrology*, 148.
- 90 Wallis Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, v. 2, 261, 262.
- 91 Ibid., 262.
- 92 Wallis Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, v. 1, 407.
- 93 Ibid., 415.
- 94 Ibid., 403.
- 95 Ibid., 407.
- 96 Ibid., 407, 408.
- 97 Tompkins, *The Secret of the Great Pyramid*, 256.
- 98 Wallis Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, v. 1, 405.
- 99 Ibid., 403.
- 100 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 570, 624; Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, v. 1 (Pasadena, CA: Theosophical University Press, 1974), 103, 130; Geoffrey Barboraka, *The Divine Plan*, 32, 33.
- 101 Temple, *The Sirius Mystery*, 95.
- 102 Bauval and Hancock, *The Mystery of the Sphinx*, 210.
- 103 Ibid., 213 – 214.
- 104 Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, v. 2, 314.
- 105 Ibid., 229.
- 106 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 300.
- 107 See Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 201 – 202, which states that the usual pattern for the distribution of celestial influence is from star to sign of the zodiac, and then to planet.
- 108 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 3.
- 109 This point, of course, was located between the paws of the Sphinx, the importance of which monumental statue was referred to directly by the Tibetan when he stated in *Esoteric Astrology*, 288, “...when the nature of the world is revealed, then the mystery of the Sphinx will no longer exist.” This statement would seem to suggest a parallelism between the nature of our planet and the mystery of the Sphinx, such that the purpose for the existence of our planet is in some way one and the same with the issues embodied in the Egyptian Sphinx at Giza. Thus, when one is known, so also is the other.
- 110 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 197.
- 111 Allen, *Star Names*, 125; Lindsay, *Origins of Astrology*, 166 – 169.
- 112 Lindsay, *Origins of Astrology*, 166 – 170.
- 113 Ibid., 168, 169.
- 114 Ibid., 166 – 170.
- 115 Allen, *Star Names*, 125.
- 116 Ibid., 126.
- 117 Robson, *The Fixed Stars and Constellations in Astrology*, 208.
- 118 Allen, *Star Names*, 127.
- 119 Robson, *The Fixed Stars and Constellations in Astrology*, 235.
- 120 Ibid., 95.
- 121 Ibid., 208.
- 122 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1242; also obliquely hinted at in *Esoteric Astrology*, 108.
- 123 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1259, 1260; *The Rays and the Initiations* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1960), 413, 417.
- 124 Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 99; *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 156; 182, 511, 520, 572; *Esoteric Astrology*, 46.
- 125 Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 190; *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1265.
- 126 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 363.
- 127 Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 190; *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1265.
- 128 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 427; *The Rays and the Initiations*, 387, 733.
- 129 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 375.
- 130 “The microcosm, when known, holds ever the clue to the Macrocosm.” Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 415.
- 131 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 416.
- 132 Ibid., 197.
- 133 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology I*, 18.
- 134 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 415, 416, 420.

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- 135 Ibid. 517.
136 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 415.
137 Ibid.
138 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 576.
139 Ibid., 700.
140 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 516.
141 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 711.
142 Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II*, 258.
143 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 471.
144 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 383.
145 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 700.
146 Ibid.
147 Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1971), 15.
148 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 255.
149 Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, 1888 Facsimile Edition.
150 Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology II*, 559.
151 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 201.
152 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 606.
153 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 592; *Esoteric Astrology*, 416.
154 Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 98; *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 336, 553, 571, 1243; *The Rays and the Initiations*, 426.
155 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 570.
156 Ibid., 569 – 570.
157 Ibid., 1032 - 1033.
158 Ibid., 723.
159 Ibid.
160 Ibid., 40.
161 Ibid., 723-724.
162 Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1985), 298.
163 Ibid., 299.
164 Ibid., 298.
165 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 330 – 331.
166 Alice A. Bailey, *The Reappearance of the Christ* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1976), 121; *The Rays and the Initiations*, 418.
167 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 197, 416, 349 – 350; *The Rays and the Initiations*, 415.
168 Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle* (New York: Lucis Trust), 1978), 131; *Esoteric Astrology*, 355.
169 Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 98.
170 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 347.
171 Ibid., 348.
172 Ibid.
173 Ibid., 347.
174 Ibid., 212.
175 Ibid.
176 Ibid., 213.
177 Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 126.
178 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 212.
179 Ibid.
180 Ibid., 211.
181 Ibid., 209.
182 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 415; *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 173.
183 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 415.
184 Ibid.
185 Ibid.
186 Ibid., 654.
187 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 504.
188 Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 17.
189 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 416.
190 Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 18.
191 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 299.
192 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 416.
193 Ibid., 416 – 417.
194 Ibid., 417. This impulse to pull away from form might be construed as First Ray in nature, if that ray is considered in its capacity as “liberator from form.”
195 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 349.
196 Ibid., 348.
197 Ibid., 50, 465.
198 Ibid., 168.
199 Ibid., 275, 286.
200 Ibid., 197.
201 Ibid., 168.
202 Ibid., 416.
203 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1258.
204 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 417.
205 Ibid., 447.
206 Ibid.
207 Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 98.
208 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 483.
209 Ibid.
210 Ibid., 202, 381, 382, 547.
211 Ibid., 421.
212 Ibid., 428.
213 Ibid., 432.
214 Ibid.
215 Ibid., 299.
216 Ibid., 50, 465.
217 Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, 98; *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 347, 378, 1161, 1162; *Esoteric Astrology*, 50, 465. Also, M. Temple Richmond, *Sirius* (Atlanta: Source Publications, 1997), 336, 337.
218 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 483.
219 Ibid., 214, 215, 547.
220 Ibid., 211.
221 Ibid., 417.
222 Ibid., 421.
223 Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology I* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1962), 420 – 421; *Esoteric Astrology*, 224.

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- 224 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 125, 138, 200; *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 357.
- 225 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 139, 538 – 541.
- 226 *Ibid.*, 445.
- 227 *Ibid.*, 224.
- 228 *Ibid.*, 539, 540.
- 229 Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 899.
- 230 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 306.
- 231 *Ibid.*, 296.
- 232 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 414.
- 233 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 296.
- 234 *Ibid.*, 296.
- 235 Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 415.
- 236 Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 199.

The Hieroeidetic Power of Esoteric Teachings: Alice A. Bailey and Global Consciousness

Isobel Blackthorn

Abstract

This article explores the teachings of Theosophist Alice A. Bailey in relation to their transformational or hieroeidetic power. I argue that a transformation towards global consciousness involves a shift away from the divisive tendencies of our personalities and includes an embodiment of the core concepts of wholeness, inclusiveness and interconnectedness. Central to the Bailey teachings is the notion of initiation, regarded here as a series of recognitions and as a metaphor for expanding awareness. It is argued that through engaging with and applying the teachings in daily life, the seeker may reach a threshold of awareness, beyond which global consciousness could be realized.

Introduction

It is clear to anyone familiar with the Bailey teachings that the corpus aims to contribute to a discourse of human and planetary betterment, yet how well do the texts serve their stated intention to reorient humanity towards a spiritually oriented life? Can the Bailey teachings expand awareness? Do they in themselves contain hieroeidetic or transformational power? Above all, can they help foster global consciousness?

Alice Bailey is not alone in seeking change. One stream of contemporary thought found in a variety of academic disciplines identifies the need for a new type of thinking oriented towards human and planetary betterment.¹ Included in this stream may be found the articulation of the concepts of inclusiveness, wholeness and interconnectedness, concepts that have arisen in Transpersonal Psychology, Ecology and Social Ecology, Complexity Theory, and a stream of Futures Studies. These concepts are integral to global consciousness, loosely described by Veronica Boix Mansilla and Howard Gardner somewhat generally as “a *mindful* way of being

in the world today.”² These concepts are also central to the worldview of the Bailey teachings.

Concepts and Transformation

Philosopher William James notes that all concepts have consequences by shaping the way we think and act.³ We use concepts as a lens through which to perceive reality, as an interpretive, evaluative framework. In this sense, concepts have functional value in fostering human understanding. As meaning-makers, concepts also inform the way we construct knowledge. They hold much beneath them rather like pegs on a washing line. Even as abstractions, concepts have a concrete form, stabilizing the continual flux of perception. As James highlights, our ability to conceptualize and our ability to perceive are intertwined in one seamless whole. In lived experience, a continual feedback loop of conception informing perception and perception informing conception occurs.

Concepts may also obstruct or veil perception. When concepts are treated as fixed or immutable they create a sense of finitude, certainty and truth, denying the acceptance of, or even the possibility of alternative ways of conceptualizing. The concept of inclusiveness, for example, may be reduced to a dogmatic principle of inclusion, manifesting in inflexible bureaucratic

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policy. In this fashion, global consciousness itself may become a fixed object and not lived experientially as a process of Being.

The concept of inclusiveness is a moral precept and pertains to actions performed by people whose orientation is to include or embrace all. Inclusiveness is essentially dynamic love experienced subjectively in our hearts. It is the will to include. Wholeness or unity is the perception of the universal, recognized or perceived in any given particular. And interconnectedness refers to the way that all things are connected in the universe.⁴ While interconnectedness may be scientifically observed in disciplines including physics, biology and ecology, and inclusiveness and wholeness regarded as moral or spiritual precepts, all of these concepts also have their grounding in subjective experience and can be understood as they are embodied in experience, and all imply a prerequisite orientation, a way of perceiving the world.

A transformation towards global consciousness involves a shift away from the attention we give to our knowledge about things, or to the contents of knowing, including any concepts used to understand knowledge, and instead, steers us towards both wisdom, which takes experiential learning as its basis of knowing, and intuition, or the faculty of immediate holistic perception. A discourse of transforming consciousness needs to speak more forcefully about this change in orientation, as well as including the various expansions of consciousness that any of us may experience in our lives.

Wisdom engages intuitive perception, and concepts are valued in the way that they may serve this perception. A reorientation towards a way of perceiving grounded in the practice of wisdom (phronesis) construed in terms of global consciousness relies on our ability to perceive intuitively. Alice Bailey refers to intuition as synthetic understanding based upon the principle of universality.⁵ The intuition sees the universal in any particular and is fostering and fostered by an openness to the unknown. Inclusiveness, wholeness and interconnectedness are concepts predicated upon intuitive knowing, itself contingent upon a developed imagination, one that visions.

Any method or approach we can find to reorient ourselves individually and collectively towards this form of consciousness will be of enormous benefit to humanity and the planet. While by no means alone in this objective, the esotericism of Alice Bailey has a role to play in fostering this reorientation among Bailey students. This may be achieved through the transformational or hieroeidetic power of the teachings themselves, along with the spiritual training offered in her Arcane School.⁶ As her students affirm, Alice Bailey places transforming consciousness at the fulcrum of the teachings.

All esoteric teachings concern the notion of transformation, typified in the works of Alchemy. According to Professor of Religious Studies Arthur Versluis, esoteric knowledge carries initiatory or hieroeidetic power, able to foster a transformation of consciousness in the reader. For scholar of Western Esotericism Tom Cheetham, “transformation is an alchemical process: the very substance of things is the locus of the work, both container and content, and the goal is the transmutation of each being into a more subtle, more definite, more real state.”⁷ To access this transformational power it is not sufficient to read about esotericism or gain an understanding of esoteric knowledge. It is imperative that the teachings are allowed to do their work as lived experience. To explore this aspect of esotericism the reader must become a seeker and a student open to receiving the training offered and embodying it as part of daily life.⁸

The Alice Bailey Teachings

Alice A. Bailey (1880-1949) was a British Aristocrat and evangelical Christian turned Theosophist who wrote a series of volumes in telepathic rapport with the Tibetan master Djwhal Khul, instructing her readership on the imminence of the New Age of Aquarius, which she believed would involve the reappearance of the Christ.⁹ Regarded as a second or even third generation Theosophist, Bailey established a number of organizations designed to further the ideas in the texts, including the Arcane School, an esoteric training school by correspondence still receiving students today.

The metaphysical reality portrayed in the Bailey texts is abstruse. Somewhat in unison, Alice

Bailey and Djwhal Khul (DK) assert their core theosophically inspired postulates as foundational truths, forming the integral ground upon which their version of esoteric knowledge is built. At root is an ontological commitment to a transcendent reality, including the existence of a solar Logos—a metaphoric description of God construed as a trinity manifesting out of the One, or Absolute Reality.

Following in the theosophical tradition, the teachings then build a teleological argument for the evolution of consciousness, using a range of metaphors to explain how evolution proceeds. The pivotal motif in the cosmology is *hierarchy*, derived from a Neoplatonic interpretation of Aristotle's idea of a continuum of creation. Bailey's model of the human constitution, the seven rays, the spiritual path of transformational initiations, and notions of glamour are all based upon an ontological commitment to Platonic and Neoplatonic "truths." These include the Platonic notion that appearance veils reality, and the Neoplatonic idea of emanationism.

The Bailey texts do not deviate from these underlying principles. Rather, the teachings are layered up with theosophically derived Eastern mystical teachings and a Christology involving the core Christian ethics of service and goodwill, and an emphasis on the reappearance of the Christ as the head of the spiritual hierarchy or masters of the wisdom. Although the result is somewhat cumbersome, the presentation is internally coherent and consistent, and firmly grounded in an esoteric ontology that conforms to Western esoteric thought.¹⁰

Wholeness, Interconnectedness and Inclusiveness in the Bailey books

Global consciousness in Bailey's scheme begins with the integration of the personality, with its mental, emotional and physical bodies, and the soul. For Bailey, wholeness involves a recognition of the divine Whole and is a characteristic of soul awareness in which unity is known. The ability to sense wholeness requires illumination beyond the plane of the intuition and manifests at an advanced stage of

growth towards a spiritual state of being.¹¹ This spiritual state deals "with the integration of the personality and the soul, thus evoking the consciousness of the *Whole*. When this is accomplished, group consciousness is added to self-consciousness, and this is the second great step on the way to God-consciousness."¹²

Interconnectedness in Theosophy is understood in terms of hylozoism—pertaining to a living material universe—and has its foundation in consciousness. The way that our universe is interconnected is depicted in an elaborate metaphysical cosmology in Alice Bailey's *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, a dense, abstruse and highly detailed presentation of the interconnectedness of all existence from the single atom to the Solar Logos and beyond. Global consciousness, for Bailey, involves a recognition of this hylozoistic reality.

Inclusiveness is fundamental to the evolution of consciousness. As we evolve, so does our capacity to include.¹³ We move away from seeing ourselves as isolated units or personalities and develop a sense of soul and thence group consciousness. It is the soul who becomes inclusive. "This inclusiveness is the outstanding characteristic of the soul, or self, whether it is the soul of man, the sensitive nature of the cosmic Christ, or the anima mundi; the soul of the world."¹⁴ As consciousness expands, so does an awareness of the whole of which the individual forms a part, and more and more of this whole is included in their individual consciousness.

Transforming Consciousness Bailey-style

Bailey sought to universalize esoteric thought, placing it in the service of her own understanding of the principles of service and goodwill. Wholeness and interconnectedness form the bedrock of the teachings, and inclusiveness their moral imperative. The Bailey texts take the student on a long and deep psychological journey, presenting and delineating a variety of esoteric concepts along with much advice and a stage model of the evolution of human consciousness which the reader is invited to apply to themselves in the hope that in so doing, awareness and growth are fostered.

Bailey's developmental stages are concerned with the evolving spiritual life construed in terms of the soul gaining ever-increasing control of the individual's (and humanity's) personality. Such control slowly increases in magnitude and is marked by certain leaps made at key moments or jumps to another level. For Bailey, these jumps are initiations. Paradigm shift, turning point, transformation, transfiguration, rebirth, baptism, epiphany, quantum leap and even spontaneous emergence all relate to the notion of initiation.

Beyond the esoteric world, the notion of initiation contributes to esotericism's reputation as indicative of secret, elitist groups.¹⁵ Within esotericism, initiation denotes a particular event of serious importance central to esoteric practice. Should esoteric texts carry transformational power, awakening higher degrees of consciousness and perhaps enabling the reader to tread the spiritual path and pass through the initiations, then the reader achieves this transformation by internalizing and becoming what he or she reads.¹⁶

For Bailey, initiation conveys an understanding in terms of universal turning points involving expansions of consciousness on the spiritual path of discipleship towards an ever-increasing realization of wholeness. These expansions of consciousness include the pre-existing aspects of the individual, along with a new, broader awareness of reality, a new way of being and a new sense of direction. The individual gains a renewed grasp of the Plan or Great Design and the personality becomes energetically changed and thus better able to fulfill new intentions:

It [initiation] is first of all the entering into a new and wider dimensional world by the expansion of a man's consciousness so that he can include and encompass that which he now excludes, and from which he normally separates himself in his thinking and acts. It is, secondly, the entering into man of those energies which are distinctive of the soul and of the soul alone, - the force of intelligent love and spiritual will.¹⁷

Bailey makes it clear that expansions of consciousness in themselves are not the same as an initiation. Rather, initiation is regarded by

Bailey as the effect of the recognition of the expansion. Bailey explains that initiation embodies a series of recognitions by the initiate, including a retrospective recognition of the end of a cycle of happenings, the recognition or prevision of the appearance of an eventual yet imminent cycle, and the recognition or acceptance that an initiation has occurred.¹⁸

Such recognition is founded on an inner reflective life, through which change or growth can occur. Change, valued as desirable, becomes contingent upon the faculty of recognition, itself contingent upon an inner reflective life. Whilst we may all experience growth and change in our lives without this meta-level of awareness, with regard to the spiritual unfolding of primary concern in Bailey's work this process of recognition is a necessary feature.

In Bailey's view, through initiation every individual has the potential to go through the same types of expansions of consciousness. These initiations are thought to mark the beginning of the end of human evolution and entry into the spiritual kingdom in which individual consciousness expands to recognize, or intuit group or planetary consciousness. At this juncture, the evolution of consciousness has already progressed from the basic instincts of early humans, through the development of the intellect typified by average contemporary humanity, to the intuitive awareness and wholistic vision which, for Bailey, are attributes of the soul.

The First Three Initiations of the Spiritual Path

In her hierarchical presentation of the evolution of consciousness, Bailey identifies a series of nine initiations in her work. The first two are regarded as initiations of the threshold or preparatory initiations. The third refers to the first initiation in which the soul gains complete control of the personality and the individual enters the spiritual kingdom. From there, each initiation marks a more completely realized spiritual consciousness.

The Bailey texts encourage students to ponder on whether they might be a candidate for initiation and whether such an event has ever occurred in their life. It is up to each individual to

decide how far they have evolved in consciousness and determine their exact point of attainment before they can know what the next step is, a step that must be consciously taken. In this fashion, the student becomes situated inside Bailey's model of initiatory stages.

An initiation is a blaze of illumination thrown upon the river of existence, and it is in the nature of a whole experience. There is not indefiniteness in it, and the initiate is never quite the same again in his consciousness.¹⁹

The first initiation is described as a birth into the spiritual life, when the very first glimmerings of recognition of the light of the soul occur. Bailey writes, "that which has been slowly gestating in man comes at last to birth, and the Christ, or soul, is born consciously."²⁰ This can only take place, Bailey argues, once the personality has become fully integrated. Bailey describes the qualities of an integrated personality as having the free use of the mind, so that the individual is able to focus attention upon their own aims, ambitions and personal fulfillment. This type of individual may display many talents, be extremely versatile, charming and attractive. Bailey claims that "preparatory to this first initiation, there has always to be...the denial of the lower self and the fervid acceptance by the personality of the loss of all the material factors which have held the soul a prisoner in the womb of time."²¹

The first initiation occurs to individuals in this cohort who choose to orient themselves to a more spiritual way of living. Attention is paid at this stage to the physical body and to healing as the aspirant attempts to overcome the inertia and stability of the personality and enter into the

spiritual life beckoning through the Christ within.

A student who believes they have experienced such an event is now challenged to ascertain whether they fit the next category, the initiate of the second degree. The second initiation deals with the emotional plane and the aspirant's effort to gain control of the emotional body. Ac-

...“transformation is an alchemical process: the very substance of things is the locus of the work, both container and content, and the goal is the transmutation of each being into a more subtle, more definite, more real state.” To access this transformational power it is not sufficient to read about esotericism or gain an understanding of esoteric knowledge. It is imperative that the teachings are allowed to do their work as a lived experience.

According to Bailey, this is a very difficult stage when the inflowing energy of the soul intensifies the emotional nature. An individual reaching this stage needs to be able to demonstrate the ability to be steady, be in command of or purify their emotions so that all that remains is aspiration and a "sensitive response to all forms of divine life."²² Bailey goes on to state, "the initiatory process between the first and the second initiations is for many the worst time of distress, difficulty, realization of problems and the constant effort to 'clear himself.'"²³

Bailey likens the second initiation to the Baptism of Christ, drawing upon Christ's orientation to future service in teaching and healing that occurred after his baptism in the river Jordan (at age thirty), and after the three temptations or tests of purity that took place in the wilderness. "The second initiation stands for the demonstrated control and consecration to divinity of the desire nature, with its emotional reactions and its potent 'wish life.'"²⁴

The first two initiations are considered to be threshold initiations, each preparing the disciple for the initiate life that occurs once the third initiation has been passed through. Bailey states that it is not always the case that the individual is aware of having passed through these first two stages, unlike the third initiation, which

might be regarded as the milestone in Bailey's model. With the exception of *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, the Bailey texts were written for aspirants and disciples who are passing through the first or second initiations, in preparation for the third:

Up to the third initiation, man has been occupied with the process of fusing soul and body into one unity. After the third initiation...man is oriented towards and becomes occupied with, a further fusion in consciousness, that of spirit-soul-body. I speak of a fusion in consciousness. The unity is ever there, and man in evolution is really becoming aware of that which already exists.²⁵

According to Bailey, the third initiation occurs on the mental plane in full waking consciousness. The procedure involves an alignment of the concrete and abstract mind, and the creation of a direct channel for vision received by the "third eye" or eye of the soul, which temporarily turns inward towards the higher spiritual light. The objective of this initiation is the sudden inflow of spiritual energy. Bailey claims that the process flashes into being then fades out, leaving a new and permanent spiritual and instinctual trend towards spiritual perception and livingness; the third eye now receptive to light from the highest source, functioning like a lens for the reflection of light and for the attaining of the highest possible inner vision for the particular point in evolution reached.²⁶ The keynote of this initiation is radiance and the initiate also displays detachment, endurance and power.²⁷ From this point, the disciple understands him or herself to be an initiate.

The initiate, Bailey argues, is released into a particular vortex of force, sensitive to the energy of life, and must now learn methods of handling on a global scale, whatever the initiate has individually transcended, thus transmuting personal knowledge into wisdom.²⁸ The initiate has dealt with his or her own personality and now must deal with the personality of humanity as a whole, in loving understanding and intelligent service. Having begun to learn to see through illusion, the initiate is now able, in some degree at least, to intuitively register, interpret and transmit wisdom. Inner reflection

and outer service merge into a single life activity. Personal will and God's will are fused in the life of the initiate who sees, not choice, but an inherent impulse to act in accordance with spiritual will, which initiates any needed activities without a personal need for reward.²⁹ The hallmarks of the initiate are lack of self-interest, humility, a balanced perspective and a dispassionate attitude. Bailey uses the transfiguration of Christ as an exemplar of this stage, in which the divided self is finally healed, the higher self or soul able at last to control, in synthesis, the lower self or personality. Through the transfiguration, Christ "passed in His consciousness to the realm of inclusive realization, standing forth as the perfect expression of the uttermost possibility to which humanity could aspire."³⁰

This pinnacle of achievement leads the disciple into the initiate life. As progress is made through the following initiatory stages, a more rarified form of consciousness is said to develop. "An initiate is essentially one whose sense of awareness is occupied with subjective contacts and impacts and is not predominantly preoccupied with the world of outer sense perception."³¹

For Bailey, the initiate intuitively perceives ideas and expresses these ideas wisely. The initiate will recognize intuitively the wisdom embedded in the ideas of inclusiveness, wholeness and interconnectedness. It is the practical application of the wisdom contained within such ideas that is indicative of a spiritualized consciousness, one reached through the lengthy process of reorientation described above, and not the conceptualization of these ideas in veils of language.

The Process of Initiation

Bailey describes the initiatory process in considerable technical detail, much of it highly abstract in flavor. Some of her ideas are encapsulated in the following quotations:

Initiation has been defined as a 'progressive sequence of directed energy impacts.' These impacts are characterized by points of tension, and these lead inevitably to points of crisis.³²

These points of tension (when *consciously* attained) become the actuating energy which enables the disciple to ‘stand in the light and in that light see greater Light; within that greater Light he knows and sees, grasps and absorbs that which has hitherto been dark and secret and unknown.’ This is initiation.³³

Periods of search, periods of pain, periods of detachment, periods of revelation producing points of fusion, points of tension and points of energy projection—such is the story of the Path of Initiation.³⁴

The points of crisis Bailey refers to involve decisions of orientation or direction. Having decided, the disciple stands at a point of tension—stress and strain—between the decision having been made and the next step to be taken becoming clearer, influencing the individual’s attitude to the future. For Bailey, “a point of tension is, symbolically, a storehouse of power.”³⁵ “Energy is generated and held for future use. This point of tension is a static point of concentrated contemplation.”³⁶ The individual undergoes an intense interior preoccupation with the world of significances. When the work is done in the period of tension then there comes a point of emergence. This is an emergence from and an emergence into a new field of experience. Bailey argues that “there is no initiation possible without a preceding revelation, and yet each initiation leads to a subsequent revelation.”³⁷ For Bailey, the former is self-engendered, the latter conferred.

Initiatory transitions are existential crises involving a breakdown of theory, constructs and concepts which have lost their explanatory power in the face of a new problem or question. The revelation that is induced prior to an initiation is created through the individual’s own inner tension. Meaning is uncreated; the individual is no longer able to make sense of things in the face of the realization that current explanations are no longer adequate. This unmeaning-making frees perception, the individual facing the unknown which is not yet conceptualized. There is an awareness that what was formerly conceptually adequate is no more so. This comes as a revelation, in the sense that suddenly

we know it, we know or perceive that our conceptual knowledge no longer serves us.

The post-initiatory revelation referred to by Bailey relates to the entry into a new field of experience. The revelation speaks directly to the existential crisis, opening up the individual to new explanations, new ideas, a new body of knowledge, which in turn fosters a new way of understanding the world.

As James highlights above, concepts and perceptions form a dynamic system. In Bailey’s initiatory transformation, first there is the emptying by the individual of inadequate concepts. Then there is a pause, in which perception is drawn inwards, into the void or wilderness. The aspirant becomes aware of blackness, of meaninglessness, and desires light to see. The new revelation provides this light. All that is before the aspirant in the future and all that lies in the past can be redescribed in terms of the new revelation. The aspirant sees things differently and interprets things differently.

As has been widely acknowledged in a range of fields, including: Complexity Studies, Futures Studies, Social Ecology and Transpersonal Psychology, for decades humanity has faced a major turning point both in terms of how we perceive the world and how we conceptualize it. In my view, this turning point involves an unfixing of our various relative positions and adherence to this or that ideology or model. It is a freeing-up process in which collectively, the embodiment of a new spiritual way of knowing, or global consciousness, including the concepts of inclusiveness, wholeness and interconnectedness, is realized. Entering this new spiritual way of knowing, these concepts are no longer regarded as objects separate from the self. They are not merely analytical tools, used to write a treatise on how bad the world is because it does not measure up in the face of these new ideas. Rather, these concepts, along with global consciousness, become lived experience, applied in daily life.

The Dweller on the Threshold

Humanity appears a long way from such a state of being. To reach it, aspirants,

individually and collectively, must first recognize the goal and strive. Even aspiring to reorient the personality towards soul consciousness is, according to Bailey, a struggle, depicted in her culminating metaphor of the divided self—the Dweller on the Threshold and the Angel of the Presence.

Despite the manner in which the initiations are presented in the texts, Bailey does not consider spiritual growth to be a linear progression. The unfolding of consciousness occurs with much overlapping, fusing and inter-relating, much like a spiral. Echoes of old patterns reemerge in the face of newer or more pressing matters at hand. These old patterns reemerge, to be re-evaluated in terms of the new vision as the personality continues to be wrestled with, particularly in the early stages after the initiatory process has occurred. Inner chaos and turmoil may arise as the new spiritual energies flow through the individual. “Later ensues a period of synthesis, of organized activity and of a fuller expression of divinity. But there remains for a long time the need for recognition of energy and its right use.”³⁸

Bailey argues that when an aspirant reaches the initiatory stage of the spiritual path, they are confronted with a very powerful duality, the Dweller on the Threshold and the Angel of the Presence. The dweller and the angel are metaphors of the divided self. According to William James, this aspect of religious experience refers to the cleavage experienced when the individual identifies with, or perceives themselves, as the higher self or soul. The higher self then looks back at some wrongness in the individual’s lower self or personality. Such perception disrupts personal equilibrium, resulting in much instability and chaos as the struggle to negate the lower self-proceeds. This struggle is seen as a prerequisite to pass through the doorway into the spiritual life.

Bailey conceptualizes all aspects of an individual (or humanity) that stand in the way of spiritual progress beyond this stage as the *Dweller*. It is the personality that becomes the dweller, facing the soul, or Angel, when a certain threshold of growth is reached:

The dweller takes form when a re-orientation of man’s life has taken place consciously and under soul impression. The whole personality is then theoretically directed towards liberation into service. The problem is to make the theory and the aspiration facts in experience.³⁹

And:

The dweller in the body perceives wrongly: he interprets incorrectly that which is perceived; he proceeds to identify himself with that which is not himself; he shifts his consciousness into a realm of phenomena which engulfs him, deludes him and imprisons him until such time as he becomes restless and unhappy under the sense that something is wrong. Then he comes finally to the recognition that he is not what he seems to be and that the phenomenal world of appearances is not identical with reality.⁴⁰

Through the metaphor of the dweller/angel the aspirant comes to a new understanding of the duality between soul and personality, sensing that this duality should be ended through a process of unification or at-one-ment, thus reaching a culminating point along the path Bailey describes. In meditation, or sustained, focused concentration, the constant, fluid changefulness of the dweller is gradually overcome and the personality merges with the Angel or soul. All the conceptual dualities or pairs of opposites (good/bad, right/wrong) which are used by the personality to divide, categorize and analyze in the human quest for understanding, reach a culmination in the dweller/angel. Here the illusory separation of self and other—which might crudely be expressed as me and my soul, over there, somewhere—is transcended.

Awareness and acceptance of the dweller/angel dynamic is vital in meeting the challenges all those on the path of transforming consciousness face. It isn’t enough to assert the attainment of global consciousness as some sort of highwater mark and leave things there as if that was all there was to be done. The three defining concepts of inclusiveness, wholeness and interconnectedness alone belie the enormous complexity and the challenges faced in terms of how this

new awareness is to be applied in the individual's sphere of influence.

Global consciousness, taken to embody an understanding of wholeness, inclusiveness and interconnectedness, is not simply a state of being, an appreciation of all that is in a fresh, expansive fashion. As Bailey's body of work suggests, global consciousness requires action, application and practice in the service of humanity and the planet. It has a moral dimension, one that is duty bound, involving a life of personal sacrifice for the good of the whole.

The Door of Perception

So urgent is the need for global consciousness in the Twenty-first century to meet the demands and challenges of a rapidly globalized world, that it is not enough for individual seekers to work hard to attain it, rather the state of awareness must be harnessed collectively in groups in an accelerated process. This was the reason behind Djwhal Khul's experiment in group initiation depicted in *Discipleship in the New Age Volume II*, in which a group of twenty-four students participated. An earlier group experiment involving ten groups of nine participants aimed to work together to create and destroy thoughtforms for the benefit of humanity in fields including education, politics and healing, along with a group dedicated to dispelling glamour. Ninety participants were sought and forty-two agreed. The results of this experiment can be found in *Discipleship in the New Age Volume I* and *Glamour: A World Problem*. Today, other groups exist that seek to follow the path set out in these volumes and help advance group work and, whether or not a stated aim, foster global consciousness.⁴¹

There are numerous hurdles to attaining and maintaining global consciousness, as is evident in the numerous letters to disciples found in the *Discipleship* volumes above. One of these hurdles is adherence to any fixed view. This, paradoxically, includes the very teachings adopted to attain that view.

In a *Door of Perception*, Aldous Huxley describes a realization he had as "the miracle, moment by moment, of naked existence."⁴² It is a point of recognition of the merging of

consciousness and life. Perception through this door is a kind of awakening, in a sense becoming more fully conscious. A student of the Bailey teachings may arrive at this point through a process of filling themselves up with Bailey's esoteric concepts, allowing themselves to relate to these concepts, observing the effects the teachings have on their understanding, and then, emptying themselves of these contents as fixed knowledge. While valuing the reorientation that the notion of initiation implies, this emptying is experienced as a rejection of any attachment formed. It is a process of both engagement and disengagement, or the interaction itself that fosters a shift in perception, involving non-adherence as absolute truth to the very body of teachings used to reach this juncture.

This practice of non-attachment is a precursor to the *Via Negativa*, or the path of negation of all subject-object divisions. Versluis identifies this path as the journey beyond the hieroeidetic or initiatory power of esoteric writing.⁴³

The duality of the inner and the outer is a key illusory division. The interconnected wholeness of reality includes the objective world perceived through the five senses and the subjective world perceived in imagination and intuition. Along the *Via Negativa*, this inner/outer duality is perceived and experienced as a unity. Such experience is facilitated through the esoteric practice of correspondence.

From an esoteric perspective, the practice of correspondence is a key device enabling the student to progress along the spiritual path. Correspondence is in part a process of symbolically matching like with like to seek congruity of meaning. This is the horizontal aspect of correspondence. The act of seeking correspondence is also based upon the assumption that life is an interconnected whole, the universal perceived in the particular so that meanings of particularity are transcended. This may be thought of as the vertical aspect of correspondence. Correspondence as the vertical aspect relies upon imaginative perception and a grasp of symbolic meaning rather than reason and analysis. Through this method of correspondence, a sense of the universal within any particular is acquired.

In seeking to penetrate the deeper significance of our lives, astrologers are exemplars of the esoteric practice of correspondence. Schoener provides one example of this in his study of the history of astrology, “the properties of the ancient Babylonian life and light-giving god Shamash correspond to the properties of the sun.”⁴⁴ In locating a planetary position against constellations and comparing it to some event or circumstance occurring on our planet, astrologers generate evocative metaphors for reflection. Through the act of seeking correspondence based upon the premise of metaphysical interconnectedness, the astrologer may invoke synchronicity, where two causally independent chains of events intersect and carry the same meaning.⁴⁵

This seeking to know beneath the surface opens the student to the emergence of insights. Transcendence through esoteric penetration allows the whole of a thing to generate meaning which is then intuitively grasped.

Rather than practicing correspondence in order to make predictions in the mundane world, astrology can be harnessed to develop the intuition, the ability to perceive wholeness, and offers a tool on the pathway towards global consciousness. The Bailey teachings aim to stretch the astrologer to her limits by presenting a new, soul-centered overlay on top of personality-centered astrological knowledge, not only introducing a new set of correspondences but teasing the student with all manner of cosmic abstractions to ponder on. The effect, as with other abstract treatises in the corpus, including *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, might be less to teach a set of metaphysical presentations and rules and more to foster a transformation of consciousness gained through the very effort involved in comprehending those presentations and rules. This transformative process involves perceiving wholeness and interconnectedness on a cosmic scale.

Correspondence is a tool which, in its most rarefied sense, focuses the intention of the individual who wills their own intuitive perception into being, until with practice and over time the intuition becomes eidetic.

So urgent is the need for global consciousness in the twenty-first century to meet the demands and challenges of a rapidly globalized world, that it is not enough for individual seekers to work hard to attain it, rather the state of awareness must be harnessed collectively in groups in an accelerated process.

Eidetic intuition is a recognition of consciousness meeting life, or in a phenomenological sense arriving at the Husserlian lifeworld (pre-scientific world). For Husserl, to touch the essence of the lifeworld we need eidetic intuition. Since esotericism is a direct idealization of the lifeworld represented in all its interconnectedness through correspondence and analogy, penetrating such corre-

spondences—symbolically depicted alphanumerically in esoteric texts that affirm these connections—takes the reader on a journey back to the lifeworld. Versluis identifies this as the *via positiva*, or path of affirmation.⁴⁶

Framed this way, global consciousness sits on the other side of a door of perception and includes both the *via negativa* and the *via positiva*.

The bulk of humanity is situated fully in personality consciousness. Those who grasp the concept of global consciousness may or may not embody this spiritual state of awareness and will do so in varying degrees. The aspirant fluctuates, forced to exist in the world of paradox as both personality and soul where irony abounds; an attachment to the idea of inclusiveness leads us to admonish someone else for not being inclusive, excluding them in the process. Within the Bailey community, so urgent is the felt need for global consciousness as the all-important 2025 conclave of the Spiritual Hierarchy approaches that many are called upon to help foster its growth, since each individual striving to attain global consciousness contributes to its collective formation.⁴⁷

The door of perception expresses a simple notion of orientation towards the little miracles

that we all are as active, conscious particulars conducting ourselves amidst the vast mysterious panoply of life.

Transforming Consciousness: A Conclusion

A student of the Bailey teachings may choose to carry a basket of esoteric knowledge informing their thoughts and actions. A student may take away a cultivated and refined esoteric way of knowing, and acquire a few tools to help foster intuitive perception. And a student may embrace the esoteric principle of transformation (or initiation) and gain a fresh sense of purpose and direction. From this place, which is no particular place, aspirants may strive to transcend the illusions created in and by language, by penetrating beneath the surface of things to access deeper meanings, motives and causes.

The Bailey teachings foster the realization that how we perceive ourselves and our world affects how we think about both in a special way. If we perceive ourselves as conscious, embodied souls, rather than personalities, then the perceptual flux we are subjected to is not simply gained through our five senses, but through our intuitive sense as well. The concepts that we use to perceive our world must then complement this perception. In global consciousness, the concepts of inclusiveness, wholeness and interconnectedness are paramount. They are not simply abstract ideas but a whole lived reality.

By placing thinking before knowing, we may be putting our personalities before our souls. By placing intuitive knowing before conceptual thinking, we have accomplished a reorientation, we have opened ourselves to a transformation and all that remains is the task of remembering, or recognizing as Bailey argues, that this is so. This remembering is itself the embodiment of the new reflective state of being, one that, from a state of intuitive awareness of the essential interconnected unity of all of life, functions to include, embrace, synthesize. The soul may be thought of as a metaphor for the state of being that is ours when we manage to reorient ourselves. As conscious, embodied entities, we cannot separate ourselves from our

personalities, our clusters of habitual thinking and feeling. But we can require of our personalities, including our conceptual thoughts, that they serve our new state of being. To do this we also face the task of recognizing the difference between intuitive knowing and abstract thinking and choosing who we wish to be.

To gain even a glimpse of global consciousness as depicted in the Bailey teachings, the aspirant first becomes cognizant of their own ability to embody wisdom (gained through experience) while concomitantly growing an awareness that human thinking is often taken for granted, tacit, conditioned and tied to the personality, with its mental, emotional and physical bodies. Such thinking is typically divisive, adversarial, reductive, linear and deterministic, and seeks to separate rather than include. Such thinking fragments humanity into competing, selfishly oriented units. So ingrained in humanity is this thinking style that transcending it is ever partial, the seeker forced to walk a razor edge of perpetual discernment. In the esoteric realm awash with abstruse metaphysics, seekers may form strong attachments to a body of knowledge and allow it to shape their thinking in a fashion that excludes other paths, other ways to construe reality. This, too, blocks attainment of global consciousness. In this sense, the Bailey teachings taken as a whole, represent the very thing they argue against in transforming consciousness, and the only way past this is to embrace the paradoxical nature of esotericism. To grow spiritually through following the Bailey books, the student embraces the presentation, yet the moment that presentation is regarded as unequivocally true rather than a body of knowledge to see through, something is lost. To keep walking the path, at some point we need to loosen our grip on the map.

Bailey's esotericism offers highly specialized training aiming to foster the emergence of an advanced, intuitive, soulful way of knowing, one eventually expressed in global consciousness. Bailey does not and cannot claim ownership of the process of achieving this stage of awareness. There are many other pathways that achieve the same. For most of us, the goal of global consciousness, with its attributes of interconnectedness, wholeness and inclusivity, is

out of reach. Yet recognizing the goal might bring it a little bit closer.

¹ Kenneth Boulding, *Stable Peace* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989); Vladimir Dimitrov, *A New Kind of Social Science: Study of Self-organization of Human Dynamics* (Morrisville: Lulu Press, 2003); Richard Slaughter, *New Thinking for a New Millennium* (London: Routledge, 1996); Sally Goerner, *Chaos and the Evolving Ecological Universe* (Luxembourg: Gordon and Breach Publishers, 1995); Clare Graves, *Levels of Human Existence* (Santa Barbara: ECLET Publishing, 2002); Jean Houston, *Jump Time: Shaping Your Future in a World of Radical Change* (New York: Tarcher/Putnam, 2000); Deborah Tannen, *The Argument Culture: Moving From Debate to Dialogue* (New York: Random House, 1998); Ken Wilber, *A Theory of Everything: An Integral Vision for Business, Politics, Science and Spirituality* (Boston: Shambhala, 2000).

² Veronica Boix Mansilla and Howard Gardner "From Teaching Globalization to Nurturing Global Consciousness" Marcelo Suarez-Orozco (ed.) *Learning in the Global Era: International Perspectives on Globalization and Education* (Berkeley: University of California, 2007) 47.

³ John McDermott (ed.), *The Writings of William James: A Comprehensive Edition* (New York: Random House, 1967), 237.

⁴ Like all theosophists, Bailey takes the concept a step further in adopting a hylozoistic view of existence in which all is alive and life and matter are inseparable.

⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1988), 2-3.

⁶ Since Bailey's death in 1949, other esoteric training schools following the Ageless Wisdom tradition laid out in the Bailey texts have been established, including the School for Esoteric Studies and The University of the Seven Rays.

⁷ Tom Cheetham, "Within This Darkness: Incarnation, Theophany and the Primordial Revelation," *Esoterica* 4 (2002): 62-107.

⁸ The author, as Isobel Wightman, explored how this process of transforming consciousness might occur in *The Texts of Alice A. Bailey: An Inquiry Into the Role of Transforming Consciousness* (Sydney: University of Sydney, 2006). Central to the findings as requisites for transforming consciousness include: non-attachment to the teachings as absolute truth, the

fostering of imagination, and the development of metaphoric and intuitive ways of knowing.

⁹ For the most part, in this article Bailey is referred to as the author of the teachings, despite the majority having been composed in telepathic rapport with the Tibetan.

¹⁰ See Wightman, *The Texts of Alice A. Bailey*, 64-68.

¹¹ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology Vol II* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1988), 30 and 231-3.

¹² *Ibid.*, 409.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 555.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 556.

¹⁵ Lee Irwin, "Western Esotericism, Eastern Spirituality and the Global Future," *Esoterica*, 3 (2001): 1-47.

¹⁶ Arthur Versluis, "Western Esotericism and Consciousness," *Journal of Consciousness*, 7 no. 6 (2000): 20-33.

¹⁷ Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology Vol II*, 12.

¹⁸ Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age Vol II* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1986), 339-340.

¹⁹ Alice A. Bailey, *From Bethlehem to Calvary: The Initiations of Jesus* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1989), 42.

²⁰ Bailey, *From Bethlehem*, 105.

²¹ Bailey, *Discipleship Vol II*, 244.

²² Bailey, *The Rays and The Initiations*, 578.

²³ *Ibid.*, 577.

²⁴ Bailey, *From Bethlehem*, 100.

²⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology Vol I* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1971), 328-9.

²⁶ Bailey, *Discipleship Vol II*, 400.

²⁷ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology Vol II* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1988), 69-72; Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1989), 259-60; Bailey, *Discipleship Vol II*, 289-291.

²⁸ Bailey, *Discipleship Vol II*, 399.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 286-7.

³⁰ Bailey, *From Bethlehem*, 141-2.

³¹ Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology Vol II*, 247.

³² Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and The Initiations* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1972), 724.

³³ Bailey, *The Rays and The Initiations*, 538.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *The Reappearance of the Christ* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1996) 73.

³⁶ Bailey, *Discipleship Vol II*, 419.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 417.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 412.

³⁹ Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1988), 154.

⁴⁰ Bailey, *Glamour*, 94-5.

⁴¹ Two groups known to the author are: Italian-based “The Planetary System,” which engages in advanced meditation in groups of seven; and “Twelves,” a form of group service through advanced esoteric meditation to bring a high order of transforming spiritual energy into the world for human and planetary betterment.

⁴² Aldous Huxley, *The Doors of Perception and Heaven and Hell* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1959), 17.

⁴³ Arthur Versluis, “Western Esotericism and Consciousness” *Journal of Consciousness*, 7 no. 6 (2000): 20-33.

⁴⁴ Gustav Schoener, “Astrology: Between Religion and the Empirical,” *Esoterica* 3 (2001), 29-60. *Shamash* is based on the Arabic word “Shams,” meaning Sun.

⁴⁵ Carl Jung, *Four Archetypes: Mother, Rebirth, Spirit, Trickster* (London: Ark, 1992), 43.

⁴⁶ Versluis, *Western Esotericism and Consciousness*, 20.33.

⁴⁷ The predicted 2025 conclave of the Spiritual Hierarchy coincides with plans for the anticipated reappearance of the Christ central to Alice Bailey’s Christology. The hierarchy is said to meet in this fashion once every hundred years to assess progress of the evolution of humanity and determine any interventions.

The Relationship between the Reality of the World and the Reality of Consciousness

Nicolas Laos

Abstract

The concept of being is the central concept of philosophical inquiry. By the term “being,” we mean a reality that encapsulates every kind of reality and is present in every field of philosophical inquiry. In the present essay, I shall investigate the different aspects of being and the relationship between consciousness and the world. There are two general models whereby philosophers interpret the world: the one gives primacy to the reality of the world, and it is known as philosophical realism, whereas the other gives primacy to the reality of consciousness, and it is known as philosophical idealism. The monistic varieties of philosophical realism ignore important elements whose identification and analysis undermine the validity of the monistic varieties of philosophical realism. The dualistic varieties of philosophical realism lead to contradictions and logical gaps. Idealism seems to be an arbitrary intellectual construction, which can be refuted on both substantial and logical grounds. However, idealism has the advantage of allowing various philosophical differentiations, which highlight the plasticity of idealism. In the present essay, I shall argue that the aforementioned two general models (realism and idealism) are not incompatible with each other, but they complete each other, and their common function contains elements that underpin the mutual adaptation between realism and idealism. My synthesis between realism and idealism is based on the use of the notion of “structure” (which refers to the link between “substance” and “form”), and, specifically, on the structural continuity between the energies of cosmic/divine reality and the energies of human consciousness. My conceptions of “intelligent activity” and of the “dialectic of intelligence” elucidate a unique way of conceiving the synthesis between realism and idealism, and they highlight the creativity of consciousness.

Introduction

One of the most important problems in every philosophical endeavour is the analysis of the relationship between consciousness and external reality. The arguments that have been articulated with regard to this problem can be reduced to two general philosophical “schools,” namely: realism and idealism.

The central premise of philosophical realism is the following: *since experience provides human beings with images (irrespective of whether they are related or unrelated to each other) of a reality that seems to be external to one’s consciousness, it naturally follows that this reality (namely, the reality of the world) is the cause that generates the set of the given partial images, which exist in human consciousness.* Therefore, on the basis of the principle of causality, there necessarily exists a mind-independent reality.

Realistic philosophical theories can be divided into two categories: monism and dualism. According to monism, only one basic substance or principle exists as the ground of reality. If this

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principle is material, then we talk about monism of the materialistic type (or materialistic monism), and, if this principle is spiritual, then we talk about monism of the spiritual type (or spiritual monism). On the other hand, according to dualism, two fundamental substances or principles exist, which often oppose each other.

The second general cosmological model to which one can reduce the relationships between consciousness and external reality is idealism, and it developed mainly in the context of Modernity. As opposed to realism, idealism does not distinguish between external reality and consciousness. The basic argument of the idealists is the following: *if the substance of external reality were distinct from the substance of consciousness, then we would not be able to know external reality*. Idealism presents the world not as something reflected in consciousness, but as an extension and a projection of consciousness outside itself and as consciousness itself.

Ancient Realistic Philosophy

The earliest Greek philosophy (which extends from about 585 BCE to the middle of the fifth century BCE)¹ is realistic, in the sense that it orients the mind toward the external nature; it is mostly hylozoistic, specifically, it conceives nature as animated; it is ontological, in the sense that it inquires into the essence of things; and it is mainly monistic of the materialistic type, namely, it seeks to explain its phenomena by means of a single material principle, such as a single natural element or a concrete combination of different natural elements. Monistic theories of the spiritual type were developed much later in the history of philosophy as extreme varieties of dualistic theories.

Two characteristic examples of dualistic realism are Platonism and Aristotelianism. Platonism² is a paradigmatic type of realistic philosophy: according to Plato, the “idea” comprehends or holds together the essential qualities common to various particulars. Plato argues that ideas are not mere thoughts (abstractions) in the minds of human beings or even in the mind of God; in Platonism, even the divine mind is oriented toward the ideas, which exist eternally, and they may be considered as the energy (or the mode of being) of the deity. Platonic ideas

are the original, eternal, and transcendent archetypes of things, existing prior to things and apart from them and, thus, uninfluenced by the becoming of the manifest world. On the other hand, as Plato maintains in his earliest books (including his famous *Republic*), the particular objects that we perceive are imperfect copies or reflections of the eternal patterns (ideas). At this point, Platonism follows the philosophical legacy of Parmenides.³

According to Parmenides, there are no intermediate ontological degrees of being between being⁴ and nonbeing: if being has become, it must either have come from being or from nonbeing; if it has come from nonbeing, then it has come from nothing, which is absurd; if it has come from being, then it has come from itself, which is equivalent to saying that it is identical with itself and, hence, has always been. Therefore, Parmenides argues that, from being, only being can come, that nothing can become something else, and that whatever is always has been and always will be, which means that there can be only one eternal, self-existent, unchangeable being and that the world of the senses, which is susceptible to change, is an illusion.

During the last period of his life, Plato (especially in his books *Timaeus*, *Critias*, *Philebus*, and *Laws*) was arguably influenced by the critique of his philosophy by Aristotle. As a result, Plato qualified his previous thesis about the irreducibility of ideas (namely, beings) and phenomena (namely, nonbeings), and he argued that reality is composed of beings and nonbeings as well as of nearly beings and nearly nonbeings. As Brann, Kalkavage, and Salem explain, in Plato’s *Sophist*, nonbeing is not anymore “unthinkable and unutterable, as Father Parmenides asserted,” but it is interpreted as the “Other,” and, thus, it “ceases to be mere nothingness and becomes instead the source of articulated diversity in things and in thought. Parmenides has been superseded.”⁵ Indeed, in Plato’s *Sophist*, “the Other is Nonbeing positively understood,” and it “is in fact a necessary ingredient in thought and speech,” since “it is still negative enough to help account not only for the diversity of kinds but also for differences in their dignity. An image or an imitation, because it has a share in Nonbeing, is not merely

other than its original but also less. It is less in genuineness and may even fall further into falsity.”⁶

Finally, Plato asserts the existence of a series of different ontological levels, which inspired Neoplatonism. Neoplatonism, mainly through the works of Plotinus (ca. 204/5–70 AD), Proclus (412–85 AD), and Dionysius the Areopagite (one of the earliest Church Fathers), formulated a religious and philosophical argument according to which there exists a series of fundamental substances such that: they are related to each other, either through emanation or through return, and they compose an ontological hierarchy that starts from the One, namely, from the absolute being, and ends in matter, namely, in the absolute nonbeing.

The three basic principles of Plotinus’s metaphysics are called by him “the One” (or, equivalently, “the Good,” namely, the good-in-itself), “Intellect,” and “Soul.”⁷ The One is the absolutely simple first principle of all. It is both “self-caused” and the cause of being for everything else in the universe. Plotinus was inspired with the idea of the One by studying Plato’s *Republic*, where Plotinus’s One is named “the Idea of the Good,” and by studying Plato’s *Parmenides*, where Plotinus’s One is the subject of a series of deductions. Because of its absolute simplicity and transcendence, the One or the Good, is indescribable directly. Plotinus argues that we can only grasp it indirectly by deducing what it is not. The universe is an emanation of the One, an inevitable overflow of the One’s infinite power or actuality. The first emanation of the One is Intellect. This emanation is a unified system of all the eternal and immutable entities that account for or explain the possibility of intelligible predication, namely, the Platonic ideas. In other words, in the first stage of the divine emanation, the One contemplates the pure ideal cosmos. The second stage of the divine emanation is Soul, which is an image of Intellect and less perfect than the original. In the highest life (namely, in the life of Intellect), we find the highest form of desire, because that desire is eternally satisfied by contemplating the One through the entire array of ideas that are internal to it. The Soul is a lower level of life, since it is the principle of desire for objects that are

external to the agent of desire. “One” is paradigmatically what Intellect is, and Intellect is paradigmatically what Soul is. Thus, there are two phases of the Soul’s existence: in the first, it is turned toward Intellect, and, therefore, it acts as its archetype and contemplates ideas; in the second, it is turned toward the sensuous world, and, therefore, it is impelled to bring order into matter. In his *Enneads*, Plotinus maintains that matter is to be identified with evil and privation of all form or intelligibility. However, according to Plotinus, matter is evil not in itself, but matter is evil only when it impedes humanity’s return to the One. In other words, Plotinus maintains that matter is evil when considered as a goal or an end that is a polar opposite to the One.

Furthermore, Proclus, by applying his views about the place of matter in the metaphysical hierarchy and carrying long-held views, like those of *Timaeus*, through to their conclusion, argues that matter is not the absolute nonbeing, but it has a degree of being. In particular, Proclus argues as follows: Given that bodies are made of limit and unlimited, it naturally follows that matter is an unlimited, and form is a limit. If, therefore, as Proclus maintains, God substantiates every unlimited, it is evident that God also substantiates matter, which is the last unlimited. From Proclus’s perspective, God is “the First and Ineffable Cause of Matter,” and, “because everywhere the sensible exist by analogy to the intelligible causes . . . likewise, the unlimited which is down-here [‘gross matter’] derives from the Prime Unlimited.”⁸ Moreover, Proclus argues as follows: “. . . the Prime Unlimited, which is prior to the mixed existence (Being), is established at the summit of the intelligibles and from there it extends its irradiation as far as to the last things, so, according to it, Matter proceeds from the One and the Unlimited which is prior to Being . . . For this reason, matter is to a degree good and infinite, as well as that which is most obscure and formless.”⁹ With regard to Dionysius the Areopagite, another major Neoplatonic scholar, it should be mentioned that his work consists in putting a “Christian dress on the thought of Proclus.”¹⁰

In general, within the framework of Neoplatonism, Plato’s dualism is transformed into a type

of theoretical spiritualism, since the One, or the idea of Good, is considered to be the absolute being, whereas matter, as such, has neither form, quality, power nor unity, and it is considered, even by Plotinus, as the absolute nonbeing, until Proclus is led to assert the value and goodness of both stable matter, as a cosmic substratum created by the One, and unstable, “gross” matter found in the world of the senses.

Aristotelianism is a dualistic realism, since it is based on the equality between two elements that are related to each other, namely: matter and form. All objects are composed of a certain material arranged in a certain way. The material they are composed of is their matter, and the way it is arranged is their form. In other words, according to Aristotle,¹¹ all objects have matter (namely, a material of which they are composed) and form (namely, they are characterized by a certain way in which their matter is arranged). The form of a thing makes a thing what it is. For instance, form allows us to distinguish between a vase and a sculpture.

Whereas Plato asserts the separation of the form of a thing from the thing itself, Aristotle argues that every form is, like the Platonic “idea,” eternal, but, instead of being outside matter, it is in matter; they coexist. In particular, form is the manner in which matter exists. Thus, according to Aristotle, reality itself is formed within the world of the senses by matter and by the manifestation of a spiritual factor, specifically, form (or species). Within the framework of Aristotelianism, when we say that an object changes its form, we do not mean that form itself changes, since no form (species), as such, can change into another form. Change occurs when the arrangement of matter changes, namely, when it assumes different forms. In other words, the original form of matter does not change into another form, but a new form fashions matter.

Intimately related to the distinction between form and matter is the distinction between “actuality” (“*einai emergeia*” = “being actually”) and “potentiality” (“*einai dynamei*” = “being potentially”). In particular, Aristotle identifies actuality with form, while identifying matter with potentiality. Potentiality is that state of being in which a being’s existential program has

not been completed yet, and it may be only at its initial formative stage, but it is already firmly oriented toward a specific purpose (“end”). Actuality is that state of being in which a being’s existential program has been completed, and the completion of this program determines both the corresponding being itself and the corresponding being’s behaviour. For instance, as long as a pot remains stored in a cabinet, it exists potentially, but, when it is used in accordance with the purpose for which it has been constructed, it exists actually. Furthermore, Aristotle distinguishes between “primary substances” (those which exist only as subjects and never as predicates) and “secondary substances” (species and genera); for instance, Socrates is a primary substance, while man is a secondary substance (man is predicated of Socrates).

Medieval Realistic Philosophy and the Rise of Idealism

The Aristotelian theory of form and matter played a decisive role in the medieval philosophical clash between philosophical realism and nominalism. During 268–70 AD, Porphyry, a Syrian pupil of Plotinus, wrote his *Introduction* to the *Categories* of Aristotle.¹² Boethius’s *Isagoge* (sixth century AD), a Latin translation of Porphyry’s *Introduction*, became a standard medieval textbook in European schools and universities.¹³

As he was writing his commentaries on Porphyry’s *Introduction*, Boethius came across the problem of universals. By the term “universals,” we mean general or abstract qualities, characteristics, properties, kinds or relations (for instance, being male/female, solid/liquid/gas, or a certain color, etc.) that can be predicated of individuals or particulars, or that individuals or particulars can be regarded as sharing or participating in them. The following sentence in Boethius’s Latin version of Porphyry’s *Introduction* ignited an ongoing controversy in medieval philosophy: “Next as to *genera* and *species*, do they actually subsist, or are they merely thoughts existing in the understanding alone; if they subsist, are they corporeal or incorporeal; are they separate from sensible things or only in and of them?”¹⁴ The two major general philosophical positions (“schools”) that emerged in

the context of the aforementioned medieval philosophical controversy were medieval philosophical realism (or essentialism) and nominalism.

Medieval philosophical realists were based on a peculiar variety of rationalism according to which Aristotle's general concepts (universals) were interpreted like Platonic ideas, namely, like entities totally distinct from the material world, and they interpreted Plato's ideas like logical substances, which was absurd. Thus, medieval philosophical realists endowed abstractions of genus with ontological autonomy. In fact, medieval philosophical realists, specifically, essentialists, failed to understand that, far from being identical with concepts (abstract thoughts), Platonic ideas are the energy (or the mode of being) of the deity (the good-in-itself), and that, for this reason, Plato argues that the knowledge of ideas by the human being presupposes not only logical accountability but also psychic cleansing. The issue of psychic cleansing was methodically studied by Plato in his book *Phaedo*. In *Phaedo* (74a–c), Plato made the first presentation of his theory of ideas as autonomous entities and as the archetypal reality of beings. Additionally, in *Phaedo* (65e–66a), Plato studies the problem of the knowledge of ideas, where he argues that “he who prepares himself most carefully to understand the true essence of each thing that he examines would come nearest to the knowledge of it,” and that this would be done most perfectly by employing “pure, absolute reason” and by removing oneself, “so far as possible, from eyes and ears, and, in a word, from his whole body.” In this way, Plato integrated the Orphic Mysteries' tradition of cleansing into philosophy.

According to Plato, the soul suffers because it is mixed with the body and its appetites, and it can be cured with psychic cleansing. Plato understands psychic cleansing as “purification and purgation” (Plato, *Cratylus*, 405a), and, from this viewpoint, he speaks about the acquisition of “a pure mind” (*ibid*, 396c) and about “making a man pure in body and soul” (*ibid*, 405b). Hence, when Plato writes that “they expel the lot and leave the soul of their victim swept clean, ready for the great initiation” (Plato, *Republic*, 560e), he means that the soul must be

liberated from the corporeal passions. Also, when he writes that “true philosophers practice dying,” since “they desire to have the soul apart by itself alone” (Plato, *Phaedo*, 67e), he means that the soul must be liberated from the senses, because a soul that is enslaved to the senses cannot sense the truth (Plato, *Phaedo*, 114c).

From the perspective of original Platonic philosophy, the knowledge of ideas by the human being is ultimately a mystical *experience*, consisting in one's *participation* in divine energies (ideas), and not merely the result of correct syllogistic reasoning. Hence, intimately related to Platonic epistemology is Platonic love, namely, a pure philosophical experience of mystical union. On the other hand, realistic medieval philosophers interpreted Platonic ideas like logical substances, thus establishing and proclaiming a peculiar worship of reason (rational thinking) and giving rise to social systems and worldviews that are oppressive exactly because they are logically closed systems, in the sense that they are accountable only to the system's intrinsic rationality. The reason why the medieval Papacy was the major source of oppression was the fact that, in the context of scholasticism, the Papacy's major theologians subscribed to the aforementioned variety of rationalism, thus transforming Saint Peter's Church into the major guardian and provider of rationalism in the Middle Ages.

Indeed, in the Middle Ages, the scholastics' rationalist approach to philosophical realism (specifically, essentialism) was used by the Vatican in order to consolidate its power and authority. Using the scholastics' variety of realism as an instrument of cultural diplomacy, the Pope managed to impose his *plenitudo potestatis*. On the basis of the scholastics' philosophical realism, the Pope could behave like his archetype, namely, like his most abstract form, which was God himself. In general, the argument that the individual is significant and valuable only if and to the extent that it serves the universal implies that the authority that represents the universal has the right and the duty to suppress the individual in order for the universal to be served according to the judgment of the established authority, which is (supposed to be) the exclusive image of the corresponding universal. The

oppressive and authoritarian nature of medieval Western realism is not due to realism itself, namely, it is not due to the very belief in a mind-independent reality, but it is due to the fact that medieval Western realism identified Platonic ideas with logical substances, thus endowing logical concepts with substance, and, therefore, it equated the degree of reality with the degree of generality (level of abstraction). On the other hand, Plato, by refusing to identify his notion of an eternal, mind-independent world of ideas with the world of logic, and by conceiving ideas as divine energies rather than as logical substances, gives rise to an epistemology, a moral theory, and a social theory that, instead of being founded on the oppression that stems from logical necessities and their “vicars,” are founded on an enlightened intuition, which underpins the mystical union between humanity and the good-in-itself in the form of humanity’s participation in the world of ideas (namely, in the deity’s mode of being).

In order to understand the controversy between philosophical realism and idealism in the context of medieval and modern Western philosophy, we must bear in mind that, since the era of Augustine (354–430) who was Bishop of Hippo Regius (located in the Roman province of Africa), Western thought has been oriented toward the thesis that the certitude of self-consciousness forms the basis of truth. Thus, as I have already argued, inherent in the medieval scholastics’ variety of philosophical realism is rationalism, which, in turn, expresses the medieval scholastics’ endorsement of the thesis that the certitude of self-consciousness, specifically, of the soul’s rational faculty, forms the basis of truth, which runs counter to Plato’s, Aristotle’s, and the Neoplatonists’ own varieties of philosophical realism. Original Platonic realism is primarily founded on *mystical experience* (participation in a transcendent reality) and the quest for *divine illumination* (existential salvation), whereas the scholastics’ “Platonism” is primarily founded on *logical abstraction* and the quest for a *rational way of organizing life*.

From the distinction between the sensible and the intelligible worlds, Augustine infers that the soul knows bodies only through an inward experience and not through its relation to the body,

and he argues that humanity’s salvation consists in the soul’s elevation into the intelligible world. Augustine’s thought signals a philosophical shift from the natural world to the soul. The aforementioned shift resembles Plotinus’s thought, but it is something different. Plotinus (*contra* Plato’s *Phaedo* and Porphyry’s *Introduction to the Categories*) maintains that the mind (*nous*) does not simply participate in the essence of cosmos, and it is not simply related to the essence of cosmos, but, since, according to Plotinus, the mind dynamically contains a multiplicity (the forms) and a duality (knower and known, or intellect and intelligible), it constitutes the essence of cosmos, which implies an active and creative consciousness. In Plotinus’s own words, “no distinction exists between being and knowing,” and “the truest life is such by virtue of intellection and is identical with the truest intellection” (Plotinus, *Ennead III*, 8). However, the previous Plotinian syllogism does not lead to Augustine’s intellectual individualism, because Plotinus argues that the mind (namely, the quintessence of the human being) is essentially divine, and, therefore, the subject cannot become ontologically autonomous, namely, it cannot be ontologically individualized (it cannot become a “pure subject”). According to Plotinus’s *Ennead III*, God (the absolute One) is pure spirit, and He creates the soul (the second level of the divine emanation); the soul is the effect and image of pure spirit (and, like every effect or image, less perfect than the original), it is supersensuous and intelligible, it is active and has ideas, and, by contemplating the ideas, it forms the cosmos in the ideas’ image. The soul produces matter (the third and lowest level of emanation), which is absolute impotence and privation, in order to act on it and, thus, form the world.

According to Plotinus, the world *per se* is neither good nor evil; it is good in the extent to which it participates in being, and it is evil in the extent to which it participates in matter. Before Plotinus, Plato, in his *Sophist*, had already argued that being and nonbeing are the extreme terms of an ontological series, whose intermediate terms are the nonbeing of being and the being of nonbeing. Hence, the vision of truth is achieved through the sensation of the world,

and the ancient Greek notion of beauty signifies the triumph of spirit, namely, the triumph of the ideas over the amorphy (formlessness) of non-being. By contrast, Augustine maintains that knowledge is in no way derived from the senses, but it is only derived from the ability of the soul to contemplate immaterial, moral, and aesthetic truths *within itself*, namely, without needing to be in touch with an external reality, specifically, with the reality of the world.

In his treatise *De libero arbitrio*, Augustine defines *ratio* as the logical process according to which the intellect discerns and connects the objects of knowledge, and, furthermore, he discerns two functions of human reason: *ratio superior* and *ratio inferior*. According to Augustine's *De trinitate* XII, *ratio superior* discerns ideal reality in and through the human soul and leads to the truth, whereas *ratio inferior* uses the senses to look outward on the world of sense objects and cannot lead to the truth. Augustine contrasts the inner truth and certainty of impression (intellectual perception) with the uncertainty of sense perception. In Augustine's philosophical and theological works, the soul is the epitome of personality, and *ratio superior*, as the exclusive way in which the soul knows the truth, is combined with the rejection of sense perception. As a consequence, from Augustine's perspective, truth is not a matter of spiritual freedom, since it is constrained by *ratio superior*, and, therefore, the human being is ontologically heteronomous and cannot be united with God in this life (namely, salvation is impossible in this life).

From the perspective of the mystical Greek Church Fathers, who were philosophically founded on Plato and Neoplatonism, thus articulating an interpretation of Christ's Gospel that

From the perspective of the mystical Greek Church Fathers, who were philosophically founded on Plato and Neoplatonism, thus articulating an interpretation of Christ's Gospel that was different from the theology that prevailed in the West, the knowledge of God consists in humanity's participation in God's mode of being, and, hence, in a metaphysically grounded experience of freedom from every (logical and natural) necessity.

was different from the theology that prevailed in medieval West, the knowledge of God consists in humanity's *participation* in God's mode of being, and, hence, in a *metaphysically grounded experience* of freedom from every (logical and natural) necessity.¹⁵ On the other hand, for the scholastic West, the knowledge of God is analogous to the knowledge of the human being, in the sense of an inward experience that stems from the human will, which continuously forms and reforms the contents of consciousness. Augustine substitutes sensation with will, and he argues that the awareness of an external stimulus is a result of the soul's intentionality, whereas Neoplatonism distinguishes the mind (*nous*) from the soul (the soul being second level of the divine emanation), and, therefore, it also

distinguishes an external stimulus *per se* from the act of its conscious recognition. Furthermore, according to Neoplatonism, the task of the soul is to unite spirit with matter.

Before Neoplatonism, Aristotle, in his *On the Soul*, had pointed out that ancient Greek psychology is a theory of the acquisition of knowledge through the senses. Additionally, in Plato's *Timaeus* (45d), the soul, like the body, is characterized by "that sensation which we now term 'seeing,'" namely, even though cognition is not founded on bodily sensations, it is not founded on representations created by a subjective mind, either. Plato argues that cognition is founded on a peculiar mental *sensation*, in the sense that the mind does not reproduce an external object through a process of visualization, or conceptualization, nor does it create mental models of an external object, but it *participates* in the transcendent idea of an external object, and, therefore, it knows an external object due to the experience of the light of the

corresponding idea. As a result of this relation between knowledge and the light of the idea, Plato's philosophy is opposite to every form of intellectual subjectivism. By contrast, Augustine's distinction between the soul and the body implies the following: rational truth is reflected in human spirit, but the personal will of God can be known only by analogy with the human being's personal will. For this reason, Augustine can be regarded as the father of intellectual subjectivism.

As I have already argued, the radical distinction between the sensuous and the supersensuous worlds played a dominant role in the work of the Roman statesman and philosopher Boethius, too. Boethius's work exerted a very important influence on the entire medieval Western thought, since, until the thirteenth century, Boethius's books constituted the only significant intellectual link between Greek philosophy and the Latin world. However, this link was conditioned by the mentalities of the Latin world and by the scope of the Latin education. The primary scope of the Latin education was rhetorical power and, hence, syllogistic perfection. In the medieval West, the pursuit of rhetorical power led to the substitution of metaphysical pursuits by rationality. Thus, in the medieval West, the Greek term *logos* was substituted by the Latin term *ratio*, and Boethius proposed a Platonic interpretation of Aristotle's logic. Both Boethius and Augustine interpreted Aristotle's general concepts (universals) like Platonic ideas, and they interpreted Plato's ideas like logical substances. The cause of this confusion of the medieval Western thought is that the Latin scholars who were concerned with metaphysical problems ignored that, from the perspective of ancient Greek philosophy, the problem of "substance" was never an intellectual/rhetorical power game. Aristotle's logic itself is primarily concerned with the human reason's potential to comprehend and express an external spiritual reality (the reason of the cosmos), and not with the abstract systems of formal logic. In contrast to the Greek term "logos," which refers to an experiential understanding of truth through participation/sharing (in Greek, "methexis"), the Latin term "ratio" means the individual ability to syllogistically arrive at a

comprehensive, exhaustive understanding of truth.

The formative period of scholasticism, beginning with the ninth and ending with the twelfth century, was founded on the works of Augustine and Boethius. As a conclusion, from the above-mentioned arguments, it follows that this period is marked by an attempt to arrive at a comprehensive, exhaustive knowledge of God according to the methodology and the criteria of the human soul (intellect and sentiment). This attempt put an indelible imprint on the entire medieval Western thought and determined the course of scholasticism. The dominant philosophical path that the West followed during this stage of scholasticism is a variety of philosophical realism, according to which, as I have already argued, Aristotle's general concepts (universals) were conceived, in Platonic fashion, as the real substances of things and as prior to things (*universalia sunt realia ante rem*).

In the ninth century, the first Western scholar who methodically studied Greek Church Fathers was John Scottus Eriugena, who translated a collection of writings of Dionysius the Areopagite, Gregory of Nyssa's treatise *On the Making of Man*, and Maximus the Confessor's *Ambigua* into Latin. In Eriugena's studies about the relation between faith and reason, the former takes precedence over the latter, but Eriugena does not underestimate the significance of reason. Moreover, in Eriugena's thought, faith follows the path of philosophy, and, for Eriugena, philosophy offers a cataphatic form of knowledge that underpins apophatic (mystical) theology. Eriugena endorsed the Augustinian formula "crede, ut intelligas" ("believe so that you may understand"; Augustine, *Sermones*, 43, 9), and, inspired by Neoplatonism, he created a system of philosophical realism in which general concepts (universals) are substances, and they create and determine every other entity. For Eriugena, the cosmos (universe) is God who has given form to Himself, a partial unfolding of the divine nature, and a pure *theophany*. From the perspective of Eriugena's logic, God is the superessential and indefinable absolute universal, but He is still part of Nature, and, therefore, in the context of Eriugena's logic, initially, the individual is deduced from the

general, and, finally, in Neoplatonic fashion, the individual is absorbed back into the general. Eriugena maintains that the real is the rational, and the rational is the real.¹⁶

The thesis of the ontological autonomy of universals (general concepts) and the tendency of medieval Western philosophers to identify reality with the intellect characterize the work of Anselm (1033–1109), Archbishop of Canterbury, who was the leading proponent of philosophical realism (more accurately, essentialism) during the formative stage of scholasticism.¹⁷ Following the legacy of Augustine and Boethius, Anselm attempted to offer logical proofs for the existence of God. In his *Proslogium*, Anselm articulated his so-called ontological proof of God, which consists in deducing the existence of God from the concept of God, in showing that the very concept of God implies its existence. According to Anselm's syllogisms, the concept of God is the notion of something greater than which nothing can be thought, and, therefore, if God did not exist, this concept would not be the concept of the greatest thing thinkable (since it would not have existence). However, the Benedictine monk Gaunilo (or Gaunillon), in his anonymously published book *Against the Reasoning in Anselm's Proslogium*, exposed the fallacy in Anselm's argument: human mind's capability of constructing the existence of God by logic, Gaunilo maintains, is the same as human mind's capability of constructing the existence of any other thing by logic, that is, so far as it is thought. For instance, by Anselm's way of thinking, one might prove the existence of a perfect island: the definition of a perfect island as the most perfect conceivable island is enough, by Anselm's way of thinking, in order to prove that a perfect island exists.

In the eleventh century, Anselm's logic became an important cause of intellectual uncertainty, because the French philosopher and theologian Roscellinus, a contemporary of Anselm, argued that the content of Anselm's logic consists of names, not of real entities.¹⁸ Thus, Roscellinus founded nominalism. According to Roscellinus, ideas are simply words (*flatus vocis*), or names, not substances. Hence, for Roscellinus, the genus and the species have no substantial unity,

and the union of individuals in the genus or in the species is a mere fabrication of language or the work of thought; only individuals are real. Nominalism paved a way to positive science.

However, in the twelfth century, Peter Abelard, a French philosopher, theologian, and preeminent logician, put forward a new theory, known as conceptualism, which is an intermediate position between philosophical realism/essentialism (e.g., Eriugena, Anselm, etc.) and nominalism (e.g., Roscellinus). According to Abelard, universals are neither substances nor mere words, but they are products of intellectual abstraction. Abelard maintains that, through abstraction, the mind can separate form from matter, but form does not subsist outside the mind, since it is predicated of a class of things. Abelard opposes essentialism by arguing that we cannot predicate a thing of a thing, but we can predicate a universal of many things, and, therefore, a universal cannot be ontologically autonomous (namely, it is not a thing). For instance, the concept of a human being does not subsist in the world, but it exists only through and within particular beings. Hence, knowledge is derived from both conceptualization and sense perception. Additionally, Abelard opposes nominalism by arguing that the universal is a word only in relation to the objects of which it is predicated, and, therefore, universals are not mere words, but conceptual predicates.¹⁹

As a response to the rising spirit of positive science and to Abelard's conceptualism, which addresses the problem of knowledge independently of theology, Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), a French abbot and the primary builder of the Cistercian Order, admitted the significance of dialectic and science, but he emphasized the depth of Christ's humility and love, and, thus, he became the founder of medieval Western mysticism. In his work *On Loving God*, Bernard of Clairvaux argues that his vision of a loving union with God presupposes freedom from the mortal body, and, therefore, it consists in a psychological phenomenon of "divinization," which is due to an ecstatic mental state.²⁰ By the term "ecstasy," we mean a state of consciousness in which the subject is totally involved with an object of one's awareness, whereas, in an ordinary state of

consciousness, the subject is aware of other objects, too. Hence, ecstasy is an altered state of consciousness characterized by diminished or minimal awareness of other objects. For instance, Bernard of Clairvaux's conception of the loving union with God involves the cessation of awareness of the physical body.

In the twelfth and the fourteenth centuries, the West experienced a period of philosophical and theological flourishing (known also as the period of the culmination of scholasticism) as a result of the influence that Arab and Jewish philosophers exerted on the Latin West during that period and because, during the same period, the Latin West came in touch with Aristotle's original writings. However, it should be pointed out that the Arabs' treatises on Aristotle, which exerted a very strong influence on medieval Western thought, were based on particular Neoplatonic approaches that had prevailed among the Arabs.²¹ Under the Abbasid Caliphate, the works of Plato, Plotinus, and Aristotle were translated into Arabic and influenced philosophy throughout the Islamic world. Neoplatonism flourished especially among the Persian philosophers of the tenth century and in the Fatimid court of Egypt in the eleventh century. Additionally, since the Hellenistic era, the influence of Neoplatonism on Judaism had been so strong that many ancient and medieval Jewish scholars articulated a synthesis between Neoplatonism and the Jewish religion (for instance, the Kabbalistic literature consists mainly in a synthesis between Jewish mysticism, Neoplatonism, and the ancient Pythagorean school, from which the Kabbalists' "Tree of Life" and Gematria derive).²²

During the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries, the West continued to have fragmented knowledge of Greek philosophy and of the mystical Greek Church Fathers' writings, and it depended on incorrect translations of the Greek philosophical and theological vocabulary, but, in this way, the scholastics managed to create a peculiar Western philosophical and theological identity that paved a way to the Renaissance. During this period of the cultural history of the West, the leader of philosophical realism/essentialism was Thomas Aquinas (1224–74), an Italian Dominican priest, philosopher, and

theologian, and the leader of nominalism was William of Ockham (c.1280/5–c.1349), an English Franciscan priest, philosopher, and theologian (In 1328, Ockham was officially excommunicated for leaving Avignon (for Pisa) without permission. Louis of Bavaria, the Holy Roman Emperor, offered Ockham's group protection, and, in 1330, Ockham traveled to the imperial court in Munich, where he spent the rest of his life writing about political and ecclesiological affairs).

In his *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* and *Summa theologiae*, Thomas Aquinas argues that the truth is one, and that the soul, as a separate species and as the entelechy of the body, unites the domains of the sensuous and the intelligible into a unified natural whole (knowledge originates in Augustine's *ratio inferior* and culminates with Augustine's *ratio superior*). According to Thomas Aquinas, the soul is the supreme, *ne plus ultra*, intelligible creation of God, but it is immortal, immaterial and capable of comprehending the intelligible realm. However, Thomas Aquinas maintains, the soul is bound to the body, and, therefore, the soul does not directly understand the intelligibles, but only indirectly, through reason (*ratio*), which leads to the conception of the universal within the individual.

For Thomas Aquinas, the soul comprehends the essences of things through the conception of the corresponding species, and it comprehends the accidental properties of things through their sensible species, or sensuous representations. But, from Thomas Aquinas's viewpoint, sensible species are neither Platonic/Neoplatonic emanations nor Democritus's idols (i.e., projections of bodies themselves, guided by one's eyes toward one's soul). Thomas Aquinas argues that immaterial entities (namely, substances distinct from the sensible species by which they are represented) exist within material bodies, so that the comprehension of objects by the human mind is not externally determined by their representations, but it is determined by the inner principle of comprehension, specifically, by reason. With Thomas Aquinas's epistemology, rational thought, as an exact organ of knowledge, repudiates the ancient Greek theory of ideas (as entities independent of

consciousness), since the ancient Greek theory of ideas is not a rationalist theory of knowledge, but it is a method of spiritual cleansing. In contrast to the ancient Greek theory of ideas, Thomas Aquinas's epistemology paved a way to the modern tradition of individual intellectual truth (rationalist subjectivism), which was founded in the seventeenth century by Descartes. The ancient Greek theory of truth *qua* spiritual cleansing and participation in the external realm of ideas leads to a holistic understanding of society, whereas rationalism maintains that truth can be found through analysis or calculus, and, ultimately, it identifies truth with the self-assurance of the *ego*.

According to Thomas Aquinas, the universal does not exist as such (universal *qua* universal), but it exists only in an individualized manner within material bodies due to the quantitative differentiation of matter. From this perspective, human knowledge originates in the senses, and its integration is brought about by reason. In the context of Thomas Aquinas's philosophy, reason reigns over the soul, and its cognitive power, leading to the knowledge of God, is the most important asset of the human being. Thus, Thomas Aquinas maintains, the intellect, or the ability to reason, is superior to the will (since the will of a rational being is determined by the knowledge of the good), and, additionally, the intellect is superior to freedom (since the freedom of a rational being is underpinned by the necessity of reason). Inherent in the previous arguments of Thomas Aquinas is a latent form of the rationalist humanism that became explicit in the West in the context of Modernity.

William of Ockham's and Thomas Aquinas's essentialism can be regarded as the two sides of the same coin, specifically, of the Western rationalist humanism. William of Ockham's nominalism begins with the skeptical arguments that sense perception is not a source of certain knowledge and that universals (intelligible species) have no existence outside the mind (that is, they are not inherent in things). According to William of Ockham, to assume mind-independent universals, as essentialists/philosophical realists do, is to make entities of abstractions, and, hence, it is an unnecessary doubling of the universe. This principle is known as "Ockham's

Razor," since it shaves off the unnecessary universals.²³

In his *Summa totius logicae*, William of Ockham argues that only particulars exist, and they can be known independently of abstract concepts, through simple psychological activities, specifically, through representation. Science, therefore, is wholly concerned with self-evident truths (tautologies) and truths known by experience. If one believes in the ontological autonomy of general concepts, then universals (even though, for William of Ockham, they exist merely as thoughts in the mind) function as necessary constraints on the reality of the particular/individual and, also, on God's freedom. Thus, in order to save God's and humanity's freedom from universals, William of Ockham proposes the complete abandonment of general ideas, and he reduces them to psychological representations, meaning "expressions of one's own inner states" (intellections, acts of will, joy, and sorrow). William of Ockham's nominalism is the first ontological legitimization of the individual *qua* "subject" (i.e., a historical actor filled with reason and will and, more precisely, a historical being capable of acting on the basis of reason and will) and of the individual's autonomy from communal authority.

Aquinas's philosophical and theological system consists in a rational hierarchy of syllogistic reasoning, in the context of which the degree of generality is equated with degree of reality, and the most general concept corresponds to the deity. In other words, Aquinas's philosophical and theological system is a type of religious rationalism. As a result, for Thomas Aquinas, society consists (or, at least, should consist) in an authoritarian hierarchy that is the image of the aforementioned rational hierarchy of syllogistic reasoning, and the Pope is the authority that can explain and impose the will of the supreme universal, or the divine wisdom. According to Thomas Aquinas, the essence of politics consists in the deliberate guiding by human reason of humanity's will in social actions. Moreover, Thomas Aquinas argues that the state has positive value in and of itself on the grounds that it is an expression of God's providence and will for humankind and it secures peace.²⁴

On the other hand, gradually, the medieval Western subject realized that the most effective way to fight against Papal absolutism consists in the refutation of the scholastics' philosophical realism. In particular, it was the bourgeoisie that, from the eleventh century onward, decided to unleash an attack on the philosophical foundations of the Papacy, specifically, on the Papal theologians' philosophical realism. The bourgeois understand society, not as an expression, or image, of a universal, but as an *association of individuals*. Therefore, they endorse nominalism. William of Ockham argues that sovereignty derives from the people, who have the natural power to legislate and institute rulers.²⁵ The individualistic humanism that stems from William of Ockham's nominalism is a more radical type of humanism than the one that stems from Thomas Aquinas's essentialism/philosophical realism, since William of Ockham's nominalism can potentially justify unrestrained egoism, either at the level of the individual human being or at the level of the nation (nationalism).

Logic is inherently authoritarian, since the "more general" lords it over the "less general." Moreover, in the context of logic, it is impossible for the less general to be united with the more general, and, of course, logic (with its general, impersonal rules) precludes personhood and any personal relationships. Therefore, if one, like the medieval essentialists/philosophical realists, fuses metaphysics and logic into a system that treats Platonic ideas like logical substances, thus endowing general concepts with metaphysical weight and conceiving God as the most abstract concept, then not only is God a "Supreme Being" that exercises dominion over every other being, but also all the beings and the things that exist in the world are related to each other according to logically necessary and coercive rules of dominion. In this case, the development of a personal relationship between humanity and deity is impossible, and the Christian who attempts to be united with God is merely a caricature of oneself. This is the reason why, as I have already argued in other writings of mine, the mystics in general and the Byzantine Orthodox mystics, known as the Hesychasts, in particular vehemently oppose

any type of religious rationalism, including the medieval scholastics' essentialism/philosophical realism.²⁶ On the other hand, the nominalists' revolt against essentialism/philosophical realism fails to address the issue of humanity's relationship with (specifically, participation in) the good-in-itself, it indiscriminately nullifies the ontological significance of any principle that transcends the individual, and it underpins egoism. The nominalists attempt to safeguard and empower the individuality of the human being, but their victory over the scholastic essentialists/philosophical realists is a Pyrrhic victory, because nominalism gives rise to an individual who is unable to sufficiently understand and appreciate the functions and the dynamics of social consciousness. The nominalists' individual lives according to a nexus of conventions, leaving the sociality of the human psyche permanently injured.

Consciousness is both the essence of the human being (namely, it is the "me," the self, the higher self, the lower self, the known) and the means by which the human being confirms its autonomy and its quest for other beings, which it meets at the level of their own consciousness. This meeting is carried out by the intentionality of consciousness, which is expressed by critically and creatively relating the particular quests of the intentionality of a conscious being to the place where the interaction between different conscious beings takes place.

The means by which conscious beings communicate with each other are called symbols. Symbols derive from activities that express the tendency of different conscious beings to meet and understand each other. In other words, symbols are objects that express commonly accepted intentions and activities and are organized in sets that are called codes. When conscious beings act and behave according to common codes, then a society of conscious beings is an inter-subjective and conscious continuum, since there are things that have the same meaning for all conscious beings. As a code becomes more complete and more complex, it may increase the efficiency and the accuracy of the communication between conscious beings, but, on the other hand, it may make the communication between conscious beings more difficult.

The elements of a code whereby conscious beings communicate with each other are called “signs.” Each and every sign receives a meaning (a conceptual determination) that depends on its acceptance by all conscious beings and on the fact that it is a member of the established code. Every code, every symbol, and every sign have a dynamic structure that enables them to be functionally adapted to the requirements of their users.

In its attempt to establish correspondences between significances and things, consciousness continuously follows two directions: an extroversive one and an introversive one. The introversive inclination of consciousness consists in the descent of consciousness into the depths of its own self in order to achieve the following goals: (i) to endow itself with a more complete structure, (ii) to obtain a higher level of self-awareness, and (iii) to preserve and reinforce its ontological status by itself. In this way, a human being becomes psychologically deeper, and, by constraining the exchange of information between one’s consciousness and other conscious beings, one avoids the danger of excessive information entropy. Nevertheless, the tendency of a being to entrench itself does not *ipso facto* safeguard this being’s existential integration, because, in general, the existential integration of a being depends not only on the given being’s autonomy but also on the exchange of information between the given being and other beings. Through the social ego, by exchanging information with other beings, one exits oneself in order to meet other beings, and, through one’s communication with other beings, to become aware of one’s own self. But if consciousness persists in intensifying its inner ego (its own self), then the inner ego inhibits the manifestation of the social ego; in this case, the social ego cannot enrich consciousness through communication with other conscious beings.

In its attempt to endow things with significance, the ego needs assistance from and cooperation with other egos. The existence of symbols and signs corresponds to the need of the ego to be complemented by other egos. Symbols and signs specify the relationship between conscious beings that partake of common aesthetic experiences and/or exchange information with

each other. Thus, consciousness is faced with two risks: (i) the risk of over-information, which is associated with extremely high information entropy, and (ii) the risk of under-information, which is associated with extremely low information entropy. Over-information intensifies the social ego and, by increasing information entropy, gives rise to a disoriented being. Under-information intensifies the inner ego and gives rise to an ego-centric being.

The nominalists underestimate the fact that the ego needs to be complemented by other egos, and they ignore that, from the perspective of mysticism, the divine energies (collectively referred to as the “divine grace”) transcend the individual, but they can be participated in by the individual (in the context of the individual’s divine illumination), and, therefore, divine energies embrace the individual from the inside and endow the individual with the universality that characterizes the divine energies themselves. This is the meaning of humanity’s union with the deity. The event of personal communion between the human being and the deity endows particularity (specifically, the human individual) with universality (specifically, with the light of God’s glory) and enables one to overcome the contradiction between “individuality” and “sociality.” Thus, instead of being solitary, the human individual is united with the source of the significance of the beings and the things that exist in the world, and, in this way, the human individual develops an infinitely large inner space (capable of carrying humanity) without negating one’s existential otherness.

The Controversy between Realism and Idealism in Modern Philosophy

Modern philosophy arose as a protest against the old scholastic system, and it made human reason the highest authority in the pursuit of knowledge, but it did not, and could not, break with the past. In fact, the founder of modern philosophy, René Descartes (Latinized form: Renatus Cartesius, 1596–1650), formulated a philosophy that belongs to the “school” of dualistic realism. Descartes’s dualistic realism is based on the distinction between two

concepts: extension and thinking.²⁷ Descartes points out that we imagine that there are bodies outside ourselves, and then he poses the following question: how can we know that they actually exist? He observes that we have various feelings (e.g., pleasure and pain), appetites, and sensations, which are instinctively referred to bodily causes, but our sensations often deceive us, and our appetites often mislead us. Therefore, Descartes argues that the existence of bodies cannot be proved from the existence of such experiences. However, Descartes continues his argument as follows: if God induced in us a deeply rooted conviction in the existence of an external world, when no such world existed, then God would be a deceiver, but God is a truthful being; the existence in my mind of illusions of sense does not disprove the goodness of God, because God has endowed me with the power of intellect to dispel and correct every delusion. Hence, Descartes concludes that our sensations are caused by bodies, which exist independently of our thinking. According to Descartes, such an independent thing is called substance.

Furthermore, Descartes poses the following question: what is the nature of external things? He answers that what we clearly and distinctly perceive in body is the essential attribute of the body, which is extension. By the term “extension,” he means a spatial continuum of three dimensions (length, breadth, and thickness). According to Descartes’s dualistic realism, the attribute of body is extension, and, thus, bodies are passive (God is the first cause of motion in the world), whereas the attribute of mind is thinking, and, thus, mind is active and free. In other words, in the context of Cartesianism, these two substances (mind and body) are absolutely distinct.

In Descartes’s philosophy, bodies exist independently of our thinking, but the only reason we have to believe in their existence is a deeply rooted conviction in the existence of an external world. Thus, in Cartesianism, truth is ultimately subject to the requirements and the limits of individual consciousness. Even though Descartes wants to prove the existence of bodies independently of our mind, he unintentionally opens the way to the idealistic autonomy of the

individual consciousness. Apart from this antinomy, another problem with Cartesianism is the distinction between the mind and the body. In fact, modern *neuroscience* has shown that there is a dialectical relationship between the mind (consciousness) and the brain (the centre of the nervous system), and, thus, extension is an attribute of the mind, too.²⁸

One of the most influential students of Cartesianism was Baruch Spinoza (1632–77). Whereas Cartesianism is an example of dualistic realism, Spinoza’s philosophy is an example of monistic realism. In particular, according to Spinoza, thinking, which is the essential attribute of the mind, and extension, which is the essential attribute of the body, do not stand in mutual opposition, but they are interconnected due to a process of transition from the one to the other.²⁹ Spinoza, inspired by Neoplatonism and modern physics, unites God’s substance with the substance of the natural world in a way that gives rise to a deterministic model of the universe.

Another variety of monistic realism is materialism. According to Descartes, the entire reality is organized in a mechanistic manner, but the human being is an exception to this rule, because it has soul. However, Descartes’s philosophy cannot offer convincing arguments on the basis of which one could accept that the human being is an exceptional entity in the mechanistic universe of Cartesianism. Thus, many post-Cartesian mechanistic philosophers, such as Ernst *Haeckel*, Julien Offray de *La Mettrie*, and Karl *Vogt*, used the model of the mechanistic Cartesian universe in order to defend the argument that the human being is a machine-animal and that the mind is only an excretion of the brain. A major epistemic problem of this eighteenth-century materialistic monism is that it is based on a completely objective view of the world, thus ignoring every subjective aspect of the inner states of consciousness.³⁰

Furthermore, modern biological research has refuted the mechanistic model that is inherent in Cartesianism, in Spinoza’s philosophy, and in the nineteenth-century materialistic monism. In particular, in contrast to Spinoza’s biological determinism and biocentrism, new research carried out by Sarah Berkemer (based at the Max

Planck Institute for Mathematics in the Sciences in Leipzig, Germany) and Shawn McGlynn (from the Earth-Life Science Institute at the Tokyo Institute of Technology in Japan) and published in 2020 in the advanced access edition of the journal *Molecular Biology and Evolution* “suggests understanding early life may be trickier than previously thought.”³¹ Berkemer’s and McGlynn’s analyses “confirm other work which suggested that only a limited understanding of the lifestyle of the most ancient cells can be derived from DNA comparison,” and show that “early in life’s history, different gene types changed at different rates,” thus suggesting that “early mutation rates were much higher than at present and there has been a significant contribution of ‘gene jumping’ over time which makes a simple interpretation of the early ‘family tree’ of life misleading.”³² In addition, in 2020, Antony Jose (associate professor of cell biology and molecular genetics at the University of Maryland), in two research papers that he published in the *Journal of the Royal Society Interface* and the journal *BioEssays*, refuted the common view of heredity according to which “all information passed down from one generation to the next is stored in an organism’s DNA,” and he argued that “DNA is just the ingredient list, not the set of instructions used to build and maintain a living organism,” and that the instructions “are much more complicated, and they’re stored in the molecules that regulate a cell’s DNA and other functioning systems.”³³ In contrast to old mechanistic models, Jose maintains that, far from being the “blueprint” for life, DNA “is at best an overlapping and potentially scrambled list of ingredients that is used differently by different cells at different times.”³⁴ For instance, “the gene for eye color exists in every cell of the body, but the process that produces the protein for eye color only occurs during a specific stage of development and only in the cells that constitute the colored portion of the eyes. That information is not stored in the DNA.”³⁵

As I have already mentioned, the second general cosmological model to which one can reduce the relationships between consciousness and external reality is idealism, and the modern realist philosopher Descartes was the

unintentional founder of modern idealism. Descartes’s principle “cogito ergo sum” (“I think therefore I am”) implies that consciousness is an ontologically sufficient foundation of reality and assurance. Another unintentional founder of modern idealism is the empiricist philosopher John Locke (1632–1704). In his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke is concerned with the discovery of the source from which our knowledge springs, and he argues that, if it is true, as Descartes and others argued, that we have an innate knowledge of principles, it cannot be explained why we question its validity.³⁶ In other words, Locke refutes the Cartesian doctrine of inborn truth by assuming that the mind must be conscious of its innate principles, if there be any (for, nothing can be said to exist in the mind of which it is unconscious). In the case of Descartes’s philosophy, idealism (in its modern sense, which I clarified in the Introduction) is inherent in his principle “cogito ergo sum,” and, in the case of Locke’s philosophy, the element of modern idealism is inherent in his attempt to substitute Descartes’s principle “cogito ergo sum” with the principle “I question therefore I am.” According to Locke, the two sources of all our ideas are sensation (which supplies the mind with sensible qualities) and reflection (which supplies the mind with ideas of its own operation, such as perception, believing, doubting, willing, etc.).

Modern idealism has been developed under different forms. The most radical form of idealism is solipsism, according to which only one’s own consciousness is sure to exist. According to a more moderate form of idealism, the world of the senses is a degraded sensuous appearance of an experienced conscious state, which is the only reality. Another form of idealism is known as immaterialism and was founded by George Berkeley (1685–1753), who was inspired by Neoplatonism and denied the reality of matter.

George Berkeley, following the idea of body as held by Locke, argued that to exist means to be perceived, specifically, to be in the mind, and, therefore, bodies exist only when there is a mind that perceives or knows them.³⁷ However, all things we perceive (ideas) are inactive, and, thus, they cannot be the cause of sensations. Berkeley argues that the cause of sensations is

an immaterial, active substance called spirit. By the term “spirit,” Berkeley means a unified, active being, which, in so far as it perceives ideas, is called “understanding,” and, in so far as it creates (i.e., operates upon ideas), is called “will.” Since all ideas are passive and inert and since spirit is active and creative, there can be no idea formed of spirit, and, thus, we can perceive only the effects produced by spirit but not spirit itself. It must be mentioned that immaterialism and realism can agree about the nature of perception itself, but normally they disagree about whether there are any mind-independent material objects at all. Moreover, with regard to Berkeley’s thesis that, “for unthinking things, to exist is to be perceived” (since it is impossible to form an idea of an unperceived object), Thomas Nagel maintains that it “involves the mistake of confusing perceptual imagination as the vehicle of thought with a perceptual experience as part of the object of thought.”³⁸

David Hume (1711–76) agrees with Descartes and Locke in requiring that genuine knowledge must be self-evident, but he argues that he has not found such knowledge anywhere except in mathematics, which merely analyzes its own concepts.³⁹ According to Hume, the constitutive and fundamental elements of knowledge are impressions and ideas. By the term “impression,” Hume means a lively perception, which brings with it conviction or positive belief in the existence of a corresponding objective reality. All our sensations, passions, and emotions as they make their first appearance in the mind are characteristic examples of impressions. By the term “idea,” Hume means a copy of a corresponding impression, left behind by the given impression, and, hence, according to Hume, ideas are less

lively than perceptions. In the context of Hume’s philosophy, ideas are faint perceptions of which we are conscious when we reflect on impressions, and they are copied by the memory and the imagination. According to Hume’s “law of association of ideas,” impressions and ideas are linked together by an inclination to recall one another. However, Hilary Putnam has pointed out that, by arguing that we “do not have such a thing as an ‘abstract idea’ or a ‘general idea’ of green,” Berkeley and Hume fail to realize that, “if I can think of a *particular* relation of ‘similarity,’ then I am able to recognize at least one universal,” and, therefore, “universals cannot really be avoided in the way Berkeley and Hume wanted to do.”⁴⁰

At the political level, Hume’s philosophy implies that social and political institutions should be understood as devices developed in response to emergent human conditions, and not as products of reason. Therefore, Hume’s theory of government was primarily a theory about the function of government; he was interested primarily in who was likely to rule well and command the allegiance of people and not so much in who was morally entitled to rule. Hence, in his *Treatise of Human Nature*, II, iii 3, Hume argues that “Reason is, and ought only to be, the slave of the passions.” However, Plato has posed a crucial political question that has been rather unsuccessfully evaded by Hume, Thucydides, Demosthenes, and Machiavelli; namely, in his *Republic*, 340c, Plato asks: “was this how you meant to define what is right, that it is that which *seems* to the stronger to be his interest, whether it *really* is or not?” (emphasis mine). Therefore, the political pragmatism that is inherent in Hume’s idealism is a protection

Bergson argues that there are two ways in which an object can be known: absolutely and relatively. According to Bergson, the method of knowing an object relatively is called analysis, and the method of knowing an object absolutely is called intuition. Bergson calls intuition “sympathy,” which consists in putting ourselves in the place of others. In other words, Bergsonian intuition consists of “entering into” the object of consciousness, and, thus, it differs from the analytical method.

against ignorance and against ambivalent sentiments, but, if you know what you are doing, and if your sentiments have a clear orientation, pragmatism makes little sense and is synonymous with moral abdication.

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) formulated a philosophy that he called “critical.” Kant’s critical philosophy is a compromise between realism and idealism. According to Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), there are two different worlds: the noumenal world and the phenomenal world.⁴¹ The noumenal world is the world of things outside us, namely, of things that exist independently of our minds (the elements of the noumenal world are called “noumena”; singular: “noumenon”). Kant argues that our consciousness cannot comprehend the essence of the noumenal world, and that we can only perceive an altered version (a faded image) of the noumenal world, which Kant called the phenomenal world. The phenomenal world is the world that we perceive, specifically, the view that we have of the world that is inside our minds. It must be stressed that Kant’s refusal to accept the comprehension of the essence of the noumenal world by mind is a cognitive argument and not an ontological one (since, according to Kant, the noumenal world exists even though we cannot comprehend its essence).

In Kant’s philosophy, the communication between the noumenal world (pure concepts) and the phenomenal world (phenomena) becomes possible due to the theory of schema. By the term “schema” (plural: “schemata”), Kant refers to a set of twelve kinds of pre-existing (*a priori*) judgments, or rules, which are hard wired into our minds and interact with the noumenal world, thus helping us to create the phenomenal world, which exists in our minds.⁴² Thus, our perceptions of the world are caused by the external world, and, therefore, we perceive a world that really exists, but what that world looks like to us differs from what that world is really like. According to Kant, our perception of the world is necessarily conditioned by schemata, and, therefore, Kant gives primacy to the logical form over the real content of experience. In Kant’s philosophy, there is no knowable transcendent world, and, therefore, Kantianism signals the complete abandonment

of the metaphysical tradition that originated from Plato’s philosophy.

In Kant’s philosophy, the synthesizing activity of the mind (manifested in the rule-based structuring of perceptions into a world of objects) is derived from “transcendental imagination,” a term used by Kant in the first edition of his *Critique of Pure Reason*. According to Martin Heidegger, transcendental imagination is what Kant refers to as the unknown common source uniting sense and understanding.⁴³ Furthermore, in Kant’s philosophy, transcendental imagination underpins consciousness and secures it against the changeability and volatility of phenomenal objects. Hence, by virtue of transcendental imagination, which ultimately is a variation of Descartes’s *cogito* principle, consciousness becomes a pure and solid *ego*, which connects percepts according to its own forms, meaning in its own way. To sum up: in Kant’s philosophy, imagination forms space and time, safeguards the unity of the *ego vis-à-vis* the multiplicity of the phenomenal world, and, thus, the subject imposes its categories of understanding on phenomena. As a result, thinking is derived from imagination, and, therefore, ultimately, we are logically urged to accept arbitrariness (specifically, choices based on an individual’s own opinion or discretion) as the foundation of the *ego*! Kant was so horrified to find out the philosophically dangerous consequences of his theory of transcendental imagination that he omitted this term from the second edition of his *Critique of Pure Reason* in 1787, without, however, ceasing to glorify the *ego*.

Kant identified genuine knowledge with synthetic *a priori* judgments,⁴⁴ on which he founded the distinction between the noumenon and the phenomenon. Thus, according to Kant, we can know only products of our minds, and the world is structurally united with the thinking *ego*. Furthermore, science can only convey knowledge of phenomena, and, therefore, reality and truth are mutually separated. Apart from abstract categories of understanding, the only solid content of Kant’s pure reason is the subject.

From the perspective of Kant’s philosophy, the subject derives its ontological autonomy from

pure reason through the moral law, which is a categorical imperative, in the sense that it commands unconditionally. A categorical imperative is a universal axiom, and, therefore, it can simultaneously be a universal law and an individual duty. Hence, the subject whose individual morality is such that it has the authority and the value of a universal law can set aside the problem of the ontology of the universal good (the good-in-itself), and such a subject can substitute pure reason, interpreted as the consciousness of duty, for the universal good, thus abandoning the morality of love, which is derived from and founded on one's relationship with the universal good. In his *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant argues that the relation between human will and law corresponds to the relation between practical reason and pure reason. Thus, in his *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant formulates his fundamental moral maxim as follows: "I ought never to act except in such a way that I can also will that my maxim should become a universal law."⁴⁵

According to Kant, the will legislates, and reason determines the subject's way of life, so that a will is good when it is determined by respect for the moral law, which is a manifestation of reason. The will is subject to reason and, hence, to the moral law, so that, ultimately, the will legislates its own laws. In other words, Kant's moral philosophy extols duty for duty's sake, and it identifies free will with irrationality. Thus, with his moral philosophy, Kant seeks to accommodate transcendental imagination to the moral law. If it is to be stable and universal, "good will" cannot be a subjective goal. Thus, in order to liberate "good will" from the subjectivity of practical reason, Kant asserts that humanity is an end in itself. In particular, in his *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant argues as follows: "Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end."⁴⁶ The principle of humanity as an end in itself and the corresponding political order as a union of partial ends express a belief in the ontological autarchy of humanity, which, in the absence of a transcendent *Logos*, is secularized in conformity with the commands of pure

reason. The sovereignty of pure reason implies that the *telos* ("end") of history is a historical goal (and not a transcendent one), and, therefore, it provides "good will" with an objective end that is the source of the categorical imperative, and it determines what politics can legitimately do.

The sovereignty of reason, which Kant endorses, is overthrown when the *telos* of existence is the transcendent good-in-itself, specifically, the bliss of the union between humanity and God, in the sense of one's union with his/her lover (as it has been described by Plato and the medieval mystical Christian theologians, such as the Byzantine hesychasts, Meister Eckhart, Johannes Tauler, Henry Suso, John of Ruysbroeck, Richard Rolle, Walter Hilton, Julian of Norwich, etc.). When the *telos* of existence is the transcendent good-in-itself, the path that leads to humanity's ontological perfection is freedom. On the other hand, Kant depends on the objectivity of moral law because he intends to found his pietistic ethics on the categorical imperative. In order to overcome the contradiction between the subjectivity of practical reason and the objectivity of the categorical imperative, Kant's moral rationalism gives rise to a subject whose inner world is extremely poor, since the Kantian subject is filled with a sense of duty that has replaced free will. Kant argues that a moral act cannot depend on the absolute good (since, according to Kant, the absolute good as a thing-in-itself, i.e., as a noumenon, is unknowable), and, therefore, Kant has no other choice but to assert that the moral value of our acts is derived from "good will," in the sense that it is determined by the categorical imperative. Thus, from Kant's viewpoint, the moral status of an act is determined by the goodness of its end, and not by the good *itself*, which is a noumenon and, hence, according to Kant, unknowable. As a consequence of Kant's moral rationalism, humanity loses its spiritual freedom, and it is subjected to the formalism of pure reason.

When one is truly and, hence, unselfishly, in love, his/her good will toward his/her lover is not derived from the categorical imperative, but it is a manifestation of his/her free will, and, also, it is a way of life. This is the reason why

Plato proposes *eros* (love passion) toward the absolute good (which, in Plato's philosophy, is a knowable noumenon) as an epistemology and as a moral philosophy, and, similarly, the medieval mystical Christian theologians' epistemology and morality are based on *eros* toward Christ, the incarnate channel of God's love in history.

The enforcement of outward ("exoteric") moral rules can possibly correct one's behavior, but it cannot offer existential salvation. The suppression of passions does not save the soul, since a suppressed passion, most probably, will mutate and reemerge as a new passion. The suppression of passions through the moral law resembles witch hunts, since it is a Sisyphean process. The soul can be saved only if one is aware of the ultimate goal that underpins and guides one's passions, namely, only if one can look at the depths of one's soul. Hence, many mystics emphasize the purification of passion. In fact, it is the purified passion (and not the categorical imperative) that makes humans capable of fulfilling the New Law of Christ, which is love (Mark 12:28–31).

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831) criticized Kant's doctrine of the unknowable not from the perspective of mysticism, which I propose and defend in the present essay, but from the perspective of modern rationalism, and, therefore, Hegel proposed a different way of arriving at a synthesis of realism and idealism than Kant's philosophy, while simultaneously, like Kant, he repudiated ancient and medieval metaphysics.⁴⁷ According to Hegel, *if the unknowable is beyond every kind of knowledge, and if it is beyond the use of the concepts of understanding, then we cannot apply the concepts of causation, reality, and existence to it. In other words, Hegel argues that, if we apply the concept of existence to the noumenon, and if this statement is true, then we know the noumenon to that extent, and, thus, the knowledge of the noumena is not impossible. Furthermore, Hegel argued that we cannot and should not hide behind the argument that the term noumenon is a limiting concept in order to avoid our responsibility of knowing the noumenon. For Hegel, to be aware of a limiting condition is to go beyond it. In other words, when we know the limiting*

conditions of an object, we are aware of the part of reality that is different from this object.

Hegel's critique of Kant is based on the romantic idealism of Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814) and Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling (1775–1854). Fichte argues that the only reality is the "ego" (i.e., consciousness), which creates alone the objects of its perception, and which gets aware of itself by contrasting itself with everything that is contradictory to it.⁴⁸ Schelling, whose philosophy is very similar to the philosophy of Fichte, argues that the "ego" and all things that contradict the "ego" are functional forms of a unique reality that he called the absolute.⁴⁹ Thus, the principle of the "ego" opposes recourse to the noumenal world. Hegel put the previous teachings of Fichte and Schelling about dialectic into a more rigorous philosophical setting.

*Hegel argues that all life and movement are founded on contradiction, which rules the entire world. Everything tends to change and pass over into its opposite. However, according to Hegel, the opposites are opposites only with respect to one another, and not with respect to the unity or whole of which they form parts. In Hegel's philosophy, God is the potential universe, the Idea. According to Hegel, being (the thing-in-itself) is the Idea (universal reason) that moves far away from itself, specifically, it gives rise to a contradiction to itself, in order, ultimately, to return to itself enriched by its adventure. In addition, by the term spirit or mind (Geist), Hegel refers to the idea realized. From Hegel's perspective, spirit is the subject that, after its exodus from its inner world and its adventure in the external world, returned to its own self. Thus, at the theological level, Hegel's dialectical philosophy implies that God cannot be without creating the world (as a contradiction to God), because God cannot be without knowing Himself in His creation (the "outside-Himself"). Hegel's God is not the Biblical God, who created the world out of nothing (*ex nihilo*), according to His own divine will, but Hegel's God exists in a dialectical relationship with the natural world. At the historical level, the Hegelian subject exists as the "nation" and its spirit as "the spirit of the nation" (Volksgeist).*

With his dialectical philosophy, Hegel attempted to avoid Kant's unknowable noumenal world, since Hegel argued that Kant's doctrine of the unknowable is self-contradictory. However, Hegel seems to ignore the difference between "knowing" and "thinking." The unknowable (i.e., Kant's noumenal world) can be thought and yet remain unknown, since it is not given in sensibility. Moreover, something may be an object of "faith" without being an object of "knowledge." In other words, for Kant, the unknowable does not form part of any cognitive meaning, but it may have emotive, persuasive or imperative meaning. Thus, Kant's doctrine of the unknowable is not as self-contradictory as Hegel contends.

Hegel transcended the subject (individual "ego") of the earliest German idealism (Fichte and Schelling) in order to ascend to a quantitatively higher (larger), and, hence, spiritually safer, subject, namely, the historical subject (the "nation"). In Hegelianism, reason (*Logos*) is the self-consciousness of spirit, and, thus, it consists in the knowledge of a truth that is totally determined by the logic of historical becoming; since, according to Hegel, the universal subject is history, and spirit is the reason of history. Therefore, in Hegelianism, the human being is capable of knowing the historical truth, but, in contrast to Christianity's teachings about the union between humanity and the divine spirit, Hegelianism precludes the union between humanity and Hegel's notion of spirit (namely, the reason of history). The purpose of traditional metaphysics and especially of mystical Christianity is for the human being to become God, but, in Hegel's philosophy, the human being cannot *become* history itself. In Hegel's philosophy, the human being exists alienated from the "spirit" (namely, the reason of history) within a deterministic historical setting, and, therefore, the human being, as an individual, is not a true being. In this way, the life of the individual human being reduces to a course that is determined by historical phenomena, independently of the individual's inner experiences.

The Synthesis between Realism and Idealism

Existence means the continuity of being. Consciousness as consciousness of existence aims at preserving the existence of a being under the best possible terms. Thus, consciousness aims both at preserving the existence of a being and at improving the given being's existential conditions. The intentionality of consciousness (namely, the power of consciousness to be about, to represent, or to stand for things, properties, and states of affairs) functions as a tendency to participate in the world (since consciousness absorbs the world) and as pure self-knowledge. These functions take place at four different levels, namely: instinct, experience, intellect, and intelligence.

At the level of instinct, conscious activity is minimal, and existence reduces to the two basic instincts, namely, those of survival and reproduction. Instinct is a highly formalized behavioral code that reflects the reason of organic nature. The correctness of instinctive behavior is determined by the practices of an unlimited number of generations. In fact, the certitude that characterizes instinctive activity is based on the accumulation of unlimited experiences by the species. Every problem or difficulty that impedes the confirmation of instinctive activity is related to the manner in which a being is adapted to given conditions. At the level of instinct, adaptation takes place according to the method of "trial and error." Jean Piaget, the preeminent developmental psychologist of the twentieth century, has pointed out that trial and error experimentation in handling objects gives rise to the concept that the external world is not part of the self.

At the level of experience, the intentionality of consciousness is expressed through the functioning of the senses. The senses are oriented toward the external world, with which they connect existence. Experience is about finding oneself in some situation and being aware of it. In other words, experience is an event participated in or lived through. The degree of conscious activity at the level of experience is higher than at the level of instinct. However, at the level of experience, the role of consciousness is mainly passive; for, according to empiricist philosophers, consciousness is originally a "tabula

rasa,” meaning a blank slate, on which experience writes, thus filling the mind with ideas, and it is only in a later phase that consciousness recalls those ideas which it considers useful to it in order to act on several occasions. In contrast to empiricism, both Kant and Gestalt psychology⁵⁰ have pointed out that consciousness plays a much more active role in perception than the one thought by empiricist philosophers.

At the level of intellect, reason plays an active role. By the term “reason,” Kant and his followers mean a pre-existent (*a priori*) structure within the framework of which there exist various functions of categories, which, when they are adequately activated, can connect isolated segments of sensation (empirical data) into a whole, thus allowing and underpinning the formulation of synthetic statements and enabling consciousness to creatively transcend the level of experience. Following Kant’s philosophy, Gestalt psychology showed experimentally that consciousness does not respond to isolated segments of sensation but to the whole (*Gestalt*) of the situation and argued that, in perception, there are many organizing principles called gestalt laws.⁵¹ Thus, consciousness perceives and thinks in nonlinear ways, and it influences perception. Furthermore, Gestalt psychology has shown that, in perception, the method of trial and error coexists with intuition.

The French philosopher Henri-Louis Bergson (1859–1941) attempted to overcome the antithesis between realism and idealism by resorting to the distinction between intuition and intellect. Bergson argues that there are two ways in which an object can be known: absolutely and relatively. According to Bergson, the method of knowing an object relatively is called analysis, and the method of knowing an object absolutely is called intuition.⁵² Bergson calls intuition “sympathy,” which consists in putting ourselves in the place of others.⁵³ In other words, Bergsonian intuition consists in *entering into* the object of consciousness, and, thus, it differs from the analytical method, which consists in dividing the object of consciousness into different parts, according to a chosen viewpoint, and translating these parts into symbols in order to reconstruct a spectrum of the original object. This “entering into,” which reveals the object’s

meaning, for Bergson, gives us absolute knowledge.

At the level of intelligence, consciousness transcends reason in order to develop and apply intuition. Therefore, at the level of intelligence, reason coexists with intuition in Bergsonian fashion. However, at the highest level of intelligence, this combination of reason and intuition is enriched with mysticism, specifically, with a mystical process of psychic cleansing, thus enabling the human being to *enter into* the deity itself. At the highest level of intelligence, a tri-synthetic mixture of reason, intuition, and mysticism enables consciousness to enter into the source of the significances of the beings and the things that exist in the world, namely, into what we call “God,” and, in this way, the human being can live according to God’s mode of being. In fact, this spiritual pursuit is the essence of the Ancient Mysteries, Plato’s philosophy, and mystical (“esoteric”) Christianity.

The aforementioned tri-synthetic mixture of reason, intuition, and mysticism can underpin the overcoming of the antithesis between realism and idealism as follows:

It justifies philosophical realism in the following way: it recognizes and admits a consciousness-independent reality, specifically, the realm of the absolute spirit, or the good-in-itself (which is the source of the significances of the beings and the things that exist in the world) and the reality of the natural world. Hence, from this perspective, the aforementioned tri-synthetic mixture of reason, intuition, and mysticism is in agreement with philosophical realism. In fact, if the world were not different from consciousness, then the latter would not need to try so hard to know the world. In other words, if the world did not differ from consciousness, then the knowledge of the world would be exhausted in the self-knowledge of humanity. Similarly, if the deity were not different from consciousness, then the latter would not need to try so hard to be spiritually developed in order to ascend to and be united with the divine Spirit.

Simultaneously, it justifies idealism in the following way: the aforementioned tri-

synthetic mixture of reason, intuition, and mysticism implies that the transcendent, consciousness-independent reality of the absolute spirit, or the good-in-itself (specifically, the uncreated divine energy) is accessible to and, indeed, can be participated in by the human mind (through enlightened intuition), and that the physical, consciousness-independent reality of the material world is also knowable by the human mind. Hence, from this perspective, the aforementioned tri-synthetic mixture of reason, intuition, and mysticism is in agreement with idealism. In fact, if the structure of the world were absolutely different from the structure of consciousness, then it would be absolutely impossible for consciousness to obtain even partial knowledge of the world. Similarly, if the structure of the divine Spirit were absolutely different from the structure of consciousness, then it would be absolutely impossible for consciousness to theologize.

In conclusion, reality consists of both the reality of consciousness and a consciousness-independent reality. This thesis, which follows from and is underpinned by my aforementioned philosophical synthesis between reason, intuition, and mysticism, is corroborated by modern science, too. Apart from the real objects of which the natural scientist has direct knowledge, there are (for, instance, at sub-atomic level) behaviors that oblige modern physics to use concepts that are formulated in a subjective manner.⁵⁴ Such terms as ions, photons, gravitons, strings, etc. do not correspond to any indisputable form of reality; instead, they are elements of systems that have been articulated in a nominalistic fashion, and they are used for the formulation of scientific hypotheses. Moreover, the synthesis between realism and idealism has been promoted by cybernetics. The term cybernetics comes from a Greek word meaning “the art of steering,” and it is about having a goal and taking action to achieve that goal. Cybernetics as a social-scientific concept has been used by Plato in order to refer to government (“cyber” is a Greek word for governor). Norbert Wiener, a gifted Harvard mathematician, coined the term “cybernetics” around 1948 in order to denote the study of “teleological mechanisms.” Thus, by

the term cybernetics, we refer to the interdisciplinary study of the structure of regulatory systems. Within the framework of cybernetics, epistemologists focus on the observer in addition to what is observed, and they highlight the dynamic relationship between the individual and reality. In general, consciousness-independent reality differs from the reality of consciousness with respect to the degree of their integration and completion.

Truth emerges from the contact between consciousness and reality. Truth is the consequence of the contact between consciousness and reality, and it implies the ontologically grounded freedom of consciousness and the possibility that reality can be reconstructed by the intentionality of consciousness. However, the reconstruction of reality by consciousness, according to the latter’s intentionality, is not the result of arbitrary idealistic activity, but it is the result of a critical kind of activity that is founded on the aforementioned philosophical synthesis between reason, intuition, and mysticism. I shall use the term “intelligent activity” in order to refer to the critical kind of activity that is founded on the aforementioned philosophical synthesis between reason, intuition, and mysticism.

In practice, the intelligent activity of humanity consists in the following fivefold dialectical process:

- (i) First, consciousness is united with the source of the significances of the beings and the things that exist in the world, namely, it is fully aware of the teleology of reality, and, therefore, it has a clear, strategic existential vision and clear values.
- (ii) Second, consciousness aims at acting upon the reality of the world and upon itself, according to its teleology, in order to transcend the established state of the world and of itself and, thus, to improve its existential conditions.
- (iii) Third, consciousness aims at acting upon the reality of the world and upon itself in such a manner that it will not cause uncontrolled turbulence, which could jeopardize the continuity of existence.

- (iv) Fourth, when the turbulence that is caused by the action of consciousness upon the world and upon itself tends to get out of control, then consciousness tries to reduce the negative effects of its action by undertaking new action that counterbalances its previous action, thus deterring both the total elimination of the previous state of the world/of consciousness and the emergence of a totally unknown new state of the world/of consciousness.
- (v) Fifth, the action of consciousness upon the reality of the world and of itself aims at forming the necessary conditions that will allow consciousness to continue acting upon the reality of the world and of itself in the future.

From the perspective of my philosophical research work, being “intelligent” means following the aforementioned fivefold dialectical method.

Conclusion

According to the aforementioned dialectic of intelligence, history is a manifestation of humanity’s ontological potential. Humanity is in the process of an increasingly intensified confirmation of its presence in the world, by becoming increasingly aware of its presence in the world. However, due to humanity’s intelligent activity (as I defined it above), the continuity of the historical becoming is not completely substituted by the discontinuity that is caused by the action of consciousness upon the world; instead, the continuity of the historical becoming is reconstructed by the imposition of the intentionality of consciousness on time. To conclude, instead of being defeated in their struggle against a necessary historical becoming, humans overcome natural necessity due to their freedom, which enables them to reconstruct the world through intelligent action.

¹ The protagonists of the earliest Greek philosophy are the Ionian physicists, the Pythagoreans, Heraclitus, the Eleatics, Empedocles, the Atomists, and Anaxagoras, who attempt to explain phenomena by natural causes and without appeal to spiritual beings. They ask the question: “What is the basal stuff of which the world is composed?” and answer in terms of such concrete objects of sense perception as water, air, fire, or a hypothetical undifferentiated mass from which sense objects are derived. In other words, by means of a single material principle (monism of the materialistic type), they endeavour to account for the qualities of different bodies and their changes which are considered to be transformations of the primal stuff. The reasoning behind the cosmological models of these Greek philosophers is the following: observation shows that substances are changed into other substances (for instance, water becomes vapor), and, by similar process, the primal stuff must have

been transmuted into the different substances found in our present world of experience. See: Kathleen Freeman, *Companion to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1953).

² It is wrong to think that Plato’s philosophy is idealistic simply because it is focused on ideas; for, Plato argues that ideas are real entities and not creations (abstractions) of the human mind. See: Richard Kraut, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Plato* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); and Gail Fine, ed., *Plato 1: Metaphysics and Epistemology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

³ Parmenides of Elea (early fifth century BCE) was an ancient Greek philosopher born in Elea, a Greek city on the southern coast of Italy. He was the founder of the Eleatic school of philosophy.

⁴ By the term “being,” we should always understand a self-sufficient reality that exists either by being closed or by tending to

transcend its nature expanding beyond its normal limits.

⁵ *Plato's Sophist: The Professor of Wisdom* (with translation, introduction and glossary by Eva Brann, Peter Kalkavage, and Eric Salem, Newburyport: Focus Publishing, 1996), 11–12.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁷ See: Lloyd P. Gerson, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); and Dominic J. O'Meara, *Plotinus: An Introduction to the Enneads* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

⁸ Proclus, *In Platonis Timaeum commentaria* (ed. E. Diehl, trans. T. Taylor, Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1965).

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Everett Ferguson, "Proclus," *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* (edited by Everett Ferguson, second edition, New York: Garland, 1999), 951.

¹¹ See: Jonathan Barnes, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Georgios Anagnostopoulos, ed., *A Companion to Aristotle* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2009); and Christopher Shields, ed., *The Oxford Handbook on Aristotle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

¹² See: *Porphyry's Introduction* trans. with a Commentary by Jonathan Barnes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); and *Porphyry: On Aristotle's Categories*, translated by Steven K. Strange (New York: Ithaca, 1992).

¹³ See: Boethius, *Commentaries on Isagoge* (ed. Samuel Brandt, Vindobonae: F. Tempsky; Lipsiae, DEU: G. Freytag, 1906).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 234.

¹⁵ See: Nicolas Laos, "The Rediscovery of Byzantine Orthodox Mysticism: An Introduction to the Medieval Hesychasts' Theory of Humanity's Deification" (*Esoteric Quarterly*, Vol. 15, number 2, Fall 2019), 47–57; online:

<https://www.esotericquarterly.com/issues/EQ15/EQ1502/EQ150219-Laos.pdf#page=1> (accessed March 12, 2020).

¹⁶ See: Adrian Guiu, ed., *A Companion to John Scottus Eriugena* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2020); and Bernard McGinn and Willemien Otten, eds, *Eriugena: East and West* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994).

¹⁷ See: Marcia L. Colish, *The Mirror of Language: A Study in the Medieval Theory of Knowledge* (revised edition, Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1968).

¹⁸ See: François Picavet, *Roscelin: Philosophe et Théologien, d'après la légende et d'après l'histoire* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1911).

¹⁹ See: Jeffrey E. Brower and Kevin Guilfooy, eds, *The Cambridge Companion to Abelard* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

²⁰ See: Gillian R. Evans, *Bernard of Clairvaux* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

²¹ See: Heinrich Gelzer, *Byzantinische Kulturgeschichte* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (P. Siebeck), 1909).

²² See: Kieren Barry, *The Greek Qabalah: Alphabetic Mysticism and Numerology in the Ancient World* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1999); Elias J. Bickerman, *The Jews in the Greek Age* (USA: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1988); and Lenn E. Goodman, ed., *Neoplatonism and Jewish Thought* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1992).

²³ See: Ernest Moody, *The Logic of William of Ockham* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1935).

²⁴ See: Alessandro P. D'Entrèves, ed., *Aquinas: Selected Political Writings* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1948).

²⁵ See: Arthur S. McGrade, *The Political Thought of William of Ockham* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974).

²⁶ Laos, "The Rediscovery of Byzantine Orthodox Mysticism. Moreover, see: Nicolas Laos, *Methexiology: Philosophical Theology and Theological Philosophy for the Deification of Humanity* (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick/Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2016).

- 27 See: Alan Nelson, "Descartes's Ontology of Thought" (*Topoi*, Vol. 16, 1997), 163–78; and Stephen Menn, *Descartes and Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
- 28 See: John Searle, *Minds, Brains and Science* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984).
- 29 See: Don Garrett, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Spinoza* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- 30 See: John Searle, *The Rediscovery of the Mind* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 50–54.
- 31 See: Oxford University Press, "New Study Reveals Life's Earliest Evolution Was More Complicated than Previously Suspected" (*Phys.org*, April 22, 2020), no pages; online: <https://phys.org/news/2020-04-reveals-life-earliest-evolution-complicated.html> (accessed March 13, 2020).
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 See: Kimbra Cutlip, "DNA May Not Be Life's Instruction Book—Just a Jumbled List of Ingredients" (*Phys.org*, April 22, 2020), no pages. (online: <https://phys.org/news/2020-04-dna-life-bookjust-jumbled-ingredients.html>).
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 See: Jonathan Bennett, *Locke, Berkeley, Hume: Central Themes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Thomas Nagel, *The View from Nowhere* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 93.
- 39 See: Jonathan Bennett, *Locke, Berkeley, Hume: Central Themes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).
- 40 Hilary Putnam, "After Empiricism," in *Realism with a Human Face: Hilary Putnam*, edited by James Conant (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1990), 46.
- 41 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (edited by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

42 Schemata are determinations of objects in general, not specific individual objects, and, therefore, they are not particular images. A schema is a procedural rule that prescribes the way to relate a pure concept to an object in general. In other words, schemata are ways of applying pure concepts (categories) to sense impressions. These twelve kinds of judgment (schemata) are arranged in four groups of three each. The first group expresses the categories of quantity: totality, plurality, unity. It includes the following judgments: (1) the universal judgment (e.g., all dogs are animals), (2) the particular judgment (e.g., some fruits are sweet), and (3) the singular judgment (e.g., Isaac Newton was a natural scientist). The second group expresses the categories of quality: reality, negation, limitation. It includes the following judgments: (1) the affirmative judgment (e.g., electrical energy is a form of potential energy), (2) the negative judgment (e.g., the intentionality of consciousness is not extended), and (3) the infinite judgment (e.g., the intentionality of consciousness is unextended). The third group expresses the categories of relation: inherence and subsistence (or substance and accident), causality and dependence (or cause and effect), community/reciprocity between the active and the passive. It includes the following judgments: (1) the categorical judgment (e.g., the body is heavy), (2) the hypothetical judgment (e.g., if temperature increases, then entropy increases), and (3) the disjunctive judgment (e.g., energy forms are either potential or kinetic). The fourth group expresses the categories of morality: possibility and impossibility, existence and nonexistence, necessity and contingency. It includes the following judgments: (1) the problematical judgment (e.g., this may be hot), (2) the assertory judgment (e.g., this is hot), and (3) the apodictic judgment (e.g., every effect must have a cause). These twelve rules function like a filter between our minds and the external world. They are like intellectual sunglasses through which we see the world, but they alter the way that the external

world really looks to create the world that exists inside our minds (i.e., the phenomenal world).

43 See: Rudolf A. Makkreel, *Imagination and Interpretation in Kant* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

44 In an analytic judgment, the predicate merely elucidates what is already contained in the subject; e.g., the judgment “body is an extended thing.” Therefore, such judgments are by definition true and cannot qualify as genuine knowledge. Only synthetic judgments qualify as genuine knowledge, because they add something to the predicate; e.g., the judgment “every material body has specific gravity.” But, as Kant maintains, not all synthetic judgments give us genuine knowledge. Some synthetic judgments are derived from experience, i.e., they are *a posteriori*, and, therefore, they are lacking in necessity and in universality; e.g., the judgment “the horse is white.” According to Kant, to be genuine knowledge, a synthetic judgment must be necessary and universal, i.e., *a priori*. Universality and necessity have their source in reason, i.e., in the understanding itself. According to Kant, we find synthetic *a priori* judgments in the foundations of physics and mathematics.

45 See: Herbert J. Paton, ed., *The Moral Law: Kant’s Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1948), 67.

46 Ibid, 91.

47 Frederick C. Beiser, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

48 See: Robert C. Solomon and Kathleen M. Higgins, eds, *Routledge History of Philosophy, Vol. VI: The Age of German Idealism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993).

49 Ibid.

50 Gestalt psychology was founded by Max Wertheimer (1880–1943). Wertheimer noted that we perceive motion where there is nothing more than a rapid sequence of individual sensory events. This argument is based on observations that he made with his stroboscope at the Frankfurt train station, and on additional observations that he made in his laboratory when he experimented with lights flashing in rapid succession (like the Christmas lights that appear to course around the tree, or the fancy neon signs in Las Vegas that seem to move). Wertheimer called this effect “apparent motion,” and it is actually the basic principle of motion pictures. According to Wertheimer, apparent motion proves that people do not respond to isolated segments of sensation but to the whole (Gestalt) of the situation. See: Wolfgang Köhler, *Gestalt Psychology* (renewed by Lili Köhler, New York: Liveright, 1992).

51 *Examples of Gestalt Laws of Perceptual Organization*: (1) The law of closure: if something is missing in an otherwise complete figure, we shall tend to add it (e.g., a triangle with a small part of its edge missing will still be seen as a triangle, and, also, we shall “close” the gap). (2) The law of similarity: we shall tend to group similar items together, to see them as forming a whole (*Gestalt*), within a larger form. (3) The law of proximity: things that are close together are seen as belonging together. Therefore, according to Gestalt psychology, the whole is different from the sum of its parts.

52 Henri Bergson, *The Creative Mind* (translated by Mabelle L. Andison, New York: The Citadel Press, 1992).

53 Ibid.

54 See: Jacob Bronowski, *The Ascent of Man* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1973).

The Psychocentric Revelation, Part II: Space as a Living Entity

José Becerra

Space — an etheric, living space — is the physical correspondence to the transcendent fact of the immanent soul.

Abstract

This article is the second of a three-part series proposing a soul-centric or psychocentric interpretation to the release of atomic energy inaugurating the Neo-Copernican Revolution in the postmodern world. The first part proposed the existence of a transpersonal center of consciousness—the transpersonal soul or Ego—setting the scientist’s scope of consciousness as a new factor in a redefined scientific method. This new framework, inclusive of the synthetic intuitive sense—transcending but not negating the common sense of the rational mind—was proposed in order for the scientific community to revise its standards of objectivity. The aim of this redefined scientific method would be the discovery of higher and progressively subtler levels of causation in the earnest search for truth.

In this second part of this series, *Space as a Living Entity*, the subject of an etheric space, an etheric body, and the scientific foundation of brotherhood will be addressed as part of the search for higher and progressively subtler levels of causation. In the third part, *A Hierarchy of Life*, a general systems approach will be explored to better understand the evolution of consciousness and the presence of a spiritual Hierarchy of Masters of Love and Wisdom in our planetary life.

Is Space Etheric?

*Space is etheric in nature and—so we are told in the occult science—
Space is an entity¹*

Our common experience using ordinary perception says that space is a void and it has been difficult to prove experimentally. Even so,

the *ether* has been proposed as an element in Nature since the inception of our Western philosophical thought. The four states of matter—solid, liquid, gas, and plasma—correspond to the four classical (terrestrial) elements: earth, water, air, and fire. Plato considered a primordial (celestial) element: the ether.²

With the discovery of electromagnetic phenomena, the theory of an etheric substance filling space gained credibility. A weightless, transparent, frictionless, and physically undetectable substance such as the luminiferous ether, literally permeating all matter and space, seemed the reasonable medium for the transmission of electromagnetism.

In 1881, an experiment was undertaken to prove the existence of etheric substance. The rationale behind the Michelson-Morley experiment³ was that if the Earth is moving through etheric substance, then we would expect an ether flow along its pathway. If ether exists at all then the velocity of light would increase if a beam is sent toward the ether flow (opposite the Earth’s

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movement). On the other hand, if the is sent against the ether flow (in the same direction the Earth's movement), we should expect a decrease in the measured velocity of light. This experiment has been performed numerous times since then with the same outcome: in both directions, the measured velocities of light are paradoxically equal.

So, we ask, then is such ether a nonexistent chimerical product of the imagination of idealistic philosophers and animistic scientists?

Into this situation enters the genius of Albert Einstein who introduces a most unexpected interpretation of this experiment. He reasoned that the only valid conclusion that could be drawn from this data was that the velocity of light is constant, absolutely constant. Thus, was born his Special Theory of Relativity.⁴

The ether hypothesis, already weakened by the Michelson-Morley experiment, was dealt an apparent *coup de grace* by Einstein's phenomenological *epoché* to the ether controversy. He neither proved nor disproved its existence. He merely made the ether unnecessary to his theory. This point cannot be overemphasized.

Einstein's response to the Michelson-Morley experiment may have swayed generations of scientists away from the search for etheric substance in the same way that Aristotle's opinions ruled much of the scientific endeavor in the Middle Ages. Einstein's discoveries based upon the premise of a void space are astounding, indeed, reaching the shores of a new dimension. But was not the discovery of the New World five centuries ago as astounding, and still based on erroneous maps that needed revision according to truer facts?

The idea of an expected flow and friction in a sea of ether may be a materialistic oversimplification of an abstruse, multidimensional reality. And it may be as naive as our anthropomorphic versions of God. All this controversy may prove, again, the limitations of science in dealing with fundamental questions about Nature.

This concept of a void space is certainly a pragmatic hypothesis. If something does not fit our scheme, the easiest way out is to ignore, even

deny, its existence. Apparently, it saves us much energy and effort for the sake of false simplicity. How many experimental results may have been discarded based upon the premise of a void space?⁵ They are probably considered as "outliers," experimental observations that do not fit our expectations.

The ether hypothesis has not been proven or disproven by any scientific experiment so far. Instead, it may be more correct to say that the "mystery of electricity"⁶ is not well understood, particularly in its expression as the dual phenomenon of light, both particle and wave *at once*. If we consider the wave as the medium of the particle, the speed of the light particle must be constant *in its own medium*, relative to itself. The transmission of information without translocation may be at the very heart of the mystery of the *omnipresent* light in space.

Instantaneous Action at a Distance and the Consciousness of Space

A basic premise upon which Einstein's void space revolves is the impossibility of instantaneous action at a distance. The constant velocity of physical light is the maximum speed allowed, precluding any influence of any kind faster than the velocity of light. Curiously enough, it is referred to in the field of physics as *the principle of Einstein's separability*.⁷ May this be the very concept that creates the illusion that human beings are separate from each other and Nature?

Fortunately, there is growing evidence coming from the field of quantum physics contradicting Einstein's separability principle. It comes about as scientists have been trying to test local realistic theories (such as the separability principle) versus the quantum mechanics tenets.

In 1964, John S. Bell of the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) discovered that the assumptions behind any local realistic theory impose a limit on the extent of the correlations observed in subatomic physics. This limit is expressed as inequality, Bell's inequality.⁸ Most experiments have contradicted the local realistic theories by violating Bell's inequality.

Instantaneous action at a distance is possible, according to these experimental observations. Therefore, the whole question of the existence of a medium allowing this simultaneous interaction is quite open to scientific inquiry. The infringement of the principle of separability certainly is strong evidence in favor of the holistic view of the universe, disfavoring the absurd contention of waves without a medium. Most importantly, such evidence would point toward the dynamic unity of Nature.

If instantaneous action at a distance is possible—and there is experimental evidence supporting it—would such a possibility imply a *conscious* nature of space? In what other way may we understand simultaneity, that is, information being exchanged instantaneously between locations, if not in an *omniscient* space?

We agree with Einstein that instantaneous action at a distance would require a velocity so far not observed by experimentation. This is because we are considering *separate* conscious units observing the same events. But what if we consider space as an entity endowed with consciousness? The concept of simultaneity may seem unapproachable if we continue considering separate units of consciousness. And this may explain the *impasse* faced by all who have unsuccessfully tried to understand simultaneity. Simultaneity, and instantaneous action at a distance, may require an omniscient consciousness to transcend space and time limitations. Such a transcendent entity is Space: an organic, conscious, and multidimensional space.

It is only when scientists expand their scope of consciousness, to include something greater than their own consciousness, that the nature of simultaneity may become understandable. But such realization may not be possible if conceptualized within a void space. Obsolete thinking patterns may be the most important limitations in understanding this reality. And again, the scientist's scope of consciousness, as an integral aspect of the scientific method, comes to the forefront.

Only isolation and separateness can and will ensue if the initial premise stands upon separateness. So far, this premise is just a *belief*, not a proven fact of science. Just as Galileo did

centuries ago, deeply ingrained beliefs camouflaged as facts must be challenged. The deductive reasoning itself may be flawless, but if the initial premise is false the whole edifice crumbles.

There is an alternative hypothesis about the essential nature of space as an empty void. It would be an etheric, *living* space, the physical correspondence to the transcendent fact of the immanent soul, so well described as a matrix “power grid” by quantum physicist Frank Wilczek.

What is Space? Is it an empty stage, where the physical world of matter acts out its drama... or the primary reality, of which matter is a secondary manifestation? Today, the [latter] view is triumphant. Where our eyes see nothing our brains, pondering the revelations of sharply tuned experiments, discover the Grid that powers physical reality. – Frank Wilczek⁹

Space—an etheric, *living* space—can be viewed as the physical correspondence to the transcendent fact of the immanent soul, while a void space would be as soul-less as a dead body. It may be time for scientists—and for physicists in particular—to become *space biologists* and study the living nature of space, terrestrial and cosmic.

Then, it will be as absurd to speak of “you” and “I” as it is now to call our right hand “I” and our left “you”: both are informed by the same consciousness, nurtured by the same blood and perceived as simultaneous expressions of the same will. This would be a prime responsibility of science: to factually prove that every human being is a complimentary hand of the same Will; and that within this conscious entity we call Space, we all “live and move and have our being.”¹⁰

The Etheric Body

*The atom has been recognised as an energy unit but as yet the energy which keeps atoms into aggregates which we call organisms and forms has not been isolated. This the mystics in the scientific world will sense and work to demonstrate during the next generation.*¹¹

There is an aspect of biology that has puzzled scientists for centuries. It is the observed capacity for organization, for ordered growth and development and for regeneration in living organisms.

Early observers of this biological ordering described it primarily in philosophical terms. The beauty of such order had prompted the French biologist philosopher Henri Bergson¹² to postulate the existence of an *elan vital*. His school of thought, known as *vitalism*, proposed that life is an irreducible principle defining its own laws, and not explained by the laws of physics and chemistry alone. Still, his best arguments are philosophical rather than empirical.

The second law of thermodynamics states that systems evolve toward disorder. The defiance to the second law of thermodynamics that this capacity for organization implies has fascinated great minds. Teilhard de Chardin¹³ saw in it evidence of a transcendental purpose. More recently, Nobel Prize laureate Ilya Prigogine¹⁴ has proposed a new understanding of time and the concept of irreversibility in complex physical systems.¹⁵

With the progress of the physical sciences, and the discovery of electromagnetic fields, new techniques of research were made available to the biologists. But even prior to these new developments in the field of biology, there is an important historical thread that should be carefully considered. It is the Eastern tradition of acupuncture.

There is little doubt among the enlightened Western scientists that acupuncture works in trained hands.¹⁶ The enigma is how it works. Modern scientific research has not found a direct anatomical correlation between the known peripheral nervous system and the systems of meridians and acupuncture points. The Western system of neurological dermatomes runs independently of the meridians. Moreover, recent electrophysiological research established

unique electrical properties at exactly those defined by traditional acupuncture.¹⁷

The most accepted mechanism (by Western standards) of acupuncture is the mediation of opium-like substances endogenously secreted by the brain, called endorphins. But an even more important question has remained unanswered. How were the points and meridians discovered in the first place?

The Chinese did not have our modern instrumentation to detect the electrical properties of such points. And they do not follow known anatomical rules. Therefore, how were they found?

If we rule out advanced technology, and that seems reasonable, such a system of meridians and points had to be identified by either

sight or touch. Somehow, those who initially ascertained such points were seeing or sensing something. Is this part of a non-physical design in biology that might explain the organizational properties of living organisms?

The discovery of electromagnetic fields and other research techniques have given Western scientists additional methods to probe subtle fields that support the existence of the etheric body.¹⁸ The search for a system underlying biological design has produced tangible results in electric field studies. Pioneering efforts along this line were made by Dr. H.R. Burr,¹⁹ past Professor Emeritus at Yale School of Medicine. Dr. Burr was a neuroanatomist profoundly impressed by the ordered pattern apparent in the nervous system, right from its embryogenesis. It was difficult for him to accept chance as the basis of the genetic mechanism that engineered such order and beauty. He suspected the existence of an “electrodynamic field” which would serve as a blueprint for physical growth and development.

After overcoming what seemed to be insurmountable technical difficulties, in a collaborative effort with physicists at Yale, Dr. Burr produced a reliable instrument to measure the

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“electrodynamic potentials” surrounding every living organism. This “high impedance voltime-ter”—as these instruments were technically called—specifically measures “pure” voltage potential differences near (not on) the skin of living subjects. Such instruments did not measure electric currents, as is the case of the electrocardiogram and the electroencephalogram, but rather, measured the difference in voltage within an electric field not related to skin conductance.

With this instrument, Dr. Burr found a reliable and highly reproducible method of correlating, but most importantly, of forecasting, physical ailments based on the results of his findings. His papers were published mostly in the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* and the *Yale Journal of Biology and Medicine* from 1935 to 1953. He also published in *Science* and other prestigious professional journals. In most cases, he presented groups of cases confirmed by biopsies and other pertinent laboratory evidence.

In a remarkable experiment due to its theoretical implications, Dr. Burr could forecast the growth axis of an egg field prior to fertilization by measuring its electrodynamic field. The significance of this experiment consisted in his ability to change the growth axis by modifying the surrounding electrodynamic field.

The untoward reaction of the scientific community to Dr. Burr’s findings is exemplified by this historical note. In 1962, Dr. Leonard J. Ravitz presented to the New York Academy of Sciences an exhaustive paper on his research using Burr’s techniques titled *History, Measurement, and Applicability of Periodic Changes in the Electromagnetic Field in Health and Disease*, consisting of fifty-three pages of extensively documented findings with one hundred and fifty-three references. After the presentation, the chairman made the following remarks: “Dr. Ravitz’s measurements are of an electric field only and he makes no measurements of any magnetic component... Dr. Ravitz rejects the usual explanation of the potential so measured as being due to electrode effects, ion diffusion, organ activity, and so on and interprets them as an ‘electrodynamic field’ of unspecified origin

which has basic significance for the whole organism.” Period.

In short, the position of the scientific community is that such fields are effects, even artifacts, rather than causal factors in biology. The logic is that if it can be an effect, it is an effect. But no research findings are presented to substantiate such a position.

A different perspective in this line of research has been provided by Dr. William Tiller, Professor of Material Science and Engineering at Stanford University, in California. Dr. Tiller has proposed that the etheric dimension of being is related to what he calls “negative space-time energies.”²⁰ According to his model, it is in this etheric dimension that the link between the mind and the physical plane takes place. Again, a multidimensional space is advocated, and the etheric blueprint is given a causal role.

Most recently, British biologist Rupert Sheldrake has advanced his hypothesis of “Formative Causation.”²¹ It proposes that organisms are regulated by invisible organizing “morphogenetic fields.” Such fields serve, according to Sheldrake, as blueprints for form and behavior. He postulates a mechanism of “morpho resonance” through which “action at a distance” and across time becomes possible.

Sheldrake presents evidence from the fields of chemistry and animal behavior, among others. A most suggestive finding in the review that he conducted of the scientific literature is one researched by psychologist William McDougall at Harvard in the 1920s. Though Dr. McDougall had been disregarded as an “outlier,” he found that successive generations of rats “inherited” learned behavior, *i.e.*, learned quicker at each succeeding generation. Clearly clashing with prevalent genetic theories, the results, though independently confirmed, were disposed of as genetic inheritance. However, genetic (Lamarckian) inheritance has been ruled out by further experimentation. What caused subsequent generations of rats to learn more quickly if the genetic mechanism had been disproven? This question, as Sheldrake very well points out, has remained unanswered ever since. Again, what does not fit our preconceived notion of reality is ignored, but not scientifically disproven.

Knowledge of the etheric body has practical applications, as in the field of preventive medicine. The fact of the etheric body may uplift the idea of disease etiology to “higher and progressively subtler levels of causation.” As Dr. Burr envisioned, preventive measures would be instituted even prior to the occurrence of physical symptoms, a true kind of primary prevention, as has been established by the work of Barbara Brennan,²² former NASA physicist dedicating her life to exploring the etheric body and realms of human consciousness, in her *Hands of Light*²³ and *Core Light Healing*.²⁴

Impending discoveries in the field of electricity may also provide scientific evidence as to the existence of the etheric body, naturally linked to its healing properties. Healing may be understood as a restoration of integrity and cohesion to a previously fragmented condition, both physically and psychologically. The cohesive (healing) aspect of electricity may be intricately linked to the properties of the etheric body. We may think of the etheric body as the medium through which this aspect of electricity will be increasingly manifested, another instance of the importance of this imminent discovery for the scientific community.

The study of the healing properties of electricity probably dates to the Egyptians and Greeks, but it was Scribonius Largus (46 AD) who first recorded the use of electric eels for therapy. In the 18th century, Richard Lovett's *Subtil Medium Proved*²⁵ and Methodist Church co-founder John Wesley became influential forces promoting the use of electricity for medical treatment. We should note that Wesley interpreted this “subtle fluid”²⁶ as the soul of the universe.

These electrophysiological effects may need to invoke a design upon which the physical body is organized. For example, electricity applied to an amputated stump would cause an animal to partially regrow its limb.²⁷ The same current

applied to the same cells isolated in a test tube will not organize themselves into a new organ. There are many experiments like this one in embryology, and, so far, only the chemical and physical forces in the tissues have been held responsible. But until the etheric body of all organisms is recognized

by science, a complete explanation will be unlikely. Another consequence of proving the fact of the etheric body, as Dr. Tiller hints, is closely related to the discovery of higher dimensions of being that are inscrutable with our present modes of understanding. Then, the Biblical phrase “For in him we live and move and have our being” would acquire a scientific meaning, as the

current COVID-19 pandemic reveals.²⁸ We are all sharing the same breathing space and breathing is closely associated with the flow of prana in the etheric body.²⁹ Furthermore, the presence of the SARS-CoV-2 virus in Madrid or Paris is related to our living space in New York, Los Angeles, Mexico City or Sao Paulo. A devitalized etheric body has been associated with epidemics in the writings of Alice A. Bailey.³⁰

The individual and collective expansion of consciousness from the factual realization of an etheric counterpart in Nature may also prevent the insane destruction of life on this planet that has led to the deleterious effect of global warming. The etheric body would become the outer symbol of a soul that spiritually links humankind with Nature.

However, how would this factual realization become *visible*? Anthropologists tell us that the evolution of color vision has been a relatively recent development in the history of the race. The systematic lack of mention of some specific colors in some Greek classics has been presented as evidence supporting such a hypothesis. Why, then, should we assume that our evolutionary history has stopped? Are there still

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further evolutionary adaptations that the human eye could undergo that would allow us to “see” the etheric body?

The development of the etheric vision by a critical mass may be a next step in the evolutionary unfoldment of humanity. The research of Dr. Stephen Phillips³¹ would support the hypothesis that etheric vision is already manifesting. He has keenly demonstrated that the number of “Ultimate Physical Atoms” for each element, as reported in the clairvoyant research by Besant-Leadbetter in the 1900s,³² would correspond to the number of quarks postulated by modern science in each atom. It is likely that quarks exist in etheric substance.

But it would seem unlikely that such evolutionary development of a physical trait would occur at a collective level without a psychological counterpart, a *psychocentric revelation*, a revelation of the human soul, of which the etheric body would be its outer symbol. Such an etheric vision would manifest in a *multidimensional* state of consciousness that would allow the perceiver to transcend time and grasp space in its essential livingness. Only then would the concept of true brotherhood be redeemed, and present itself to the consciousness of the scientist as an elementary fact of Nature.

On Brotherhood And Its Scientific Foundation

There is an aspect of electrical phenomena that produces cohesion, just as there is an aspect that produces light. This has not yet been recognised... One of the imminent discoveries will be the integrating power of electricity as it produces the cohesion within all forms and sustains all form life during the cycle of manifested existence. It produces also the coming together of atoms and of the organisms within forms, so constructing that which is needed to express the life principle... This second aspect of electricity... will be released in fuller measure during the Aquarian Age... One of its earliest effects will be the increase of the understanding of brotherhood and its really scientific basis.³³

As the etheric body is revealed, thus linking all living organisms, brotherhood may

become a factual realization. Brotherhood is that Promethean Fire which alone can save humanity from the fires of separateness now raging throughout the world. Brotherhood may not only be present in the wishful imagination of well-intentioned idealists, but it may be realized as a *fact* in Nature.

We have challenged the validity of orthodox notions of objectivity in science on both epistemological and empirical grounds. And we have presented evidence, at least suggestive, of the existence of a “Reality” of a different order: call it the spatial ethers or higher states of consciousness. This Reality knows no separateness. When the existence of an individual and collective etheric body is viewed as a mediator between the spiritual and material worlds, then the necessary chain of causation seems complete.

Many of the unanswered questions that we have raised are coming from the very same field of science. When science has ventured itself to the study of the subatomic world, it has necessarily touched the surface of that dimension which underlies our physical perception. This is the ultimate promise of the Neo-Copernican Revolution in science, the eventual full release of the energy within the atom, safely and as planned.

It is our contention that such a release of atomic energy is inseparable from its psychological counterpart. In a world so used to mechanical, detached manipulations of natural phenomena, such as the conception of human life and the manipulation of the genetic code, this contention may be a psychological counterpart to the release of atomic energy. This would be the release of the creative powers of the soul, expressing an “altruistic meme” inherent in the *human* spirit, in contrast to the “selfish gene” inherited from the animal kingdom.

The physical sun was acknowledged to be the center of the universe five centuries ago. The nucleus was discovered to be the center of the physical atom early in the past century. In the same way, the soul will be acknowledged to be the center of what we call now the subjective and unconscious realm of experience. With that center established, a truly psychocentric source of light, and love, and power in the realization of brotherhood will be an inevitable

consummation.

When we speak about the “scientific foundations” of brotherhood, are we implying that it is possible to *scientifically* prove the existence of the soul? Maybe not directly, but by *correct inference* from established facts. After all, who has factually seen the physical atom?³⁴ Likewise, the existence of the soul may be established following the rules of the exoteric scientific method. The atom of the physical sciences has been an established, irrefutable fact since Dalton, but so far, no physicist has been able to directly perceive it on its own plane. We have correctly inferred its existence beyond any reasonable doubt, but its real nature has remained esoteric to the exoteric scientific method. Can the fact of the soul be similarly proven by irrefutable, “objective” (correct) *inference*?

Likewise, the existence of the soul may be established following the rules of the exoteric scientific method. Proving the survival of consciousness after death may be a step in this direction. The accumulated evidence of near-death experiences,³⁵ the scientific research on reincarnation,³⁶ and the study of geniuses³⁷ may pose this question: if heredity and environment cannot account for these empirically verifiable events, what else can explain it?

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle had an interesting viewpoint on this type of logic: “When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth,” Sherlock Holmes is quoted as saying.³⁸ Likewise, when the likely explanations about the survival of consciousness are eliminated by scientific research, the remaining explanation,

however improbable from the materialistic perspective, must be true. This is what is meant by *correct inference*.

Conclusions

In summary, in studying the living nature of space, scientists may become *space biologists*. This will be a step—a giant step, indeed—in the direction of peace, aligned with the United Nations maxim to “beat swords (of intellectual prowess) into plowshares,”³⁹ promoting mutual tolerance, and right human relations. The illusion of separateness may thus be dispelled, clearing the way to establishing the scientific foundation of brotherhood. After this realization, it would be impossible, for instance, for any scientist in any country to turn back and misuse his or her talents in the interest of separative, militaristic endeavors.

Furthermore, the biological world shows a remarkable capacity for ordered growth and development, implying the existence of a design. A design indicates the existence of a Planner or Thinker. The etheric body, interacting with electromagnetic fields and galvanized by electricity, may reflect such design. On a microcosmic scale, we refer to this Planner or Thinker as the Soul. On a macrocosmic scale, Emerson referred to it as the Oversoul.⁴⁰ Of it the *Bhagavad Gita* says,

“Having pervaded this whole universe with a fragment of Myself, I remain.”

This imminent realization we have referred to as the *Psychocentric Revelation*.

¹ Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle* (1950; Lucis Publishing Co., 1974), 340.

² <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/empedocles/> (accessed May 22, 2020).

³ https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michelson%E2%80%93Morley_experiment (accessed May 22, 2020).

⁴ <https://www.space.com/36273-theory-special-relativity.html> (accessed May 22, 2020).

⁵ Such as the solid findings of Dean Radin’s parapsychology and healing research at the Institute of Noetic Sciences, <https://noetic.org/profile/dean-radin/> (accessed May 25, 2020), and

William Tiller’s scientific research about human consciousness for the past 50 years, <https://www.tillerfoundation.org/> (accessed May 25, 2020).

⁶ <https://blavatskytheosophy.com/fohat-the-cosmic-electricity/> (accessed May 23, 2020).

⁷ <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/einstein-philsience/> (accessed May 23, 2020).

⁸ <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/bell-theorem/> (accessed May 23, 2020).

⁹ http://www.lightnessofbeingbook.com/inside_what.html (accessed May 23, 2020).

¹⁰ *The Bible* (New Testament), Acts 17:28.

- 11 Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise On White Magic* (1951; Lucis Publishing Co., 1974), 332.
- 12 <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/bergson/> (accessed May 23, 2020).
- 13 <https://www.khanacademy.org/partner-content/big-history-project/early-humans/other-materials6/a/pierre-teillard-de-chardin> (accessed May 24, 2020).
- 14 <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/chemistry/1977/prigogine/biographical/> (accessed May 24, 2020).
- 15 <https://www.informationphilosopher.com/solutions/scientists/prigogine/> (accessed May 24, 2020).
- 16 <https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/acupuncture-in-depth> (accessed May 23, 2020).
- 17 <https://tillerinstitute.com/pdf/White%20Paper%20XXI.pdf> (accessed May 25, 2020).
- 18 More recently, Robert Becker has postulated, based on his research, the existence of an "internal direct current (DC) electrical field," running in parallel to the peripheral nervous system, corresponding to a "primitive analog DC system controlling growth and healing" in the human body (different from the conduction of electrical potentials in the nervous system). The acupuncture points would thus serve as modulators of the DC current-conducting pain signals from tissues in need of healing or regeneration. -Robert Becker. *Cross Currents*. Chapter 4: Turning on the *Body's Electrical System*, p 86. <https://archive.org/details/cross-currentspro00beck> (accessed May 24, 2020).
- 19 <https://www.wrf.org/men-women-medicine/dr-harold-s-burr.php> (accessed May 24, 2020).
- 20 William A. Tiller (2009). *It is Time for a Consciousness-Inclusive Science*, <https://www.tillerinstitute.com/pdf/White%20Paper%20IV.pdf> (accessed May 26, 2020).
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- 22 <https://barbarabrennan.com/about-barbara/> (accessed May 26, 2020).
- 23 Brennan, Barbara (1987). *Hands of Light*, Bantam Press at Random House, New York City.
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- 25 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Lovett_\(scientist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Lovett_(scientist)) (accessed May 22, 2020).
- 26 http://www.survivorlibrary.com/library/etherology_or_the_philosophy_of_mesmerism_and_phrenology_1845.pdf (accessed May 24, 2020).
- 27 Leppik, L. P., Froemel, D., Slavici, A., Ovadia, Z. N., Hudak, L., Henrich, D., Marzi, I., & Barker, J. H. (2015). Effects of electrical stimulation on rat limb regeneration, a new look at an old model. *Scientific Reports*, 5, 18353. <https://doi.org/10.1038/srep18353> (accessed May 21, 2020).
- 28 World Health Organization. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019> (accessed May 25, 2020).
- 29 "The external control of the prana or life currents concerns those breathing exercises and rhythmic practices which bring the physical organs, allied with the etheric centres, into proper condition." Alice A. Bailey, *The Light of the Soul* (New York, Lucis, 1927), 222.
- 30 "The sweep of epidemics of any kind through the masses are founded in some condition in the etheric substance of the planet. Those diseases which are general, national, racial and planetary find their way to an individual via his etheric body, but are not so personal in their implications." Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing* (New York: Lucis, 1953), p.26.
- "That disease, in its immediate cause, can be traced to the individual etheric body when the difficulty is purely local, or to the planetary etheric body (in particular the etheric body of the fourth kingdom in nature) where epidemics are involved." Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing* (New York: Lucis, 1953), p. 274.
- 31 <http://www.smphillips.mysite.com/remote-viewing-of-atoms.html> (accessed May 25, 2020).
- 32 Besant, Annie; Leadbeater, Charles. (1919 edition). *Occult Chemistry: Clairvoyant Observations On the Chemical Elements*. Theosophical Publishing House.
- 33 Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology, Vol. I* (1962; reprint; New York: Lucis Publishing Company 1979), 373-74.
- 34 A photo, taken by David Nadlinger and titled *Single Atom In An Ion Trap*, was the winner of the 2018 Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council science photography competition. <https://www.popularmechanics.com/science/a17804899/here-is-a-photo-of-a-single-atom/> (accessed May 26, 2020). The photo depicts a single strontium atom, embedded inside a strong electric field, blasted by lasers which cause it to emit light. Please note that it is a depiction of an atom, not a photograph of an atom.

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- ³⁵ <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/04/the-science-of-near-death-experiences/386231/> (accessed May 26, 2020).
- ³⁶ <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/bering-in-mind/ian-stevensone28099s-case-for-the-afterlife-are-we-e28098skepticse28099-really-just-cynics/> (accessed May 26, 2020).
- ³⁷ <https://www.britannica.com/science/genius-psychology> (accessed May 23, 2020).

- ³⁸ <https://philosiblog.com/2012/05/22/when-you-have-eliminated-the-impossible-whatever-remains-however-improbable-must-be-the-truth/> (accessed May 26, 2020).
- ³⁹ *The Bible* (Old Testament), Isaiah 2:4 <http://lorettoattheun.org/the-art-of-peace-at-the-united-nations/>
- ⁴⁰ Ralph W Emerson, *Over-soul, from Essays: First Series*, 1841 <https://emersoncentral.com/texts/essays-first-series/the-over-soul/#complete-essay> (accessed May 23, 2020).

Book Review

The Esoteric Apprentice, by Steven Chernikeeff. Outskirts Press, 2018, Parker, Colorado. Paperback: 171 pages; US\$13.95. Available at Amazon. ISBN-10: 1977202543, ISBN-13: 978-1977202543.

At this juncture in human history, when the world is experiencing strife at every turn and many wonder what the future holds and if humanity can ever make the necessary leap towards more enlightened modes of economic and social governance, the esoteric community may be left wondering what can be done to fix things drawing on the inner planes of existence.

When Theosophist Alice Bailey, in telepathic rapport with the Tibetan Djwhal Khul, produced her body of work, humanity was enduring similar crises of right relations. In 1931, at the second Summer School for Spiritual Research at Ascona, Switzerland, Djwhal Khul issued an instruction to Alice Bailey. He wanted to conduct an experiment in discipleship in the New Age. He called it the New Group of World Servers. On the outer planes of outreach, Men of Goodwill was formed, which later became World Goodwill and the Lucis Trust was charged with spreading the word and establishing Units of Service worldwide. From the moment Djwhal Khul communicated that first instruction to Alice Bailey, a sizeable portion of the teachings carried this pointed orientation towards service, goodwill and right relations. Pamphlets were composed, forming the *Externalisation of the Hierarchy*. So central to the teachings is the NGWS, that Lucis Trust continues with this work today.

On the esoteric side, Djwhal Khul envisaged ten groups of nine who would each focus on a particular aspect of the human problem including: healing, politics, education, glamour, economics, science, and an overseer group of telepathic communicators. Ninety participants were needed.

Alice Bailey and her team brought together forty-two participants who practiced in four of the groups (and an incomplete fifth) for about

ten years. When Djwhal Khul disbanded the groups, he then formed a single group of twenty-four in an experiment in group initiation.

Neither of these experiments came to fruition but they laid the foundations for future esoteric work. Triangles was formed in 1937 to help create a planetary network of light and goodwill to distribute spiritual energies.

Meditation, particularly in group formation, sits at the core of the Bailey teachings. Yet today few in the Bailey community practice this form of what can only be described as “white magic” beyond Triangles itself. One example is the Italian-based “The Planetary System” which holds advanced meditation in groups of seven.

Another example, depicted in Steven Chernikeeff’s memoir *Esoteric Apprentice*, is known simply as “Twelves.”

Founded in the 1980s, Twelves is a continuation of the Tibetan’s original groups of nine, holding advanced meditations in group formation for the purposes of funneling spiritual energy and dissipating thoughtforms. It is pure white magic. In his memoir, Chernikeeff provides insights into the motivations, purpose, methods, and reasoning behind this form of spiritually focused group work following in the Bailey tradition.

The narrative is peppered with explanations and quotations, providing the lay reader with a primer, and the esoterically minded with an example of what is achievable through dedication and a commitment to act on the inner planes beyond the usual Triangles and Full Moon meditations practiced by the Bailey community. The powerful experiences of the meditations themselves, the consequences of the stimulation of spiritual energy playing out in the lives of participants, and then the final folding of the initial experiment upon the passing of two founding members, all are portrayed with detachment and sincerity. There is no glorification of the spiritual life.

Chernikeeff documents twenty years of dedication and commitment in a very human manner. Honesty, integrity and above all humility, infuse the pages. Alice Bailey's texts were meant not only to inform and help foster inner transformation, they were given as guidance for esoteric practice in all its forms, for the use by those on the right-hand path of love, wisdom and goodwill. As a singular example of best practice, Chernikeeff and the original Twelves participants are to be commended for their efforts at applying the Bailey teachings, captured by the author in *Esoteric Apprentice*.

The first stage of Twelves was experimental. Now, a second stage has commenced with a new group of participants expanding rapidly with the hope of reaching a full twelve groups of Twelves in the years to come. To that end, *Esoteric Apprentice* is a special book that makes an important contribution to the understanding of esoteric practice when it is aimed at human and planetary betterment. In all, *Esoteric Apprentice* is a valuable resource and a must read for all esoteric practitioners who aspire to foster global change for the better.

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