

The Plane of Atma: Third and First Aspects in Emanation

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***All forms exist in order to express truth.*¹**

The plane of Atma, the plane of the spiritual will, is the third systemic plane counting from above, and as such predominantly corresponds to the third aspect, active intelligence, and the third ray. Secondly, within this context of being the third systemic plane, in relative microcosm the plane of Atma is also the vibrationally highest aspect of the threefold reflection of the Monad known as the Spiritual Triad, and as such corresponds to the first aspect, Will, and the first ray. Master DK specifically states that the third ray has a close relation to the first ray.²

A consideration of the process of emanation explains how any given vibrational level is both microcosm and macrocosm, and as such conveys the energies of more than one aspect. Each emanated level is microcosm to vibrationally higher levels from which it emanates, which are macrocosm to it; each emanated level in turn is macrocosm to vibrationally lower levels that it emanates, which are microcosm to it. It is because it is both microcosm and macrocosm that Atma can represent and convey the energies of both the third aspect and the first aspect.

Atma is third aspect as the third systemic plane, and first aspect as the uppermost level of the Spiritual Triad. Atma is *also* both first and third aspects by virtue of the emanatory process. Therefore, both first and third aspect energies are particularly strongly conveyed by the plane of Atma.

Master DK does not provide as much information about the plane of Atma as he does about the systemic Buddhic, mental, astral, and physical planes. This is because those for whom he is writing are occupied with developmental tasks on the Path of Return that more directly involve planes that are vibrationally below Atma. Master DK writes much about these tasks, such as dissipating glamour and aligning with the soul; it is only as these developmental tasks are substantially accomplished that the aspirant/disciple/initiate increasingly consciously works with energies of the plane of Atma. In fact, Master DK states that it is the plane of Buddhi, the plane most immediately '*below*' Atma vibrationally, that is the goal for humanity in this system.³

However, all progress on the Path of Return is ultimately impulsed by the Will aspect, initially in vibrationally stepped down or filtered form. That is, energies of the spiritual will from the plane of Atma are active on the Path of Return, albeit in vibrationally stepped-down or filtered form, long before the aspirant is aware that he is using energies of the Will aspect as transmitted via the plane of Atma. Therefore, it behooves the aspirant/disciple to be aware of the role that Atma plays, and will increasingly play, in his⁴ ongoing progress on the Path of Return.

This paper will discuss the systemic plane of Atma as representing both (primarily) third aspect and (secondarily, in relative microcosm) first aspect. The process of emanation will initially be discussed, as it is in this context that the role of Atma as representing both first and third aspects can be understood. Planes of particular relevance to Atma, including and particularly the other planes of the Spiritual Triad,

i.e., Buddhi and Manas, will be addressed as well. Additional correspondences to the plane of Atma will also be reviewed. Additionally, the relevance of the plane of Atma to disciples and students of the Ageless Wisdom will be discussed.

EMANATION

***"Having pervaded this entire universe with a fragment of Myself,
I remain."*⁵**

Emanation refers to the process by which a manifest universe comes into being, that is, the process by which an original Unity differentiates and is qualified in(to) time and space. The original Unity may be thought of as undifferentiated Life itself, a flame that emanates countless Divine sparks. These emanated Divine sparks are microcosm to, and at a vibrationally 'lower' level than, the macrocosmic Unity that emanated them. In turn, these emanated Divine sparks *themselves* emanate an additional level of Divine sparks which are microcosm to, and at a vibrationally 'lower' level than, the level of Divine sparks that emanated *them*. In a sense, each emanating level can be thought of as being the Unity or first aspect *relative* to the level that it emanates; the emanated level is third aspect or differentiation of the level that emanates it (although at the same time each level may correspond to any of the three aspects from other perspectives). This process repeats at many, many (perhaps countless) levels of iteration.

Each emanated level is *microcosm* to the level that emanated it; each level is vibrationally lower than, i.e., vibrationally stepped down or filtered, compared to the level that emanated it. This vibrational step-down or vibrational slowing into densification or manifestation of each emanated level, compared to the level that emanated it, means that each emanated level is a *differentiation and qualification* of the level that emanated it. That is, compared to the level that emanates it, each emanated level is *more limited* in (1) scope of awareness, (2) vibrational level with which that awareness is identified, and (3) power to affect more inclusive levels of Unity.

The original level of Unity remains as the most essential identity of each emanated Divine spark at the many reiterative levels of emanation. The apparent limitation is in the *experience and expression* of the emanated Divine sparks only, not in occult fact. The original emanating Oneness is never lost to any Divine spark no matter how 'far' into densification the process of emanation proceeds. What *is* (temporarily) lost to each Divine spark – progressively lost further with each level of emanation – is the scope of its awareness, power, and the level of Unity with which it identifies or which it experiences itself as *being*.

The process of emanation, therefore, results in limitation in the *experience and expression* of each Divine spark, but not in its essential occult identity. Emanated Divine sparks are just (temporarily, until sufficient progress on the Path of Return) less than fully aware of their essential Divine nature. They are also less than fully identified with, and less than fully able to express the power of, their essential Divine nature. The further the level of reiteration of the emanation process, i.e., the more stepped down vibrationally compared to the vibrationally higher emanating levels, the greater the reduction in the emanated Divine sparks' awareness, identity, and power.

The experienced limitation in scope of awareness, identification, and power is a progressive circumscription of the emanating Unity's omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence – *further*

circumscribed at each level of emanation (i.e., at each level of vibrational step-down). This progressive limitation of experience is inherent in the process of emanation.

The term *ring-pass-not* is used in Master DK's teachings to refer to the scope of *experienced* awareness, self-identity, and power of each emanated Divine spark. Using this terminology, the ring-pass-not of each emanated Divine spark is progressively further circumscribed and limited with each level of further emanation/differentiation. With each level of emanation, the *experienced* self is a progressively smaller and smaller fraction of the original emanating Unity. Again, this limitation is temporary, until sufficient progress on the Path of Return results in expansion of the ring-pass-not, which occurs in progressive steps.

The phrase 'God transcendent,' as in the typical Western theological conception of "God," refers to the original emanating Unity. The phrase 'God immanent,' more characteristic of the traditional Eastern view, refers to the original level of Unity that remains as the most essential identity of each emanated or *apparently* separated Divine spark. Thus it can be seen from a consideration of the concept of emanation that *both* descriptions, 'God transcendent' and 'God immanent,' are occultly accurate. The East versus West theological dichotomy is one of the (apparent) pairs of opposites that are (eventually) synthesized into a unity with progress on the Path of Return and the correspondingly expanded ring-pass-not of the Divine spark's experience/expression.

One can conceive of the process of emanation as an issuing forth of all form at the many vibrational levels of macrocosm and microcosm. What is emanated is microcosm to that which emanates it, and at the same time is macrocosm to that which it emanates. Thus not only are *macrocosm* and *microcosm* relative terms, so are terms such as *less dense* and *more dense*; *vibrationally higher* and *vibrationally lower*; *substance*; *form*; and *manifest*. A vibrational level that is dense compared to the finer vibratory level that emanated it, is the underlying finer and more subjective level compared to that which it emanates. For example, what is seen by the human eye as the dense physical form (at the current level of human awareness) refers to a (relatively) small range of vibratory frequencies.

Any *apparent* or *implied* separation between emanator and emanated at any of the many levels of iteration is illusory. While the emanated Divine sparks do temporarily *experience* an *apparently* separated state, this is an illusory result of their (temporarily) limited awareness. The perceived separation is not their most essential identity. The occult reality is the inherent oneness of that which emanates and that which is emanated. As expressed in the Bhagavad Gita, "Having pervaded this entire universe with a fragment of Myself, I remain." ⁶

This means, again, that both *God transcendent* and *God immanent* are occult reality: The emanating Oneness is at once greater in scope (of awareness, power, and identity) than any of the emanated fragments of the Divine, and at the same time the emanating Oneness is fully immanent within each and every emanated fragment of the Divine, regardless of how far the Divine sparks may appear to be (temporarily) removed from *awareness* or *demonstration* of that occult truth. Each emanated Divine spark is directly and most essentially the emanating Oneness; its awareness is just temporarily limited such that this occult truth is veiled from its awareness.

Emanation is more commonly known as *creation*. However, a limitation of the term *creation* is that as used in a Western theological context, it typically implies a transcendent God that is not also immanent. In other words, it connotes a duality or separation of creator as active agent from that which is created.⁷

One could also speak of the process of emanation or creation as *projection*, the creation being that which is *projected* from a higher/more macrocosmic level to a lower/more microcosmic level. However, although not in such common use and therefore not as heavily imbued with connotations, the term *projection* still suggests active agency on the part of the creator/projector, and thus may tend to similarly connote duality or separation of projector as active agent from that which is projected.

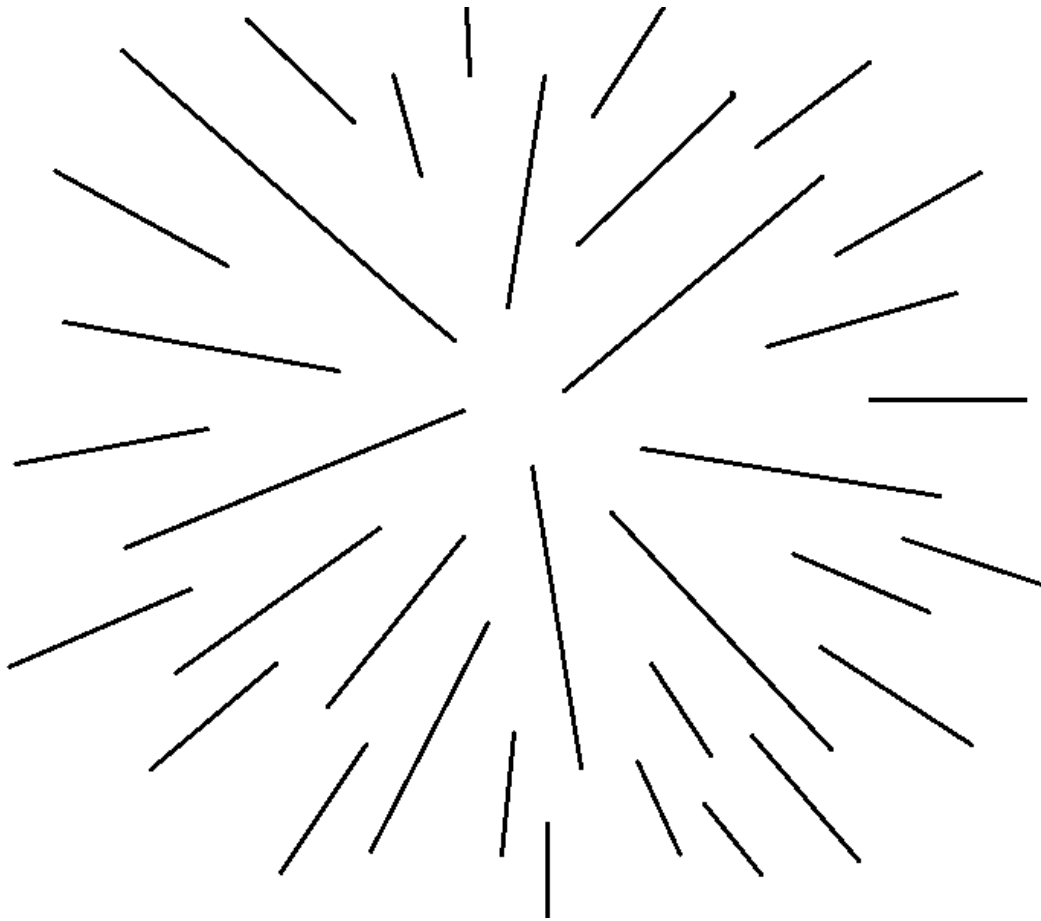
Another term that could be used to describe the process of emanation is *extension*. The original Unity *extends* itself further and further into densification/manifestation. Some of the connotations of this term may be helpful, as it may be taken to imply that *that which extends* remains one with *that which is extended*. However, it may also be taken to imply an active extending agent, perhaps with that agency not also present in that which is extended, again inaccurately connotatively suggesting separation of extender and that which is extended.

With the term *emanation*, the concept of active agency in the emanator may not be as strongly implicit or connoted, and therefore implication of separation between emanator and that which is emanated may not be as strong. One can, of course, similarly speak of 'emanator' and 'emanated' as distinct entities, in parallel with 'creator' and 'created'; however, the implied duality may not be as stark. The connotations in using the term *emanation* may tend more accurately to suggest that the process of emanation is inherent in the characteristics and qualities of the original emanating Unity, rather than being a specific act of an emanating agency that results in a separated emanated product. Also, because the terminology of *emanation* is not in common use, it is not yet associated with the same thicket of connotative thoughtforms, and may therefore be less likely to introduce distortion in mental substance (illusion) compared to a commonly used term such as 'creation.' The intent of using the terminology of 'emanation' instead of 'creation' is to present the concept in a way that helps to keep the concrete mind open and receptive to impression from the soul and/or Buddhi.

Another analogy that may help the lower/personal mind to conceptualize the process of emanation is the concept of sets and subsets. Considering the original emanating Unity as the original set, each level of emanation/creation could be considered as *experientially* being a subset within that whole. Each further level of emanation/creation is then a sub-subset within that prior level of subsets, etc. This process continues at many levels and could be imaged as circles within circles within circles, etc., each smaller level of circles being less inclusive than the prior level and representing a further level of differentiation and limitation, with that limitation again referring to the *experience* of the emanated Divine sparks. All are in occult fact identical with the original emanating Unity; it is their *experience and expression* that are circumscribed into the more limited ring-pass-not of their (temporary) subset limitation.

Emanation creates extension in space and time. To use a spatial analogy, one might depict the process of emanation, extension, creation, or manifestation as below, likening it (again by analogy) to a cosmic 'big bang' in physical terms, as symbolically represented on p. 5 below.

Emanation/Extension/Differentiation



Again, it should be noted that the emanated Divine sparks are never separated in occult fact from the emanating Oneness at any of the many levels of iteration of the process; it is only the scope of their awareness, power, and identification (their ring-pass-not) that is progressively limited with each additional level of emanation. As a consequence, the emanated Divine sparks *experience* separation and limitation rather than their essential Divine nature as the original emanating Oneness, until sufficient progress on the Path of Return.

As suggested by the above image, as a metaphor in physical terms for the process of emanation, one may consider the 'big bang,' a dominant model in theoretical physics to explain the genesis of the observed universe. From an originating singularity, the manifest universe expands in all directions, issuing forth galaxies, solar systems within those galaxies, planets within those solar systems, and all life and form therein 'down' to the most microcosmic levels. The 'furthest emanated extent' in the big bang metaphor would refer to the most microcosmic levels, not to the spatially furthest galaxies. The physical, externally observed, visible levels of this process (galaxies, solar systems, planets, etc.) are only the denser vibrational levels that are experienced as manifestation; the physical is symbol of the finer vibrational levels that underlie. Underlying the dense forms at the various levels are the many

intermediate levels of emanation and progressive limitation, 'extending' back to the original emanating Unity.

Involuntary Arc versus Evolutionary Arc: Emanation and De-Emanation/Return

The 'outgoing' process (again, to use spatial metaphor) of emanation or differentiation from the originating Oneness, as symbolized above, i.e., the progressive reduction in scope of awareness, identity, and power of the emanated Divine sparks, is referred to as the *involuntary arc* by Master DK.⁸

The reverse process of 'ingoing' or return of the differentiated Divine sparks in progressive stages to *awareness of being* the emanating Oneness is referred to as the *evolutionary arc* by Master DK,⁹ also referred to as the Path of Return (sometimes just referred to as the Path), which consists of several progressively accelerating stages. Although aspirants/disciples may tend to refer to the later, accelerated stages of the evolutionary arc as the Path of Return, Master DK defines the Path of Return as the *entire* evolutionary arc. This is consistent with the occult fact that the entire evolutionary arc consists of the emanated Divine sparks returning to awareness of the emanating Oneness (progressively, at the various stages of macrocosm-microcosm), albeit very slowly initially. In reference to the image above, once the furthest extent of emanation/differentiation is reached, the emanated Divine sparks eventually return to a full awareness, identification with, and power to express as, the original emanating Unity, in effect retracting or de-emanating, 'ingoing' to more comprehensive awareness, identity, and power instead of 'outgoing' to progressively greater limitation. This return occurs very gradually and in stepwise fashion, consisting of many, many human lifetimes and subsequent suprahuman continued evolution (as well as earlier evolution through the lower kingdoms).

Master DK states that the Path of Return consists of four stages: (1) Evolution (meaning that the term 'Path of Return' applies to the evolutionary arc even before the later, accelerated stages are reached); (2) the Probationary Path; (3) the Path of Discipleship; and (4) the Path of Initiation.¹⁰ Each stage is more accelerated compared to the previous stage, because each stage is more consciously facilitated by an evolving awareness of, and increasingly awareness *as*, the essential core identity as Divinity/original emanating Oneness.

This process of 'Return' can be thought of as *de-emanation* or *retraction* of the differentiated and limited emanations/extensions. Each progressive retraction or de-emanation involves an expanded ring-pass-not, with awareness/experience/expressions of a progressively more comprehensive Unity at each stage (and sub-stage) of expansion. At each such stage (and sub-stage) of Return, the Divine spark experiences progressively more of what it most essentially always *is*, the emanating Oneness. Each progressive increase in realization is an increase in the level of Unity of which the Divine spark is aware and with which it identifies, as well as an increase in power to *express as* that level of Unity to aid the return of (apparently) other emanated Divine sparks. Master DK refers to significant stages in this process of 'return' as *initiations*.

Initial progress on the evolutionary arc, including up to and perhaps even somewhat past the first initiation, is generally not undergone consciously or intentionally. With further progress, however, the 'return' process becomes increasingly conscious and intentional. The disciple works increasingly with conscious intent toward knowing a more comprehensive level of unity, which facilitates the 'return' process. That is, the process of de-emanation or 'return' to awareness of a more comprehensive Unity is consciously facilitated by the returning Divine spark itself, such as a disciple following Master DK's program of meditation, service, and study. For example, although initially progress after the first initiation may not be conscious, with time and further progress on the Path (there are multiple lifetimes

between first and second initiations), in working consciously toward the second initiation, the aspirant/disciple works intentionally to dissipate glamour. Subsequently, in working consciously toward the third initiation, in working to dispel illusion the disciple works even more consciously to further his progress. Progress on the Path of Return is facilitated and accelerated by increased conscious *attention* to the process and increased *intention* to further one's progress for purposes of increased service.

One may ask whether there is a 'final' uppermost level above which there is nothing greater or more comprehensive. The human mind (lower mental subplanes) can only speculate, not definitively answer this question. However, one might speculate that the answer to this question may be *no*, because if the answer were *yes*, it would constitute a limitation of occult reality, i.e., a lack of omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence. It is the concrete human mind (lower mental subplanes) that is limited in its ability to conceptualize infinity and eternity; this should not be interpreted to constitute limitation of occult reality itself.

The Three Aspects

The process of differentiation and *experienced* separation inherent in the process of emanation (creation, projection, extension, etc.), is the origin of the apparent distinction between Spirit and matter, i.e., between *first* aspect and *third* aspect. As noted above, there is no *actual* lack of Spirit, first aspect, in any emanated fragment; there is no occultly factual separation between Spirit and matter. Spirit remains always as the most essential identity of each apparently separated Divine fragment at all levels of emanation. Matter is simply Spirit at its most differentiated/separated level, the furthest emanated level on the involutionary arc before the 'return' phase (evolutionary arc), hence HBP's statement that "Matter is spirit at its lowest point of manifestation and spirit is matter at its highest." ¹¹

However, from the perspective of awareness that is identified with more extended or emanated levels (the lower vibrational levels, including current human awareness), Spirit and matter are *experienced* as distinct, including (and particularly) during early stages on the Path of Return, even on the Path of Discipleship. From the perspective of their limited rings-pass-not of identification, awareness, and power (the level of Oneness of which they are aware), the emanated Divine sparks at these early stages on the Path of Return *experience* separation, not yet knowing that they *are* in essence the emanating Oneness. Thus the distinction is noted *in emanation/expression* between the first aspect (Spirit) and the third aspect (matter). In the above image on p. 5, the first aspect, the emanating Unity, is represented by the center, and the third aspect is represented by the emanations, the extensions or projections from the center – each subsequent point on each extension or projection representing (by analogy) a further step removed from the originating Oneness, such as a lower plane or subplane, a more circumscribed level of experience.

Furthermore, each point on each extension is a potential source of further emanation, as noted above. Each level of emanation is microcosm to the level of Unity just 'above' it vibrationally from which it emanated, and at the same time is also macrocosm (emanating Oneness) to that which it emanates, just 'below' it vibrationally. Again, this process reiterates at multiple, multiple levels.

The outgoing, or emanating phase, as well as the eventual return phase, is characterized by the straight line motion descriptive of the first aspect as represented above on p. 5. This *driving* energy impels emanation, and it also impels de-emanation, i.e., progress on the Path of Return. With each progressive stage on the Path of Return, the aspirant/disciple/initiate is able to work directly with energies of the Will (the first aspect) that are less stepped down vibrationally or filtered. This is part of the basis for progress on the Path of Return accelerating at later stages.

The motion characteristic of the third aspect, that which is manifest, is rotary; hence, all that manifests is spherical, and thus the overall image on p. 5 exhibits sphericity, considered as a whole at the furthest extent of emanation. From our currently limited human level of awareness focused in the dense physical levels, we do not tend to see this sphericity at the human scale, although we recognize it on a much smaller scale such as the atomic level or on a much larger scale such as planets. The spheroidal shape of the atom represents the ring-pass-not of the atom. Its (nascent) consciousness is confined within this sphere. The same applies to a human individual, as well as a Planetary Logos, and a Solar Logos, etc. The fact that (even at the limited human level) we can easily see the spheroidal shape of the physical manifestation of planets and solar systems from images provided by astronomy is *due to perspective*. At the personal human level of identification we do not as readily see the spheroidal shape of the *human* 'atom' yet because of our (current) narrow focus within the vibrational levels of the dense physical form, i.e., lack of perspective. The physical eyes of humanity as a whole are not yet registering the etheric vehicle (or the astral or mental vehicles, which are characterized by this spheroidal shape). By analogy to this limited perspective, one can consider the view of our planet by humanity historically, prior to the perspective provided by astronomy. Looking out from the perspective of a human vehicle with physical eyes that are attuned to the dense physical vibrational level, one does not see the planet as a spheroidal shape. It is only with *perspective* (in this example, as provided by astronomy) that the planet is *seen* as spheroidal. Similarly, it is only with the *perspective* provided (eventually, with progress on the Path) by perceiving a broader range of frequencies than dense physical vibrational levels that the spheroidal nature of the human atom can be *seen*. In the meantime, Master DK has provided us with this information in His teachings to help us open the personal mind to higher impression and enable us more readily to eventually *see* truth.

The rotary motion of the third aspect tends to maintain itself until acted upon by a force with different qualities and characteristics – such as the straight line motion of the first aspect. This is the occult basis of the statement that the Will (first) aspect ultimately impels all progress on the Path of Return, even before the Divine spark (temporarily identified with the third aspect) is consciously aware of the Will aspect. By itself, rotary motion would take a very long time to bring the emanated Divine sparks back 'home' to the emanating Oneness (much longer than the current process, which itself seems a very long time from the human scale). It is the straight line motion of the first aspect that 'breaks' the pattern of rotary motion of the third aspect enough to allow for progress on the Path of Return at an accelerated rate – a rate that accelerates further with additional progress on the Path of Return and the resulting increase in direct infusion of the Will/first aspect energies.

At each level of de-emanation or retraction – i.e., return on the evolutionary arc – a union of first and third aspects at that level is accomplished. The identity of first and third aspects is an ever-present occult fact at the many levels, including the spark of the original emanating Unity as the most essential identity even of the 'furthest' emanated level (as well as all of the levels between). As noted above, it is the *awareness* of an emanated level that is temporarily limited. An emanated level gradually *becomes aware of itself as being* the emanating level or first aspect in the context of retraction, de-emanation, or return *at that level*. All progress on the Path of Return (the process of de-emanation or retraction) is ultimately impelled by the Will/first aspect, that spark of the Divine will that is the most essential identity of every emanated Divine spark, and without which rotary motion would remain rotary much longer. That is, progress on the Path of Return is brought about by progressive acts of the Will utilizing energy from the plane of Atma, initially stepped down vibrationally. With progress on the Path of Return, the will energy is less and less stepped down vibrationally, and so progress accelerates.

The *second* aspect is a product of the (apparent) separation of first and third aspects that results from the process of emanation. The second aspect is the magnetic, radiant energy that exists between each (apparently) differentiated, emanated Divine spark and every other (apparently) differentiated, emanated Divine spark. The second aspect is the love-wisdom aspect or Christ energy, i.e., *consciousness*. The second aspect is the *relational* energy that exists between all emanated (apparent) fragments of the original Unity – whether or not that relation is yet recognized and expressed by an emanated Divine spark at its particular stage on the Path.

In the original undifferentiated Unity prior to emanation/creation/manifestation, there was no distinction or potential separation allowing of *relationship between*. Within the illusory experience of separation that results from the process of emanation, the apparent separation between emanated Divine sparks at the many levels creates the possibility of *relation between* them. That is, the existence of *relation between* (i.e., the second aspect) results from the apparent separation of first and third aspects (including at all of the many emanated levels). This *relational energy*, the second aspect, consciousness, is that which helps to bring about the recognition by the emanated Divine spark of the essential identity of first and third aspects.

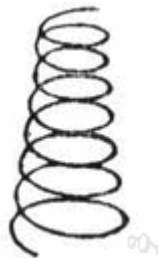
Thus it is that the (apparent, perceived) separation of first and third aspects allows the second aspect to come into being in the expressed/emanated universe as a *result* of this (apparent, perceived) separation. The second aspect that results from the process of emanation, apparent separation of first and third aspects, could perhaps be represented by a sphere of energy as depicted below.

Second Aspect Relational Energy, Co-Extensive with Emanation¹²



The interaction of the types of motion characteristic of first and third aspects, straight line motion and rotary motion respectively, produces the spiral-cyclic motion characteristic of the second aspect. Rotary motion continues, but its pattern is 'broken' enough by the straight line motion of the first aspect that progress on the Path of Return can accelerate, resulting in the spiral-cyclic motion of the second aspect. The above image on p. 9 exhibits sphericity (characteristic of the *third* aspect) *because it represents the relational energy between each and every point within* the prior image on p. 5. The image on p. 5 in totality represents a manifest universe (third aspect), and hence exhibits sphericity as a whole; thus, the *energy between* all constituent points, attempted to be represented by the image on p. 9 above, also exhibits sphericity *as a whole*, although the characteristic of the second aspect *motion itself* is spiral-cyclic as depicted (in part) below. In the second aspect spiral-cyclic motion, the more directly the Will energy is utilized, the less the oscillations or portion of the time spent in rotary (third aspect) motion and the more the straight line (first aspect) motion dominates the return process; hence, the rotary component of the spiral-cyclic motion is reduced with progress on the Path of Return. In the image below, progress on the Path is depicted from 'below' to 'above,' showing oscillation due to the rotary (third aspect) component being reduced with progress on the Path of Return.

Spiral-Cyclic Second Aspect Motion¹³



The second aspect, which emerges as a product of the emanatory, involutionary phase, plays an essential role in bringing about the eventual *experienced* union of first and third aspects, i.e., progress on the Path of Return, the de-emanatory, evolutionary phase. In the initial emanatory process on the *involutionary* arc, although always existing, the second aspect is *latent* in terms of awareness because the involutionary lives are not yet *conscious*. The second aspect must therefore be actualized, expressed, or embodied by progress of the emanated Divine sparks on the evolutionary arc, the Path of Return, in the process of de-emanation or retraction. Embodiment and expression of the second aspect brings together Spirit and matter *as experienced in emanation* (recalling that they are never truly separated). For example, on the scale of the human microcosm, the soul (second aspect) bridges between higher mind (in this context, representing first aspect) and lower mind (third aspect). Expression or actualization of the second aspect (i.e., *being* soul) brings together first and third aspects: by fusing with the soul (second aspect), the personality (third aspect) increasingly expresses as Spiritual Triad (in this context, representing first aspect), and eventually Monad (a higher expression of first aspect than the Spiritual Triad). This process applies similarly to the Return or de-emanation process at the many levels of microcosm and macrocosm.

Pralaya

Just as in the physical 'big bang' model it is posited that the universe expands, may reach a point of maximal expansion, and then may contract back to a singularity, so it is with the more occult levels in the process of retraction or de-emanation, i.e., the wide range of vibratory states underlying that which is physical.

The state of universal pralaya or rest is the macrocosmic pause that intervenes between each cycle of emanation (involutionary arc) from the emanating Oneness and subsequent return (evolutionary arc) of a universe to the emanating Oneness. At least as we conceptualize it at limited human levels, in the state of universal pralaya, all that *is* is an undifferentiated unity prior to any creation, differentiation, or separation into the three aspects. There are likely to be qualities and characteristics of this Unity that are beyond any awareness of the current expression that is humanity. The human mind can only speculate and hypothesize regarding levels of Unity so far above our current levels. However, one might hypothesize that this Unity would be characterized by relatively near-omniscience, as well as relatively near-omnipresence and relatively near-omnipotence (“near” rather than unqualified omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence because it would be hypothesized to not include full co-extension with that of which it is an expression; RE “relatively,” see discussion of scale below).

Comparing the pre-emanating Unity with the de-emanated or retracted Unity in pralaya, what has changed is that the original emanating Unity has been enriched by all that has transpired during the period of emanation (*mahamanvantara*, or simply *manvantara* at more microcosmic levels). De-emanation is not a simple reversal that *erases* what transpired in emanation; *nothing is lost* in de-emanation or retraction except *experienced limitation*. The experience of every Divine spark during the period of emanation and return, in all its detail, is contained within That which emanated the Universe on the involutionary arc and to Which all that was emanated returned on the evolutionary arc.

All that is manifest in involution veils the truth of occult reality; with evolutionary progress on the Path of Return by the emanated Divine sparks, all that is manifest progressively *reveals* truth.

A Note Concerning Time and Space

The atom is as God, God as the atom.¹⁴

We know from the teachings of Master DK, if not yet from our own direct knowledge, that time and space, which on the human scale appear to be characteristics of the external world, are in occult fact illusory. Both time and space are characteristic of the *emanated, extended, or manifested* state – extension being characteristic of the emanated and thus limited state in which we experience ourselves in the cosmic physical plane. Space is part of the substance of the emanated great Cosmic Entity; time consists of a series of events – all that transpires during involution and evolution. This series of events, or time itself, leads up to the series of progressive expansions that constitute progress on the Path of Return to awareness of the emanating Oneness. At a non-emanated/non-extended level of Unity – i.e., universal pralaya – time is not and space is not.

Given the knowledge that time and space are illusory, one may suggest that scale too is illusory, as apparent scale depends upon the experience of spatial extension – which, again, is illusory. Atom, planet, solar system, galaxy, universe – may not only *correspond* to each other in microcosm-macrocosm but may *be* the same.

That is, an atom may *be* a universe and vice versa, and likewise at the various intermediate levels of apparent scale. The personal human mind can only speculate about such matters, but the statement from Master DK’s teachings that “the atom is as God, God as the atom”¹⁵ is consistent with this concept.

It should be noted similarly that terms such as “duration” of pralaya or “during” pralaya may be misleading, as they imply time, which does not exist in a state of non-extension/non-emanation. Time, again, is a series of events, experienced only in the emanated/extended/manifest state. However, just as *macrocosm* and *microcosm* are relative terms, so is *pralaya*. Within the emanated/manifested state, pralaya occurs at the many levels of emanation. Pralaya at a more microcosmic level does not imply coexistent pralaya at the more macrocosmic or emanating level. For example, between the human lifetimes of an individualized human soul is *pralaya* at that level of emanation, while the Planetary Logos and more macrocosmic levels remain in form and are not in a state of pralaya at that time.

Similarly, one may hypothesize as to whether the regress/progress of emanation/retraction could be infinite. One might suggest that our current scale restricts our scope of awareness so that we cannot see or even imagine its full extent either way, only hypothesize it. Progressive initiation would widen the scope, but simply to a wider ring-pass-not, still not the whole. It may be that when identification – expanded/expanding awareness and the scope of the perceived emanating Oneness – expands awareness to an extent that the currently imagined Oneness is apprehended (for example, our current comprehension of the universal or cosmic level), the horizon may become so expanded as to reveal that this itself is a microcosm within a yet greater macrocosm. The retraction to progressively greater levels of Unity may be infinite; and emanation/differentiation may be infinite (subatomic particles, the smallest level to which our current physics has been able to penetrate as yet, may be as universes to yet more microcosmic levels).

Furthermore, as noted above, the concept of scale depends upon our concept of space, itself a limitation of perception due to identification with differentiated, emanated levels. Therefore, it may be further hypothesized that what we identify as (supposedly smallest) microcosm may *be* macrocosm; for example, atom may be universe, universe may be atom. In other words, rather than the reiterated process of macrocosm-microcosm reflection being a linear process with ‘very big’ at one end of a linear scale and ‘very little’ at the other end of a linear scale as if they were opposites, the relation may be circular such that the apparently ‘very big’ may *be the same as* the apparently ‘very little.’ Again, Master DK’s statement that “the atom is as God, God as the atom”¹⁶ is consistent with this concept.

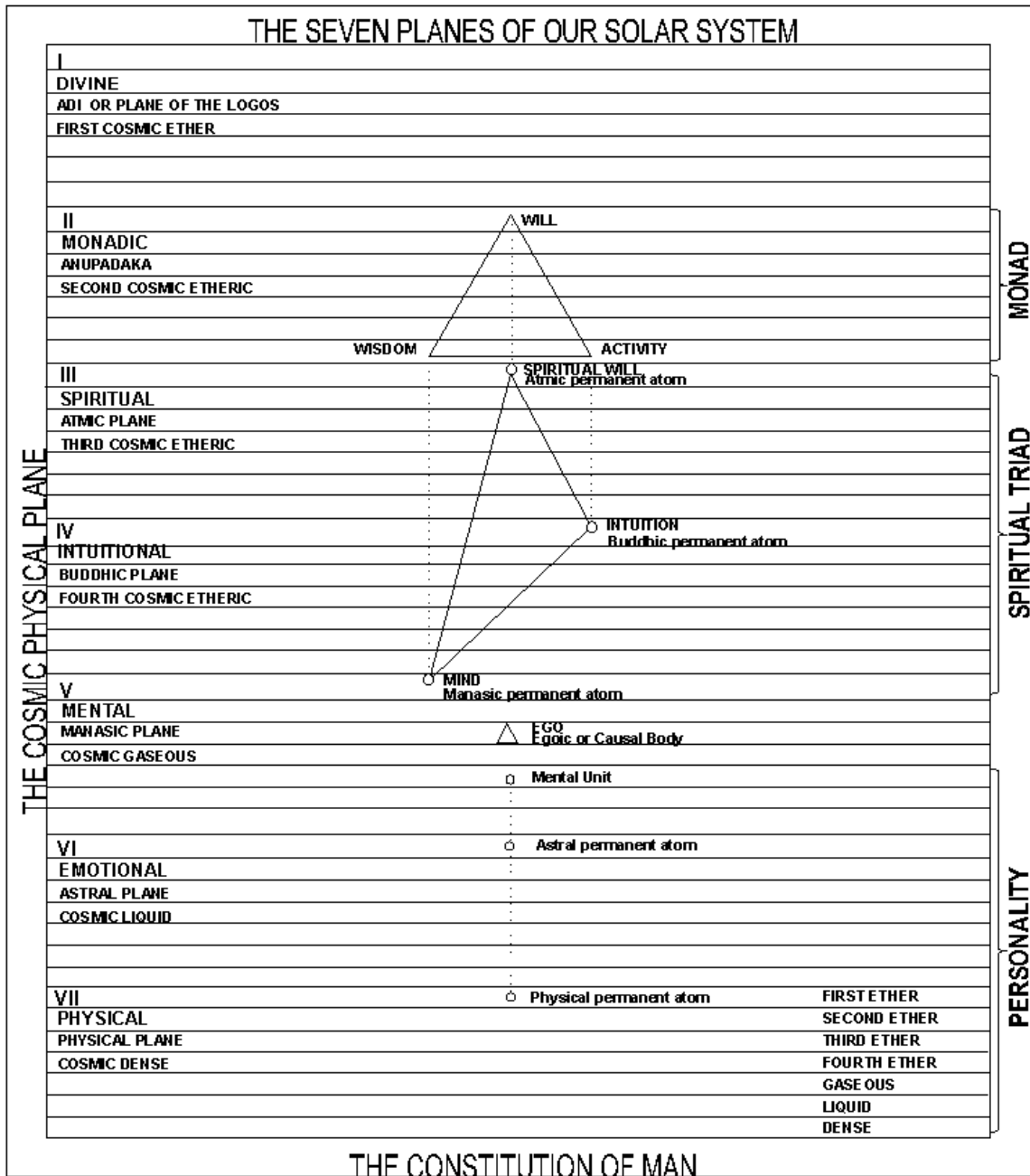
PLANES

The systemic planes are most commonly diagrammed as if in vertical spatial relation to each other, as in Chart III on p. 13 below.¹⁷ The systemic planes (i.e., the planes of our current Solar System) listed from ‘above,’ i.e., vibrationally higher, to ‘below,’ i.e., vibrationally lower/denser, are as follows:

1. Logoic plane, also known as the plane of Adi
2. Monadic plane
3. Atmic plane, also known as the spiritual or Nirvanic plane
4. Buddhic plane, also known as the plane of the intuition or Christ consciousness
5. Mental plane, also known as the manasic plane
6. Emotional plane, also known as the astral or kamic plane
7. Etheric-physical plane

The Seven Solar Systemic Planes¹⁸

CHART III



The three upper systemic planes are reflected in the three lower systemic planes, the middle plane of Buddhi being the transitional plane between the upper triplicity and the lower triplicity.

Each systemic plane has 7 subplanes representing finer gradations of the substance comprising the plane. The uppermost subplane of each plane represents the finest substance of that plane, referred to as the atomic subplane. Each subplane is related by numeric correspondence to the numerically similar systemic plane. For example, the third subplane of each plane corresponds to the third plane, Atma; thus, the third ether of the etheric-physical plane corresponds to the third plane, Atma.

In the mental plane, subplanes are divided into two groups. The upper three mental subplanes are known as the abstract or upper mental subplanes, and the lower four mental subplanes are known as the concrete or lower mental subplanes. The upper mental subplanes are the vibrational 'location' of the individualized soul (the causal vehicle). The causal vehicle (which consists of the egoic lotus, formed of the substance of the Solar Angels, plus the permanent atoms of the personality vehicles) is 'located' within the vibrational frequencies (the substance) of the third mental subplane for most of the eons of evolution in the worlds of form. Its vibration is refined to alignment with frequencies of the second mental subplane with progress on the Path of Return, near the end of the soul's long evolutionary process. The causal vehicle (the soul, individualized for purposes of manifestation in the three worlds of human endeavor) serves as a temporary bridge or link between higher (abstract) and lower (concrete) mental levels until sufficient progress on the Path of Return renders such an assist unnecessary.¹⁹

In the etheric-physical plane (sometimes referred to overall as the 'physical' plane), subplanes are also divided into two groups. The upper four subplanes of the systemic physical plane are etheric subplanes (in four grades of vibrational substance) and the lower three subplanes of the systemic physical plane are dense physical subplanes (subplanes five, six, and seven being gaseous, liquid, and solid respectively).

The phrase 'three worlds of human endeavor' refers to the lower 18 subplanes, i.e., the seven subplanes (four etheric and three dense) of the etheric-physical plane, the seven subplanes of the astral plane, and the four lower or concrete mental subplanes. These are the familiar levels of the personality, the physical body (including the etheric body), the emotions, and the personal mind respectively.

It must be kept in mind that the seven systemic planes are all *subplanes* of the *cosmic physical* plane. Therefore, from a cosmic perspective, *all are substance*. Corresponding to the systemic physical plane with its four etheric subplanes and three dense subplanes, the higher four systemic planes are the cosmic etheric subplanes, and the lower three systemic planes are the cosmic dense subplanes:

1. Systemic Logoic plane = first cosmic ether, "atomic"
2. Systemic Monadic plane = second cosmic ether, "subatomic"
3. Systemic Atmic plane = third cosmic ether, "super-etheric"
4. Systemic Buddhic plane = fourth cosmic ether (the bridging or transitional level between the ethers and dense manifest levels), "etheric"
5. Systemic mental plane = gaseous cosmic dense
6. Systemic emotional/astral plane = liquid cosmic dense
7. Systemic etheric-physical plane = solid cosmic dense

It must be noted that the spatial relationship between planes implied by the vertical imagery is analogy only. The imagery is used to help the concrete mind to conceptualize the planes, and does not represent any actual relationship in space between the various planes. The planes are *vibrational*

states, not spatially circumscribed locations. The only occultly factual ‘above’ or ‘below’ with regard to the planes is their relative vibrational frequency.

Correspondingly, the implication of the vertical imagery that progress on the Path of Return consists of progressively ascending from one plane to the next as if climbing a ‘ladder’ is analogy only. Again, the only *real* ‘higher’ or ‘lower’ is the vibrational level with which the aspirant/disciple resonates, identifies, or *is*. Progress on the Path of Return consists of a series of progressively expanding rings-pass-not of awareness, identification, and potency; the ‘higher’ the vibrational level, the more comprehensive the unity experienced. The awareness of each individualized Divine spark progressively identifies with a more comprehensive unity with progress on the Path. With the expanded awareness and identification comes an expansion of power to assist (apparent) ‘others’ on the Path of Return – and correspondingly increased responsibility to do so.

Additionally, it should be noted that progressive stages on the Path of Return overlap substantially, as Master DK tells us.²⁰ The Pilgrim on the Path of Return does not neatly complete one stage in full before embarking on the next stage; rather, progress toward the subsequent stage begins well before the previous stage is entirely completed.

A different analogy that may help dispel the illusion of verticality is a relationship of inner-outer, with the planes that are depicted as ‘higher’ in vertical illustration, instead imagined as more ‘inner’ or *subjective* compared to the outer, more *objective* planes that are depicted as ‘lower’ in vertical illustration. However, again, the implied spatial relationship between planes is analogy only, to help the concrete mind to conceptualize an occult reality.

The occult reality is that what are referred to as *planes* represent gradations of vibrational frequencies of their substance (which is composed of devic lives). That is, planes represent *states of awareness*, not physical locations in relative spatial relationship to each other. If referred to in spatial terms, the planes all fully interpenetrate without spatial limitation or definition. Terms such as *denser* and *rarified*, or *coarser* and *finer*, can also be used to refer to vibrational differences between the planes considered *lower* and *higher* respectively, the *higher* planes being of less dense/more rarified substance of finer vibrational quality; the *lower* planes being of denser substance and coarser vibrational quality. The subplanes are finer differentiations of these vibrational states or states of awareness.

Applying the familiar metaphor of the planes as if they were vertically stacked to the above emanatory image on p. 5, the verticality metaphor would apply to *each* extension or projection, *each* outwardly directed externalization from the emanating Oneness. The ‘upper’ planes are ‘closer’ (more vibrationally similar) to the emanating Oneness; the ‘lower’ planes are ‘further out’, i.e., more vibrationally dissimilar in the differentiated state compared to the emanating Oneness, because they represent awareness that is more limited in scope of awareness, power, and identity. Again, though, the spatial metaphor is not to be taken literally. It should be noted again as well that the complexity is much greater than the image on p. 5 shows. From each point on each ‘line’ of emanation (which, again, is simply metaphor), further externalizations/emanations may extend or radiate out, and further externalizations from each point on *these* emanations, etc.

Progress on the Path of Return consists of resonating with, and eventually *as*, vibrational states that are progressively ‘higher,’ that is, closer to the vibrational state of the original emanating Unity of which the individualized Divine spark is an emanated differentiation in time and space. It is a *choice* of each individualized spark of the Divine (including but not limited to each human individual) with which

vibrational level(s) it resonates, or in which it is polarized. This choice is not made consciously in the involutory stages or early in the evolutionary stages, but becomes a more and more conscious choice with progress on the Path. As this becomes an increasingly conscious choice, progress on the Path of Return is able to accelerate according to the degree to which the choice is conscious – choice being an act of the Will.

Progress on the Path of Return consists of the stable level of one's awareness being progressively polarized at vibrationally higher levels. Each stage, including the initial identification with physical levels, is part of the process and is therefore appropriate initially, but is to be transcended in time with progress on the Path of Return. For example, very early on the Path of Return, one may still be identified with the physical vehicle, i.e., with the substance of the systemic physical plane. In the early stages, this is natural and appropriate. However, with progress on the Path, a point is reached where this becomes a limitation and is therefore to be transcended. This identification, appropriate to earlier stages on the Path, with progress subsequently becomes *mis*-identification, which then is gradually and eventually transcended. The aspirant is next identified with emotion, i.e., with the substance of the systemic astral plane. This too is appropriate and represents progress initially, but in turn is likewise to be transcended. As identification with the substance of the astral plane is gradually and eventually transcended, the identification is with the lower mind and personality as a whole (i.e., the focal point of the awareness is polarized in the lower mental subplanes). Again, this represents progress initially, but must also be transcended in turn. Through this stage, identification is still within the lower 18 subplanes.

The next stage is identification with the soul in the upper mental subplanes, the first level of identification 'above' the 18 lower subplanes (although still within cosmic dense physical levels). The process reiterates repeatedly at the many gradations of vibrational levels, each stage of progress on the Path representing identification with progressively higher vibrational levels (again, in substantially overlapping fashion). Subsequently identification will be with Buddhi, then Atma, and eventually with further progress, the Monadic level. The process will eventually continue through abstraction from the cosmic physical plane altogether and polarization on vibrationally higher cosmic planes, first the astral, then mental, etc.

Atma-Buddhi-Manas: The Spiritual Triad

The term *Atma-Buddhi-Manas* refers to the Spiritual Triad, which is the first level of reflection or vibrational step-down of the threefold Monad. The three planes involved in the Spiritual Triad are the Atmic plane (third systemic plane), the Buddhic plane (fourth systemic plane), and the upper mental subplanes (upper subplanes of the fifth systemic plane), the term *Manas* referring to the mental plane. Within the frequencies of the Spiritual Triad, Atma is the step-down or reflection of the first aspect of the Monadic trinity, Buddhi is the step-down or reflection of the second aspect of the Monadic trinity, and Manas is the step-down or reflection of the third aspect of the Monadic trinity.

The Spiritual Triad is a direct parallel and higher correspondence to the threefold egoic lotus in the upper mental subplanes, and on a lower turn of the spiral, is also a parallel to and higher correspondence of the personality and its three vehicles in the lower 18 subplanes. Eventually, as we know from Master DK's teachings, the intermediary of the soul is no longer needed. Then the manifest vehicles in the three world of human endeavor (i.e., the personality) will directly express Triadal energies, thus more directly reflecting and expressing the Monad.

The entire Spiritual Triad is *first* aspect in the triplicity of Spiritual Triad (as reflection of Monad)-soul-personality, in which Monad and its first reflection the Spiritual Triad represent the first aspect, the soul represents the second aspect, and the personality represents the third aspect.

Atma-Buddhi

The term *Atma-Buddhi* is used to refer collectively to the upper and middle aspects (vibrationally) of the Spiritual Triad, the plane of Atma representing the first aspect and the plane of Buddhi representing the second aspect, both in vibrational step-down from the Monadic trinity. Both are cosmic etheric subplanes, the plane of Atma being the third cosmic etheric subplane and the plane of Buddhi being the fourth cosmic etheric subplane, the latter the transitional etheric plane just prior vibrationally to densification (the systemic mental, astral-emotional, and etheric-physical planes all being dense physical subplanes from a cosmic perspective). All seven Atmic subplanes and all seven Buddhic subplanes are included within the Spiritual Triad. The vibrationally highest subplane (the first or atomic subplane) of each is the vibrational level that includes the permanent atom of that plane, the nucleus around which the sheath of the substance of the respective plane forms with the initiate's progress on the Path.

Atma-Buddhi at Triadal levels is a higher correspondence to kama-manas at lower vibrational levels (Atma is reflected in manas, Buddhi in the astral vehicle).²¹

Buddhi-Manas

The term Buddhi-Manas is used to refer collectively to the middle and lower aspects (vibrationally) of the Spiritual Triad, the plane of Buddhi representing the second aspect and Manas (upper mental subplanes) representing the third aspect, both in step-down from the Monadic trinity. Also of importance, Manas (representing the third aspect within the Spiritual Triad) directly reflects Atma (the first aspect within the Spiritual Triad).

As noted above, the systemic planes of Atma and Buddhi are etheric subplanes of the cosmic physical plane. Manas differs from the other two aspects of the Spiritual Triad in that Manas is a dense subplane of the cosmic physical plane (the entire systemic mental plane is dense substance from a cosmic perspective, including the upper mental subplanes). Although dense physical from a cosmic perspective, Manas being part of the Spiritual Triad facilitates bridging from cosmic etheric to cosmic dense physical levels. This 'anchors' the Spiritual Triad in the cosmic dense physical subplanes, facilitating transmission/translation, i.e., vibrational step-down, of both the Will from the plane of Atma and Ideas from the plane of Buddhi into the cosmic dense physical subplanes.

Another difference between Manas and the other two aspects of the Spiritual Triad is that Manas as third aspect, intelligence, was brought to full expression in the prior solar system. This development of third aspect is carried over from that previous system, latent in the substance of this current solar system.²² What was the culmination of the prior solar system is the starting point of the current solar system, in which the *second* aspect is to come to full expression/development (hence Master DK's statement that Buddhi is the goal for current humanity).

THE SYSTEMIC PLANE OF ATMA

*The “first qualified differentiation of the Monad life”*²³

As the process of emanation/creation occurs, the original emanating unity represents the first aspect; the *process* of emanation/creation *and* that which is emanated/creating represent the third aspect; and the relational energy connecting all that has differentiated/been created represents the second aspect. This process repeats at many, many levels of iteration, each level of creation/emanation representing a further differentiation of the emanating level of Unity.

Within the cosmic physical plane, i.e., the seven systemic planes, the plane of Atma is the third systemic plane counting from above downward. Therefore, by correspondence, it is closely associated with the third aspect and displays characteristics of the third aspect and third ray, active intelligence or adaptability. It is the plane of Brahma, the Third Logos, associated with matter, the mother aspect, the personality, the not-self, and form – but on a higher turn of the spiral than these as they are reflected in the three worlds of human endeavor. The systemic plane of Atma is a differentiation or emanation of that which is vibrationally ‘above’ its frequencies, and a source of emanation of that which is vibrationally ‘below’ its frequencies.

At the same time, secondarily (i.e., at a more microcosmic level), the plane of Atma is the *first* or uppermost level (vibrationally) of the Spiritual Triad. The Spiritual Triad is the threefold reflection or expression of the Monad, and the higher correspondence of the threefold personality (initially via the intermediary of the causal body). Master DK refers to the plane of Atma as the “first qualified differentiation of the Monad life,”²⁴ i.e., the first level of expression of the Monad as the Monad extends or projects Itself into denser levels of manifestation, continuing the emanatory process in which It is Itself a differentiation. Master DK has described the frequencies of the plane of Atma as “spiritually direct will intention.”²⁵

The phrase “first qualified differentiation of the Monad life” is considered in analytical fashion in its component parts below.

“First” – the plane of Atma is the *first* level of reflection, vibrational step-down, or emanation of the Monad, limited compared to the Monad, but less limited compared to that which is vibrationally lower than Atma. Although the Monad is, in fact, threefold, as a whole it represents the first aspect, the Father, Spirit, or Will aspect (compared to the Son/soul/second aspect and personality/matter/third aspect). Similarly, within the context of the Spiritual Triad, the quality of the Atmic plane is the spiritual will, the *first* aspect.

“Qualified” – a secondary, conditioning energy²⁶ that modifies an original or originating energy. Qualification is an effect of vibrational step-down, which can also be understood as a vibrational filtering. The range of frequencies transmitted is limited by the filtering inherent in the vibrational step-down process. This limitation is a consequence of the emanatory process itself, with progressive limitation introduced at each level of emanation or vibrational step-down. In other words, for example, the potency of the plane of Atma is less than that of the plane of the Monad.

“Differentiation” – distinction or appearance of separation, which is a consequence of the emanatory process. *Differentiation from*, or *distinction compared to*, is a result of the circumscription of the ring-pass-not of experience at each level of emanation. The plane of Atma represents the first Monad

aspect, but again in vibrationally filtered or stepped-down form, not carrying the full scope of awareness, identity, or potency of the first aspect at the Monad level. It is of note that this vibrational stepping down or filtering performs the function of making the energies more accessible to Divine sparks that are polarized at yet lower vibrational levels. The aspirant/disciple can, for example, receive Atmic energies earlier on the Path than he can directly receive Monadic Will energies; and on a yet lower turn of the spiral, the aspirant/disciple can receive the Will energies of the soul before he can receive Atmic energies directly.

“Of the Monadic Life” – the Monad is emanator of the Spiritual Triad, including the first aspect of the Triad, Atma.

The plane of Atma therefore represents, expresses, or vibrationally steps down, the Will aspect of the Monad, which Master DK describes as “its major aspect.”²⁷ Because it represents the first aspect in emanation or step-down from the Monad (as well as from the plane of Adi), the plane of Atma is also known as the *Spiritual plane* or *plane of the Spiritual Will*.

As extension or differentiation of the planes of Adi and the Monad, Atma (the third systemic plane) is microcosm or reflection, more limited than they are, and thus third aspect. At the same time, it is first aspect within the frequencies of the Spiritual Triad and is macrocosm to that which it emanates and in which it reflects itself.

Atma is a plane of synthesis, albeit on a lesser scale than the planes of Adi and the Monad. In fact, all planes are planes of synthesis to planes that are vibrationally below them. Additionally, as the third systemic plane and an expression of the third aspect, it is the plane that synthesizes the four rays of attribute (the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh rays).²⁸ Additionally, the plane of Atma is the synthetic (i.e., the vibrationally highest) plane of the Spiritual Triad. It is also the synthetic plane (i.e., the vibrationally highest) of the *five* worlds of human evolution. The phrase ‘five worlds of human evolution’ includes the Buddhic and Atmic planes, as well as the ‘*three* worlds of human evolution,’ the latter referring to the (lower) mental subplanes, and to the astral/emotional and etheric-physical planes.

In the process of further reflection into denser levels, Atma is reflected in the mental plane, initially the upper three mental subplanes. In a disciple whose lower mind is ‘vertically’ oriented to the subjective realms of the soul/consciousness (rather than ‘horizontally’ oriented to the objective or manifest worlds), energy patterns in the abstract mental levels (for example, based on impression from Atma) are received by the lower mind and impress the physical brain via the etheric vehicle. Atma, the reflected Will aspect at Triadal levels, is thus most directly reflected in Manas, mental substance, and derivatively or secondarily reflected in the etheric vehicle, and from thence in the physical brain. As we know from Master DK’s teachings, the soul is the intermediary between higher and lower mental levels prior to the fourth initiation, by which time the temporary link between higher and lower mind provided by the soul is no longer needed.

Subplanes of Atma

The first Atmic subplane counting from above is the atomic subplane, as with all of the planes. The Atmic atomic (first) subplane is the vibrational ‘location’ (vibrational frequencies) of the Atmic permanent atom, the nucleus around which the Atmic sheath begins to form when progress on the Path of Return is such that the Atmic energies begin to be received directly.

Master DK does not speak as much about division of subplanes of Atma into two groups as he does about division of the mental plane and etheric-physical plane into two groups. This is as would be expected, because his teachings are addressed to aspirants/disciples working toward initiations up to and including the third initiation, well before polarization in the plane of Atma (which occurs at the fifth initiation).

Nonetheless, Master DK does indicate a specific distinction between the upper three Atmic subplanes and the lower four Atmic subplanes, in parallel with the division in the mental plane. He states, “Just as the three planes of the Ego on the mental plane dominate the remaining planes in the three worlds, so in the five worlds of the Hierarchy the three higher subplanes of the Atmic plane hold an analogous place.”²⁹ In other words, as the three abstract mental subplanes (including the causal vehicle) are to the lower 18 subplanes, so are the upper three Atmic subplanes to the lower 32 subplanes (32 = the 7 subplanes each of the etheric-physical, astral/emotional, mental, and Buddhic planes, plus the lower 4 Atmic subplanes).

This is consistent with Atma being directly reflected in the mental plane. As a lower iteration or emanation (vibrational step-down) of the Will aspect than Atma (which itself is an iteration, emanation, or vibrational step-down of the Will aspect at higher vibrational levels), the substance of the mental plane reflects the structure of the substance of the Atmic plane.

Additionally, specific correspondences are given to the lower five Atmic subplanes as below:

Seventh (lowest) Atmic subplane – Beatitude

Sixth Atmic subplane – Active Service

Fifth Atmic subplane – Realization

Fourth Atmic subplane – Perfection

Third Atmic subplane – All Knowledge

Correspondence is not given to the atomic and subatomic Atmic subplanes because these are even further beyond the scope of current disciples for whom Master DK is writing.

The above are higher correspondences to the senses, discussed further below in the section pertaining to correspondence between the senses and the plane of Atma.

Relation of Atma to Mental Plane

Although the Buddhic plane is the plane immediately below Atma vibrationally, there is a close relationship between planes in the ‘hard line’ of vibrational descent: 1-3-5-7 (as there is between the planes in the ‘soft line’ of vibrational descent, 2-4-6). In the ‘hard line’ of descent, one can see Atma (3, third systemic plane) as a step-down of Adi (1, first systemic plane). Indeed, Master DK states that on the Atmic plane, the initiate begins to be aware of the “note Logoic” (i.e., energy of the first or Logoic systemic plane).³⁰ One can also see the mental plane (5, fifth systemic plane) as the direct reflector of Atma (3, third systemic plane); and one can see the etheric (7, seventh systemic plane) as the next level reflector of the Will aspect in the ‘hard line’ of descent (etheric levels are the recipient initially, from which the energy is stepped down further to the dense physical vehicle).

It follows that the planes in the ‘hard line’ grouping energize planes ‘downstream’ in that grouping; in other words, they energize planes vibrationally ‘lower’ or denser than themselves in that grouping. Therefore, for example, the mental (fifth) systemic plane is energized by the Logoic (first) systemic plane, and more directly by the Atmic (third) systemic plane (as well as by the cosmic mental plane).

Hence, when substantially cleared of illusion, the mental vehicle can reflect Atmic energies of Will and Purpose. Similarly, the astral (sixth) systemic plane is energized by the Monadic (second) systemic plane, and more directly by the Buddhic (fourth) systemic plane, as well as by the cosmic astral plane (hence when substantially cleared of glamour, the astral vehicle can reflect the energies of Buddhi).³¹

The hard-line versus soft-line groupings represent lines of least resistance due to vibrational resonance. Planes 1, 3, 5, and 7 particularly resonate with each other. Considering the three solar systems of which ours is the second, in the first solar system (in which the third aspect came to full expression), the line of development (progress on the Path of Return) was physical, mental, and Atmic (7-5-3), with the Atmic being the highest point of achievement in that system. Master DK states that the third ray and fifth ray were closely allied in that system;³² this close relation continues in this second system as seen in the close relation between Atma and the mental plane. In our current second solar system (in which the second aspect is to come to full expression), the soft-line rays dominate, with the line of least resistance being the astral, Buddhic, and Monadic energies (6-4-2). In the third solar system (in which the first or Will aspect is to come to full expression), the line of development will be mental, Atmic, and Logoic (5-3-1).³³

The four rays of attribute are synthesized by the third ray of aspect, i.e., on the Atmic plane, and Master DK states that manas consists of the four rays of attribute plus the third ray of aspect which synthesizes them as the “totality of manasic energy.”³⁴

Therefore, in several respects the plane of Atma is seen to be very closely related to the mental plane, which is its reflection or step-down in the ‘hard-line’ descent of energies.

The plane of Atma can also be seen to be related to the mental plane by virtue of their respective positions on both ‘sides’ (vibrationally) of the Buddhic plane, Buddhi being the bridging or middle plane of the seven planes. The Atmic plane is the plane immediately above the Buddhic plane vibrationally, and the mental plane is the plane immediately below the Buddhic plane vibrationally.

This corresponds to their respective positions in the Spiritual Triad as well, with Atma being the highest aspect of the Spiritual Triad, Buddhi the middle aspect of the Spiritual Triad, and the manasic permanent atom in the atomic mental subplane the lowest aspect vibrationally of the Spiritual Triad.

Of note, Master DK would caution us not to be glamoured into judgment of considering a vibrationally ‘lower’ level to be somehow less valuable than a vibrationally ‘higher’ level. In occult fact, all are Divine. Each serves a purpose in the emanation-retraction (involution-evolution) cycle, functioning as the revealer of truth at the appropriate stage on the Path of Return.

In a disciple who is sufficiently advanced on the Path of Return to receive and work with Atmic energies (i.e., developing resonance with, and eventually *as* Atmic energies), energies of the Will aspect descend (vibrationally) from Atma to the upper mental subplanes, then directly descend from the upper mental subplanes (further vibrational step-down) to the lower mind, specifically, the mental unit in the fourth mental subplane (prior to this stage on the Path of Return, Atmic energies are further filtered by the will aspect of the soul between upper and lower mental levels). From the lower mind, the Will energy descends (vibrationally) to the etheric vehicle, and the impression is subsequently registered in the physical brain. This presupposes a lower mind that is oriented ‘upward’ or ‘inward,’ i.e., ‘vertically,’ rather than ‘horizontally’ toward the outer or manifest worlds.

Looking at this from another perspective, just as the purified astral vehicle (purified of glamour eventually, with progress on the Path of Return) is the vehicle for transmitting the energies of Buddhi into the lower 18 subplanes, so is the purified mind (purified of illusion eventually, with progress on the Path) the vehicle for transmitting the energies of Atma into the lower 18 subplanes. Master DK states that “it is within the substance of the Atmic plane that the activity is set up which can impress the abstract mind.”³⁵ He states that during meditation (meditation that is in the head versus the heart), the force comes from the abstract manasic levels initially, and eventually from the Atmic levels³⁶ with progress on the Path of Return.

Master DK additionally notes that meditation is the Atmic correspondence or sublimation of the mental process,³⁷ again indicating that Atma is the vibrationally higher correspondence to mental substance. We know from His teachings that to the Masters, the mental plane is used only for communication purposes with those individualized sparks of the Divine who are still identified with the substance of the lower 18 subplanes. From a cosmic perspective, the entire mental plane is dense substance, as well as the entire astral/emotional and etheric-physical planes being dense substance; hence, the Masters use the mental plane as a plane of ‘meeting’/communication, a step-down vibrational level in cosmic dense substance.

Relation of Atma to Etheric-Physical Plane

The systemic Atmic plane energizes the systemic dense physical plane via the systemic etheric subplanes (via the intermediary of the mental plane). As noted above, energies in the hard-line grouping (as well as separately in the soft-line grouping) flow ‘downstream’ and thus energize planes vibrationally ‘lower’ or denser than themselves. Therefore, the systemic dense physical plane is energized via its etheric subplanes by the Logoic (first) systemic plane; more directly by the Atmic (third) systemic plane, the third cosmic ether; and yet more directly by the mental (fifth) systemic plane, the cosmic gaseous subplane. (The dense physical plane is also energized by the planetary etheric body, and via the Logoic permanent atom, as well as by cosmic levels.)³⁸

Atma and the Antahkarana

The Antahkarana is often spoken of as a bridge of light, strands of energy, etc., but again the implied physical reference is analogy/metaphor only to help the lower mind begin to understand the concept. ‘Construction of the Antahkarana’ refers to developing vibrational resonance between the personality and progressively higher vibrational levels, first the soul, then gradually progressively higher Triadal levels. The frequencies of the Antahkarana always *exist* in the emanated universe; it is the *awareness* of the emanated Divine spark (such as the aspirant/disciple) that is initially not yet able to encompass those frequencies within his ring-pass-not. In ‘constructing the Antahkarana,’ the aspirant/disciple/initiate is expanding his ring-pass-not to gradually encompass more of the progressively higher vibrational frequencies of the Spiritual Triad within his awareness.

Vibrational resonance is often referred to as *alignment* or *infusion*. When Master DK speaks of developing *alignment* between soul and personality, or *aligning* soul and personality, or of *infusing* soul energies into the personality, He is referring to the process whereby the personality vibrationally becomes *more like* the soul. As this process progresses (regardless of the terminology used to describe it), the individual is living more and more *as* the soul, which provides the service of making these frequencies more available to (apparent) ‘others’ in the three worlds of human endeavor. This process of infusion leads eventually to *fusion* of soul and personality (known as the third initiation), when the disciple is able to be of considerably greater service to humanity because he is no longer adding to the glamour and illusion of humanity, but can actively work to dissipate and dispel glamour and illusion

respectively for humanity as a whole. Initiations consist of developed and stabilized vibrational resonance at progressively higher planes.

The first stage of the Antahkarana refers to developing vibrational resonance between personality and soul. The (vibrational) apex of the personality is in the fourth mental subplane (mental unit), the highest vibrational level in the lower mind and personality as a whole. As this early stage of the Antahkarana is being developed, the Will from the plane of Atma is being implemented, impulsing progress on the Path of Return (as it does all progress on the Path of Return), but the Will aspect is vibrationally stepped down via the soul prior to reaching the personality (specifically, stepped down via the sacrifice 'petals' of each of the three tiers of 'petals' in the egoic lotus, the knowledge tier, the love tier, and the sacrifice tier).

As this vibrational resonance between personality and soul becomes relatively stabilized, the second stage of the Antahkarana begins to be activated (again, with progress occurring in substantially overlapping fashion). The second stage of the Antahkarana refers to the 'bridge' or developing vibrational resonance between the increasingly fused personality-soul and the Spiritual Triad. Initially resonance develops with the vibrationally 'lowest' aspect of the Spiritual Triad, the vibrational level of the manasic permanent atom in the first or atomic mental subplane, i.e., the purest mental subplane. The manasic permanent atom directly reflects the Will from the Atmic plane. Therefore, as this second stage of the Antahkarana is being developed, the disciple is increasingly able to more accurately register the Will and thus implement the Purpose of the Planetary Logos.

Again in substantially overlapping fashion, vibrational resonance or alignment develops with the next higher levels (vibrationally) of the Spiritual Triad, the plane of Buddhi. As this resonance strengthens, resonance or alignment progressively develops with the next higher level (vibrationally) of the Spiritual Triad, the plane of Atma. Again, the frequencies already exist in the emanated/manifest universe; what is being 'constructed' or *activated* is the disciple's ability to encompass these higher frequencies in his awareness, to register and integrate these frequencies and thus implement them in his expressed life of service.

This process consists of progressively expanding rings-pass-not, widened spheres of the disciple's awareness of and identification with unity, and thus power to serve. Some of these expansions constitute initiations, but it should be noted that not every expansion constitutes an initiation; many smaller expansions cumulatively lead up to each initiation.

Radiance and magnetism are involved in Antahkarana building, as well as invocation and evocation. The vibrationally 'higher' level is magnetic to a Divine spark that currently experiences self at a vibrationally lower level (i.e., that identifies with a vibrationally lower level). As the Divine spark at the vibrationally lower level responds to the magnetic vibrationally higher energies, it begins to occultly radiate; this is, the sphere of its energetic influence begins to extend beyond the ring-pass-not of the form in which it was previously (temporarily) imprisoned. The form may be retained, but the awareness or sense of self becomes identified with the magnetic, vibrationally higher level as alignment/resonance develops with that higher vibrational level.

The invocation-evocation process is a result of attention (often thought) directing energy. Master DK describes this with the phrase "*The tension of the lower evokes the attention of the higher.*"³⁹ That is, the aspirant/disciple's focused orientation toward the vibrationally higher levels that becomes increasingly steadier as desire is replaced with mental aspiration, is invocative of response from the

vibrationally higher level. The “point of tension,” or focal point of the awareness, does not itself constitute fusion with the higher level, but gradually brings about, over time, fusion with the vibrationally higher level (that is, living/expressing *as* that higher level). Master DK informs us that these points of tension are the basis of all progress on the Path of Return; and as the disciple progresses on the Path, he consciously works to bring about these points of tension at progressively higher vibrational levels.⁴⁰

Eventually, with further progress on the Path of Return, the personality is in direct resonance with the frequencies of the Spiritual Triad. Then the temporary link between lower mind and higher mind (the latter being the lowest vibrational level of the Spiritual Triad) provided by the soul is no longer needed, and the mental substance of the causal vehicle begins to disperse with the fourth initiation. Then the Monad (via the Spiritual Triad) expresses more directly through the personality. Atma is registered in the mind, transmitted from there to the etheric vehicle and from there to the brain.

In terms of the above discussion of emanation and subsequent de-emanation/retraction/Return, it can be seen that the process of constructing (or *activating*) the Antahkarana, or developing alignment, are ways to describe one of the means by which the disciple facilitates the process of de-emanation or retraction, i.e., gradual return in step-wise fashion to awareness of the emanating Oneness.

Relation of Plane of Atma to Soul

The soul, as we know from Master DK’s teachings, is a temporary intermediary, filter, or vibrational step-down level between the Spiritual Triad and the personality. As discussed above, the causal vehicle (specifically, the egoic lotus) in the (background) substance of the third mental subplane (transitioning vibrationally upward to second mental subplane with progress on the Path) is instrumental in bridging the vibrational gap between the personality and the Spiritual Triad, initially between the mental unit in the fourth mental subplane and the manasic permanent atom in the first mental subplane, until the disciple’s awareness can bridge this vibrational gap itself.

Laws of the Soul

The soul functions as a vibrational bridge in very specific ways in acting as a filter of Triadal energies for their transmission to personality levels. The first six of the seven *Laws of the Soul* refer to energies that descend vibrationally from the Spiritual Triad to the soul, and then (stepped down further vibrationally) from the soul to the personality. More specifically, Soul Laws Four, Five, and Six refer to energies from specific aspects of the threefold Spiritual Triad to specific aspects of the threefold soul (egoic lotus); and Soul Laws One, Two, and Three refer to the further stepped-down specific energies from soul (egoic lotus) to personality.

The Law of the Soul most directly related to energies from the plane of Atma is the fourth Law of the Soul, the Law of Repulse (also known as the Law of All Destroying Angels). This Law of the Soul represents energies descending vibrationally from the plane of Atma to the sacrifice (Will) petals of the egoic lotus.⁴¹ Because these are Will and first ray energies, there is necessarily a destructive component: destructive of all that would hinder progress on the Path of Return and thus implementation of Plan and Purpose. In the early stages of the Path, the aspirant/disciple is applying these energies to his (mis)-identifications with the vehicles of manifestation.⁴² With the utilization of the Will energies, these mis-identifications are progressively repulsed, resulting in dis-identification with each particular lower vibrational level/vehicle in turn, a process that reiterates at multiple levels in the process of retraction or de-emanation.⁴³ Progress on the Path of Return accelerates with the direct and conscious use of the energies of Atma to intentionally facilitate that progress.

As his personal vehicles of manifestation are substantially cleared of distortion (glamour and illusion) and he is able to live as the soul (and eventually, with further progress, as the Monad via the Triadal energies), the disciple/initiate is increasingly able to utilize the Atmic energies on behalf of humanity as a whole. This includes the destructive use of the Will energies to destroy all that would hinder implementation of Plan and Purpose. For example, the disciple can work to dissipate glamour for humanity overall, which is important for the progress of humanity because glamour impedes the externalization of the Hierarchy and Reappearance of the Christ.

To put the energies of the fourth Law of the Soul in the context of the other Laws of the Soul, the Laws of the Soul and the energies that they represent are briefly outlined below.

The higher octave Laws of the Soul, Soul Laws 4, 5, and 6, represent energies descending vibrationally from the Spiritual Triad to specific energy frequencies (“petals”) in the egoic lotus. The disciple begins to respond directly to these energies when substantial resonance/alignment has been developed between personality and soul, such that Triadal energies are beginning to be registered directly.

- Energies from the Atmic permanent atom in the Atmic plane, the plane of Spiritual Will, descend (vibrationally) to the sacrifice petals in the egoic lotus. These energies are called the fourth Law of the Soul, the Law of Repulse or the Law of All Destroying Angels. This is the higher correspondence of, and works through, the first Law of the Soul, the Law of Sacrifice (which is the lower octave of these energies as they descend vibrationally from soul to personality).
- Energies from the Buddhic permanent atom in the Buddhic plane, the plane of intuition or pure reason, descend (vibrationally) to the love petals in the egoic lotus. These energies are called the fifth Law of the Soul, the Law of Group Progress or the Law of Elevation. This is the higher correspondence of, and works through, the second Law of the Soul, the Law of Magnetic Impulse (which is the lower octave of these energies as they descend vibrationally from soul to personality).
- Energies from the manasic permanent atom in the abstract subplanes of the mental plane descend (vibrationally) to the knowledge petals in the egoic lotus. These energies are called the sixth Law of the Soul, the Law of Expansive Response (for which no second name is given). This is the higher correspondence of, and works through, the third Law of the Soul, the Law of Service (which is the lower octave of these energies as they descend vibrationally from soul to personality).

The lower octave of the Laws of the Soul, Soul Laws 1, 2, and 3, represents energies descending vibrationally from specific energy frequencies (“petals”) in the egoic lotus to personality levels in the lower 18 systemic subplanes. The aspirant/disciple begins to respond to these energies first, before the higher octave of energies listed above (energies from Spiritual Triad to soul) is being consciously registered.

- Energies from the sacrifice petals of the egoic lotus descend (vibrationally) to personality levels in the lower 18 subplanes (specifically the base of spine and head centers). These energies are called the first Law of the Soul, the Law of Sacrifice or the Law of Those Who Choose to Die. This is the lower correspondence and vibrational step-down of the fourth Law of the Soul, the Law of

Repulse (which is the higher octave of these energies as they descend vibrationally from Spiritual Triad to soul).

- Energies from the love petals of the egoic lotus descend (vibrationally) to personality levels in the lower 18 subplanes (specifically the solar plexus and heart centers). These energies are called the second Law of the Soul, the Law of Magnetic Impulse or the Law of Polar Union. This is the lower correspondence and vibrational step-down of the fifth Law of the Soul, the Law of Group Progress (which is the higher octave of these energies as they descend vibrationally from Spiritual Triad to soul).
- Energies from the knowledge petals of the egoic lotus descend (vibrationally) to personality levels in the lower 18 subplanes (specifically the sacral and throat centers). These energies are called the third Law of the Soul, the Law of Service or the Law of Water and the Fishes. This is the lower correspondence and vibrational step-down of the sixth Law of the Soul, the Law of Expansive Response (which is the higher octave of these energies as they descend vibrationally from Spiritual Triad to soul).

The seventh Law of the Soul, the Law of the Lower Four or the Law of Etheric Union,⁴⁴ refers to polarization on the plane of Buddhi following dispersal of the causal vehicle at the fourth initiation. The seventh Law of the Soul therefore does not refer to energies descending to the soul (higher octave) or descending from soul to personality (lower octave) as did the other six Laws of the Soul. Instead, it represents transcendence of the need for the step-down, bypass, or filtering of Triadal energies that was provided by the egoic lotus in the causal vehicle.

It can therefore be seen that there is a specific correspondence between the three aspects of the Spiritual Triad and the three aspects of the soul, and in turn between the three aspects of the soul and the three vehicles of the personality; and that specific energies constitute the vibrational link between these levels. Eventually, with progress on the Path of Return and the dispersal of the causal vehicle at the fourth initiation, these energies become part of the direct vibrational link or bridge between the Spiritual Triad and the personality.

Although described above in terms of their relation to the individual disciple, it must be understood that these Laws are applicable to humanity as a whole, as well as to broader, more inclusive, 'higher' levels of macrocosm. For example, under the Law of Sacrifice, Sanat Kumara as instantiation of the Planetary Logos, He in whom we 'live and move and have our being,' has pledged to remain in form until 'the last weary Pilgrim has found his way home.' One can therefore see that occultly speaking, *sacrifice* is the taking of form – that which an unredeemed personality (a personality still identified with/attached to the substance of the lower 18 subplanes) *desires*. Sacrifice is typically thought of by the personality level (with an astral vehicle still oriented to the three worlds of human endeavor) as an undesirable giving up, a concept that is based upon attachment to the world of form. As the individualized Divine spark (any individualized form, including a human individual) progresses on the Path of Return to the point of no longer being attached to manifesting in the three worlds, under the Law of Sacrifice, *service* is the natural and joyous choice (not a resisted or enforced 'giving up' as the personality would interpret it earlier on the Path).

Master DK defines service not as specific actions (although action may follow), but as *being soul*, which makes these frequencies more available to apparent 'others' in the lower 18 subplanes. As Triadal energies, including the Atmic energies of the Will, are increasingly received and embodied, *being Triadal*

energies replaces *being soul* as the service that is a consequence of the disciple's progress on the Path of Return. When the disciple/initiate is expressing Triadal energies in the lower 18 subplanes, 'sacrifice' becomes the natural mode of expression and does not represent adversity as it may appear to be to the personality early on the Path. In fact, Master DK states that the Will itself *is* an expression of the Law of Sacrifice.⁴⁵

Atma and the Initiations

Initiation refers to an expanded ring-pass-not, such that the disciple develops awareness of a more comprehensive unity, and the corresponding power to serve within the broader sphere of that more comprehensive unity. Progress on the Path of Return is marked by a series of such expansions or initiations. A series of smaller (more microcosmic) such expansions leads up to each initiation.

As noted above, the first or Will aspect ultimately impels all progress on the Path of Return. In the early stages, such as the Path of Return leading up to the first initiation, as well as the many lifetimes after the first initiation until the second initiation is nearing, the Will aspect is stepped down several levels vibrationally, and typically is functioning unconsciously. That is, at these early stages, the aspirant is typically not working consciously or intentionally to progress on the Path of Return.

As the second initiation is approaching and the aspirant/disciple is working intentionally to dissipate glamour, the will aspect is coming into more conscious use, albeit still in stepped-down fashion, as the disciple uses the concrete mind to direct the light of the soul onto the astral plane in the process of dissipating glamour (utilizing the Technique of Light provided by Master DK).⁴⁶

With the approach of the third initiation and personality-soul fusion, there is an increased ability to register the Will aspect from the plane of Atma. Master DK states that the mind works in a new manner in working toward the third initiation. It was the lower or concrete mind that worked with the physical body in a transmuting capacity in working toward the first initiation; it was the soul that worked with the astral vehicle in a transforming capacity in working toward the second initiation; and it is the Spiritual Triad working through the higher/abstract mind that brings about the transfiguration of the third initiation.⁴⁷ Since the personality is aligned with the soul vibrationally at this point, step-down of the frequencies from soul to personality is no longer needed and therefore is no longer reducing the potency or directness of the Will energies as registered by the disciple/initiate.

With the fourth initiation, i.e., polarization in Buddhic frequencies and transcendence of the soul altogether, the disciple/initiate is even more closely related vibrationally to the plane of Atma and is continuing to develop increasing resonance with its frequencies, but is not yet polarized on the plane of Atma.

The fifth initiation is the initiation most specifically associated with the Atmic plane,⁴⁸ because it is with the fifth initiation that polarization shifts to the Atmic plane from the Buddhic plane. The fifth initiation is associated with the first ray⁴⁹ in the Atmic plane's capacity of representing the first aspect (Will and Purpose) within the Spiritual Triad. With the fifth initiation, the initiate comes into direct resonance with the Will and Purpose in the frequencies of the plane of Atma (previously he was more aware of Plan than Purpose, Plan being an effect or expression – a step-down – of Purpose). The fifth degree initiate is a Master.

Initiation V is known as the Revelation – revelation that includes the Way of the Higher Evolution. The fifth degree initiate becomes aware of the energies of the seven Paths available for his future service.

At the sixth initiation, the Decision, he will choose one of these seven ways as his path of future service and evolution. This is a free choice that the Master will make, but at the same time his specific choice is evoked by the energies expressed by these seven Paths in relation to the energies of Himself as an individualized Divine spark.

Energies flowing through the nadis, etheric energy channels underlying or substantiating the physical nervous system, will reflect the aspirant's/disciple's/initiate's stage on the Path of Return. These energies may be emotional, lower mental, soul (egoic), upper mental/manasic, Buddhic, and/or Atmic – again, the particular combination of energies present reflecting the disciple's stage on the Path of Return. The nadis carry the quality of the energy from the vibrational level in which the consciousness or awareness of the aspirant/disciple/initiate is focused.⁵⁰ Often there may be a mix of several energies of vibrationally adjacent planes present in the nadis because stages on the Path overlap substantially.

Atma and the Masters

Mastership generally refers to polarization in frequencies of the plane of Atma, i.e., a fifth degree initiate.⁵¹

Any individualized spark of the Divine naturally and unavoidably radiates those frequencies which it embodies. Being polarized on the plane of Atma (i.e., identified with Atmic frequencies), the Masters radiate Atmic energies. Therefore, an aspirant/disciple/initiate progressing gradually from a more peripheral to more central position in the Ashram will receive increased infusion of Atmic energies from the Master's aura.

Additionally, Master DK states that some of those whom we refer to as Masters are, in fact, Chohans, initiates of the sixth degree, who therefore are polarized on the Monadic plane. He specifically states that Master Morya and Master KH are both Chohans.⁵² He states that the Chohans *work in* the Buddhic and Atmic planes, i.e., these are the frequencies in which their Ashrams are focused.⁵³

The Ashram of a Master will be focused on specific Triadal levels based upon the purposes of that Ashram and Master, which as noted above may be a 'lower' plane vibrationally than the polarization of the Master or Chohan Himself. If the Ashram's task is focused on interpreting the will and purpose, the Ashram is focused on Atmic levels. If the Ashram's task is focused on developing group awareness and loving understanding, i.e., embodying the Christ energy and making this energy more available to humanity, the Ashram will be focused on Buddhic levels. If the Ashram's task involves translating the Atmic and Buddhic energies into manifest human civilization that displays right relations, embodying Plan and Purpose in form, the Ashram may be focused on abstract mental levels. Master DK states that Master Morya's Ashram is focused on Atmic levels; the Ashram of Master KH and Master DK is focused on Buddhic levels; and the Ashram of Master R. is focused in upper mental levels. Initiates and disciples working in these Ashrams will similarly have their developmental and service tasks focused at the corresponding vibrational levels.⁵⁴ The Masters in their Ashrams are receiving inflow of yet higher energies, which they translate or step-down vibrationally for use by the members of their Ashram. The Hierarchy receives inflow from the cosmic astral plane, and Shamballa receives inflow from the cosmic mental plane (these latter energies reach the Hierarchy in stepped-down form).⁵⁵

Atma and the Nirmanakayas

The Nirmanakayas, or divine Contemplatives, receive impression from Shamballa as to the Planetary Logos' Will and Purpose. They function as filters, vibrational step-down agents from Shamballa to Hierarchy. They are focused in the spiritual or Atmic vehicle to such an extent that their attention is

withdrawn not only from the three worlds of human endeavor (lower mental subplanes, astral/emotional plane, and etheric-physical plane), but also from the upper mental subplanes and the Buddhic plane.⁵⁶ Their contemplative activity, under direct inspiration of the Buddhas of Activity, channels the seven ray energies as qualified by the Planetary Logos' creative Purpose in Shamballa, and builds a reservoir of the resulting energies for use in implementation of the Plan by the Hierarchy.⁵⁷

The Nirmanakayas therefore bridge vibrationally between Shamballa and the Hierarchy, i.e., between the Planetary Logos' head and heart centers respectively. The Masters (and the rest of the Hierarchy) receive impression from Shamballa *via* the Nirmanakayas; the latter are thus agents for impressing the Hierarchy with Planetary Purpose,⁵⁸ as well as filtering/vibrationally stepping down Shamballic energies for reception by Hierarchy.

The New Group of World Servers (NGWS) is the lower correspondence of the Nirmanakayas,⁵⁹ i.e., their reflection on a lower turn of the spiral. The Nirmanakayas bridge vibrationally between Shamballa and Hierarchy (planetary head and heart centers); the NGWS bridges vibrationally between Hierarchy and humanity (planetary heart and throat centers).

CORRESPONDENCES TO THE PLANE OF ATMA

Third Aspect and other "Threes"

As the *third* systemic plane (counting from above), Atma is primarily associated with correspondences of *three*, including the following:

- The third aspect
- The third ray, active intelligence
- The third of the three centers in a major triangle in the Planetary Logos, i.e., humanity, the throat center of the Planetary Logos (head and heart, Shamballa and Hierarchy respectively, are the other two major Planetary centers involved in this triangle)
- Brahma (in the triplicity of Brahma, third aspect; Vishnu, second aspect; Shiva, first aspect)
- The physical sun (in the triplicity of physical sun; heart of sun; Central Spiritual sun)
- The personality (in the triplicity of Monad; soul; personality)
- The third manifest plane, the physical, reflecting the third highest, the Atmic⁶⁰
- The third initiation (although the third initiation more directly involves the mental plane, not the Atmic, the frequencies of Atma are able to be more directly registered with the third initiation) Master DK also states that the fifth initiation (polarization on the Atmic plane) marks the consummation of the third initiation.⁶¹

First Aspect and other "Ones"

As the *first* aspect within the frequencies of the Spiritual Triad, it may be hypothesized that Atma is secondarily (i.e., in relative microcosm) associated with other correspondences of *one*, including the following:

- The first aspect
- The first ray, Will or Power
- The first of the three centers in a major triangle in the Planetary Logos, i.e., Shamballa, the head center of the Planetary Logos (throat and heart, humanity and Hierarchy respectively, are the other two major Planetary centers involved in this triangle)
- Shiva (in the triplicity of Brahma, third aspect; Vishnu, second aspect; Shiva, first aspect)

- The Central Spiritual sun (in the triplicity of physical sun; heart of sun; Central Spiritual sun)
- The Monad, of which Atma is the first qualified differentiation (in the triplicity of Monad; soul; personality)
- The first plane, Adi, of which Atma is the first reflection in the 'hard line' descent of energies.

Second Aspect

As discussed above, the plane of Atma reflects energies of both the first and third aspects in its different capacities – primarily third aspect as the emanated third systemic plane, and secondarily first aspect as the highest aspect of the Spiritual Triad and emanator of vibrationally denser levels.

Additionally, the Atmic plane can also be associated with the second aspect, if the systemic planes are grouped as listed below:

- First or Will aspect – first systemic plane, the Logoic plane or plane of Adi, i.e., the cosmic first ether
- Second or Love-Wisdom aspect – second, **third**, and fourth systemic planes: the Monadic, **Atmic**, and Buddhic planes, i.e., the cosmic second, **third**, and fourth ethers
- Third or Active Intelligence aspect – fifth, sixth, and seventh systemic planes, the mental, astral/emotional, and etheric-physical planes, i.e., the cosmic dense physical subplanes.⁶²

Ethers

As the third systemic plane, the plane of Atma is the third cosmic ether, and therefore corresponds to the third etheric subplane of the systemic physical plane. With progress on the Path of Return such that Triadal energies are directly reflected in the personality, the cosmic etheric energies (Logoic, Monadic, Atmic, and Buddhic) are gradually substituted for the systemic four ethers respectively in the etheric vehicle.⁶³ The Masters who are not working through a physical vehicle have etheric vehicles composed of the four cosmic ethers, i.e., the systemic Logoic, Monadic, Atmic, and Buddhic frequencies.

Atmic frequencies will therefore be reflected in the third systemic ether within the etheric vehicle, gradually and with sufficient progress on the Path of Return. (Similarly, gradually and with sufficient progress on the Path of Return, the first systemic ether will reflect logoic energies, the second systemic ether will reflect Monadic energies, and the fourth systemic ether will reflect Buddhic energies.)⁶⁴

Additionally, the ethers are veils; we know this of the four ethers in the systemic physical plane. Although from our current perspective in the substance of the lower 18 subplanes, the plane of Atma would be a point of high attainment, we also know that from a cosmic perspective, the systemic plane of Atma is the third ether. Therefore, by correspondence, the systemic Atmic plane would also function as a veil from a cosmic perspective.

Colors

It is to be kept in mind that colors are expressions of force or quality that veil Logoic characteristics. Several colors are stated to be associated with the plane of Atma, or could be hypothesized to be associated with the plane of Atma, as discussed below.

Black – Black is stated to be the exoteric color of the plane of Atma.⁶⁵ The color black is also referenced in the triangle of Formula V (Sun – Black – Antahkarana),⁶⁶ in which the color black would appear to indicate the Atmic plane as well. Light refers to manifestation, form; the absence of light, or black,

would therefore refer to a less manifest state. Again, *manifest* is a relative term (for example, the upper mental planes are arupa, formless, from a systemic perspective, but are dense physical from a cosmic perspective). However, compared to the physical, astral, mental, and even Buddhic planes (the latter referred to in terms of *light*, which refers to manifestation/form), the plane of Atma is 'less manifest' and therefore may be symbolized by the absence of light, i.e., the color black.

Green – Green is the color of the third ray, stated as the esoteric color in one location,⁶⁷ but as the exoteric color in another location.⁶⁸ In either case, it is the color associated with the third aspect and therefore would clearly be expected to be associated with the plane of Atma, the third systemic plane.

Red – It might be hypothesized that the Atmic plane may be secondarily associated with the color red in its capacity as representing the first aspect within the Spiritual Triad, red being associated with the first aspect.

Orange – Although not a color of the Atmic plane itself, orange is closely associated with Atma because of the close association between the Atmic plane and the mental plane (the color of the latter as a whole being orange).⁶⁹ Master DK also states that there is a close association between the colors orange and green, carried over from their close association (i.e., the association between 5 and 3, mental and Atmic frequencies respectively) in the previous solar system.⁷⁰

Blue – For similar reasons, one might posit a close relation between the Atmic plane and blue, the color specifically associated with the *upper* mental plane,⁷¹ which most directly reflects Atmic energies.

Planets

Saturn⁷² – Saturn is the sacred planet that is governed by the third ray, as well as by the first ray, embodying within itself the first-third aspect connection exemplified by the plane of Atma.

Earth – Although not technically a sacred planet as yet, the third ray is one of the ray energies associated with Earth, and hence Earth could be hypothesized accordingly to be associated with the Atmic plane.

Vulcan and Pluto – It might also be hypothesized, because of the relation of the plane of Atma to the first aspect and first ray energies, that Vulcan and Pluto may have an association with the plane of Atma as well, as they are both bearers of first ray energies. Their energies would be used in the beneficent destruction that can be brought about using Atmic energies (for example, via the Fourth Law of the Soul, the Law of Repulse), to destroy what might hinder implementation of Plan and Purpose.

Mercury – Mercury is most directly related to the Buddhic plane, but Master DK has stated that Mercury is the revealer of the Spiritual Triad to the soul leading to the third initiation, as well as the revealer of the life aspect during higher initiations.⁷³ As revealer of the Spiritual Triad, Mercury may contribute to making the energies of Atma more accessible to the disciple/initiate.

Constellations

Capricorn – Because it is a carrier of third ray energies and the plane of Atma is strongly associated with third ray energies, a connection may be hypothesized between the plane of Atma and Capricorn. Additionally, Saturn (stated as above by Master DK to be associated with Atma) is the exoteric and esoteric ruler of Capricorn, further supporting the hypothesis of a close association between Capricorn and the plane of Atma.

Aries – Because of its strong association with the first ray, Aries may be hypothesized to be associated with the plane of Atma, given Atma's association with first ray energies within the Spiritual Triad. Master DK informs us that Aries is closely connected with one of the stars in the Great Bear (itself associated with the first aspect as well) called the Pointers, pointing to the Pole star, which is a "star of direction."⁷⁴ Direction and directedness suggest the straight line motion which is characteristic of the first aspect and which represents will and purpose.

Day of the Week

Saturday⁷⁵ – Saturday corresponds to Saturn, which as noted above is strongly associated with the Atmic plane.

Element

Fire – Atma is particularly associated with fire by friction,⁷⁶ characteristic of the third aspect. By virtue of its association with the first aspect as well as third aspect, one might also hypothesize an association between Atma and electric fire, characteristic of the first aspect.

Chakras

Throat Center – This would follow from the correspondence with threes, the throat center being the third center in the triangle of head, heart, and throat. Additionally, Master DK states that the centers above the diaphragm (heart center, throat center, ajna center, and head center) are controlled by the four cosmic ethers, i.e., Buddhic plane energies, Atmic plane energies, Monadic plane energies, and Logioic plane energies,⁷⁷ thus further associating Atmic energies with the throat center. The throat center is also associated with the mental plane,⁷⁸ further emphasizing the relation between the Atmic and mental planes.

Head Center – The head or crown center is related to the Atmic plane⁷⁹ via its association with the Will or first aspect, energies conveyed by the plane of Atma.

Ajna Center – Master DK states that the ajna center relates the Spiritual Triad to the personality. It does not achieve full functionality until the third initiation, when soul-personality fusion is accomplished.⁸⁰ The ajna center is a component of the triangle involving the head, ajna, and throat centers, representing the first, second, and third aspects respectively, consistent with the section above on p. 30 indicating an association between Atma and the *second* aspect. These centers also correspond respectively with the three eyes as follows: ajna center (the "third eye") corresponding to Atma (first aspect of Spiritual Triad), the right eye corresponding to Buddhi (second aspect of Spiritual Triad), and the left eye corresponding to Manas (third aspect of Spiritual Triad).⁸¹ For the initiate in whom this triangle is fully functional, this threefold Triadal vision confers insight into Divine purpose; for the disciple in whom this triangle is awakening, but not yet fully functional, activity of this triangle confers intuitive vision of the Plan.⁸²

Alta Major Center – Master DK states that the fifth revelation ("When the light of the seven Rays is blended with that of the seventh Ray, then light supernal can be known") is associated with the Atmic plane and the alta major center,⁸³ thus associating the Atmic plane with the alta major center. It might be hypothesized that this fifth revelation concerns the blended light of the seven rays that results from the contemplative work of the Nirmanakayas, filtering Shamballic energies for reception by Hierarchy, which when manifested (a function of Ray Seven) will result in manifestation of Plan and Purpose, i.e.,

the carrying out of Planetary Purpose, bringing matter into more accurate reflection of the Divine pattern based upon Purpose as known in Shamballa ("light supernal").

Will-to-Good

Because of its association with the Will, the plane of Atma is associated likewise with the Will-to-Good, a higher octave of the energies of goodwill. Goodwill is a goal for humanity as a whole; the Hierarchy expresses the will-to-good as an expression of spiritual will, the energies of the plane of Atma. The will-to-good is revealed to the aspirant/disciple by Atmic energies. The will-to-good is a basic quality of divine purpose.⁸⁴ Purpose is an aspect of divine will, an aspect that is seeking immediate expression on Earth.⁸⁵ Again, it is expressed in Hierarchical terms as the will-to-good and in stepped-down form by humanity as a whole as goodwill.

Senses

The correspondence to the senses is presented differently in different locations in Master DK's teachings. One may conclude from this that the correspondence will differ depending upon the perspective used. Indeed, Master DK states that the correspondence depends upon the point in evolution of the aspirant/disciple.⁸⁶

Smell – A major correlation is given between the plane of Atma and the sense of smell.⁸⁷ In this tabulation, the senses are associated with the planes as below:

Physical plane – Hearing
Astral plane – Touch or feeling
Mental plane – Sight
Buddhic plane – Taste
Atmic plane – Smell

Correspondences are also given between the senses as above and subplanes of the five planes of human evolution (etheric-physical, astral/emotional, mental, Buddhic, and Atmic planes) as below:

Fifth Physical subplane (gaseous) – Hearing
Fourth Physical subplane (etheric) – Touch/Feeling
Third Physical subplane (super-etheric) – Sight
Second Physical subplane (sub-atomic) – Taste
First Physical subplane (atomic) – Smell

Fifth Astral subplane – Clairaudience (higher octave of Hearing)
Fourth Astral subplane – Psychometry (higher octave of Touch)
Third Astral subplane – Clairvoyance (higher octave of Sight)
Second Astral subplane – Imagination (higher octave of Taste)
First Astral subplane – Emotional idealism (higher octave of Smell)

Seventh Mental subplane – Higher clairaudience (higher octave of Hearing and Clairaudience)
Sixth Mental subplane – Planetary psychometry (higher octave of Touch and Psychometry)
Fifth Mental subplane – Higher clairvoyance (higher octave of Sight and Clairvoyance)
Fourth Mental subplane – Discrimination (higher octave of Taste and Imagination)
Third Mental subplane – Spiritual discernment (higher octave of Smell and Emotional Idealism)
Second Mental subplane – Response to group vibration

First Mental subplane – Spiritual telepathy

Seventh Buddhic subplane – Comprehension of four sounds (higher octave of Hearing, Clairaudience, and Higher Clairaudience)

Sixth Buddhic subplane – Healing (higher octave of Touch, Psychometry, and Planetary psychometry)

Fifth Buddhic subplane – Divine vision (higher octave of Sight, Clairvoyance, and Higher clairvoyance)

Fourth Buddhic subplane – Intuition (higher octave of Taste, Imagination, and Discrimination)

Third Buddhic subplane – Idealism (higher octave of Smell, Emotional Idealism, and Spiritual discernment)

Seventh Atmic subplane – Beatitude (higher octave of Hearing, Clairaudience, Higher Clairaudience, and Comprehension of four sounds)

Sixth Atmic subplane – Active Service (higher octave of Touch, Psychometry, Planetary psychometry, and Healing)

Fifth Atmic subplane – Realization (higher octave of Sight, Clairvoyance, Higher clairvoyance, and Divine vision)

Fourth Atmic subplane – Perfection (higher octave of Taste, Imagination, Discrimination, and Intuition)

Third Atmic subplane – All Knowledge (higher octave of Smell, Emotional Idealism, Spiritual discernment, and Idealism).⁸⁸

Of note, the *lower* two physical subplanes and the *lower* two astral subplanes are not included in Master DK's listing because they are *below* the level of current human experience; the *upper* two Buddhic subplanes and the *upper* two Atmic subplanes are not included in Master DK's listing because they are *above* the level of current human experience.

Master DK additionally states that the three senses primarily affecting current humanity are those developed by the third root race (the Lemurian), the fourth root race (the Atlantean), and the current fifth root race (the Aryan): Hearing, Touch, and Sight respectively. He states that the other two senses, Taste and Smell, are currently veiled in terms of their true (supra-physical) significance, but will be revealed in the sixth and seventh root races respectively,⁸⁹ as humanity develops alignment with the Buddhic and Atmic planes respectively (the planes with which these senses are respectively associated).

Hearing – In other locations in His teachings,⁹⁰ the sense corresponding to the Atmic plane is hearing. This is consistent with the statement of sound as corresponding to the Atmic plane.⁹¹ This can be understood in connection with the Spirit/first aspect being related to sound, and the soul/second aspect being related to light/vision. This correspondence also relates the plane of Atma to the throat center, as noted above (corresponding to humanity, the third of three great centers in the Planetary Logos).

Touch – Yet another location in His teachings relates the Atmic plane (third systemic plane) to the sense of touch.⁹²

Correspondence of Atma to Other Laws

Law of Economy – As the third systemic plane, the plane of Atma is related to the third cosmic law, the Law of Economy. The Law of Economy governs all in the emanated or manifested worlds of form, and therefore is closely associated with the third systemic plane of Atma, which represents the Brahma (third) aspect.

Law of Synthesis – The plane of Atma would be hypothesized to be related also (secondarily) to the first cosmic law, the Law of Synthesis, by virtue of its relation to the first aspect within the Spiritual Triad. The working of this Law can be seen in the synthetic functions of Atma, as noted above.

As the plane that reflects both first and third aspects from different perspectives, the Atmic plane exhibits characteristics of both the Law of Synthesis and the Law of Economy.

Law of Disintegration – As the third systemic law, the Law of Disintegration corresponds to the third systemic plane, the Atmic plane. The Law of Disintegration is related to the Law of Death,⁹³ the latter controlling in the three worlds of human endeavor, and governs the destruction of the form to free the indwelling life for further evolution. The Atmic permanent atom is the vibrationally highest permanent atom. Permanent atoms represent an orientation to form life or manifestation (even the Atmic permanent atom, one must recall, is in the third cosmic ether, all systemic planes being subplanes of the cosmic physical plane);⁹⁴ permanent atoms are focal points of contact with energies/forces for purposes of manifestation.⁹⁵ Thus when the initiate becomes Chohan at the sixth degree, he is freed of the final orientation to the five worlds of human evolution represented by the Atmic permanent atom; this is preparatory to the sixth degree initiate's merging with the Monad.

Law of Attraction – The second cosmic law, the Law of Attraction, is involved in the activity of the Law of Disintegration, and by virtue of this is associated with the plane of Atma. The Law of Attraction breaks up the forms and draws back to originating sources the material that constituted those forms, prior to use of that material in rebuilding new forms. The above section on p. 30 associating the plane of Atma with the second aspect would also relate it to the Law of Attraction, the second cosmic law.

Law of Magnetic Control – Master DK states that the Law of Magnetic Control is the basic law controlling the Spiritual Triad.⁹⁶ Therefore, due to being a component of the Spiritual Triad, the plane of Atma is also associated with the Law of Magnetic Control. This is the Law associated specifically with the Buddhic plane, and represents energies that hold the evolving lower self in a coherent form, the causal vehicle (until its eventual dispersal at the fourth initiation). This law is the expression at Triadal levels of the Law of Attraction. Master DK states that this law is highly significant for human evolution at this time. Because the plane of Buddhi is the goal for humanity in this system, it is a goal of humanity to be controlled by this law and to use it in service.⁹⁷

Law of Sacrifice and Death – The Law of Sacrifice and Death is related to the third systemic law, the Law of Disintegration, and is another demonstration of the relation between the plane of Atma and the physical plane (as discussed above RE the 'hard-line' descent of energies). The *Law of Disintegration* relates to the *five* lower worlds of human evolution (Atmic, Buddhic, mental, astral/emotional, and etheric-physical systemic planes); the *Law of Death* relates to the *three* lower worlds of human endeavor (etheric-physical, astral/emotional, and lower four mental subplanes) and is subsidiary to the third systemic law, the Law of Disintegration.

Cosmic Atmic Plane

As is the case with all systemic planes, the systemic plane is the microcosmic correspondence of a cosmic plane. Corresponding to the systemic plane of Atma, therefore, is the cosmic plane of Atma. Master DK tells us little about the cosmic Atmic plane, as it is vibrationally far above even the highest Planetary initiates. At the human level, we can only hypothesize by correspondence that as the third cosmic plane, it would, as at the systemic level, reflect both first and third aspects.

Interestingly, Master DK states that it is cosmic *desire* which is expressed on the cosmic physical plane as spiritual *will*.⁹⁸ Thus we see another instance of the reiteration at various levels of macrocosm-microcosm that is characteristic of emanation, recalling that in the cosmic physical plane, desire is the lowest manifestation of the will, and only the will can overcome desire.⁹⁹

ATMA AND THE ASPIRANT/DISCIPLE/INITIATE

“Unavoidable directed purpose”¹⁰⁰

The aspirant/disciple may appropriately ask himself what he can do to cultivate infusion of the energies of the Will from Atmic levels so as to be of more service to the various wholes of which he is a component. More specifically, how can the aspirant/disciple increase alignment with and therefore expression of the energies of the plane of Atma, the spiritual will? The specific answer as to how to best approach conscious use of the energies of Atma will vary depending upon the aspirant's/disciple's stage on the Path of Return, and will change over time as the aspirant/disciple advances on the Path of Return.

Meditation, Service, and Study

General strategies appropriate for the aspirant/disciple up to and including preparation for the third initiation include following Master DK's program of meditation, service, and study. Schools such as the Morya Federation can be enormously helpful as a focusing agent in following Master DK's program. Additionally, with the name of Master Morya in the school's name, each time the aspirant/disciple sees, thinks, speaks, or writes the school's name, he is invoking and evoking the energies of the Will present in Master Morya's aura.

“Unavoidable Directed Purpose”

Master DK has described the energy of the will as “unavoidable directed purpose.”¹⁰¹ All progress on the Path of Return is ultimately impelled by the Will aspect, as noted above. It is because of the underlying Will aspect that the *eventual* outcome is known: return to awareness of/identification with the emanating Oneness (*time* taken to do so is the variable attributable to individual choice). The more the aspirant/disciple progresses on the Path of Return, the more he is able to consciously embody/express the Will aspect. Contemplation of the phrase “unavoidable directed purpose” as a spiritual expression (i.e., not the personal will) may assist the aspirant/disciple in invoking and evoking energies of the Will aspect.

Persist

Related to “unavoidable directed purpose,” a basic principle that is appropriate at any stage on the Path of Return is to *persist*. Earnest persistence characterizes progress on the Path of Return. As noted above, it is the energy of the Will that ultimately impels all progress on the Path of Return, even in the early stages before it is recognized as such. By persisting, we are at least beginning to embody the energy of the Will – not the personal will, but a higher expression of the Will energy of the first aspect. Initially this is will at the soul level, and progressively with activation of the Antahkarana into Triadal frequencies, energies of the plane of Atma. Persistence means that in spite of temporary delays or digressions – including temporary failures to live up to our current potentially highest level of expression – we keep our focus on the developmental tasks laid out for us by Master DK with a “constant effort to invoke the spiritual will in self-discipline and persistence.”¹⁰²

Energy Follows Thought/Attention

Another basic principle that is useful to remember and *utilize consciously* is that **energy follows thought**; more precisely, energy follows directed attention, which at stages on the Path for which Master DK is writing, is often expressed in mental substance as thought.

Thought is one way that we commonly direct attention; we also direct it with the eyes, and Master DK tells us that the eyes direct force (the physical eyes as well as the third eye or ajna center). Thus many of the exercises and meditations provided by Master DK include visualization, directing energy not with the physical eyes but with subjectively created visioning.

Therefore, we can further our progress on the Path of Return by *focusing on* whatever levels are ‘next’ at our current stage on the Path, such as soul, and/or Buddhi, and/or Atma.

Focus on Triadal Energies

With progress on the Path such that we begin to resonate vibrationally with (and eventually *as*) Triadal levels, we direct energy with our attention to these higher levels. Focusing, to the extent that we are able, at Buddhic and/or Atmic levels, or at least (initially) orienting toward those levels, will both invoke and evoke their energies, furthering the process of activating the Antahkarana, i.e., synchronizing our energy field with these Triadal levels such that we can eventually express *as* these levels. Meditation and contemplation can contribute powerfully toward this process of directing energy, as can studying and/or writing about these levels. Master DK directed one of his group members to write about Shamballa in an attempt to increase that disciple’s resonance with energies of the Will. Similarly, studying and/or writing about the soul, Buddhi, and/or Atma will invoke and evoke these energies and increase the disciple’s resonance with them. Writing often invokes and evokes the energies of the subject more powerfully than studying/reading because to *express* the energies and/or concepts concerning the energies (including via language), the disciple must at least to an extent *embody* the energies.

Master DK recommends a “steady orientation” of the aspirant/disciple toward the Spiritual Triad.¹⁰³ This is an example of ‘right orientation.’ At the same time, the aspirant/disciple must be sufficiently open to impression to be able to observe whom/when/where he has a specific opportunity to serve.¹⁰⁴ Just as the process of emanation reiterates at multiple levels, so does energy flow in the process of retraction or de-emanation. The disciple must not only receive the higher energies, but must integrate and express them, in turn assisting (apparent) ‘others’ who are at slightly earlier stages on the Path of Return (i.e., slightly earlier in the de-emanation/retraction process).

Dissipate Glamour

Master DK has stated that “The only factor which can successfully oppose desire is Will,” referring to the spiritual Will or energies from the plane of Atma.¹⁰⁵ The aspirant/disciple must make conscious use of the Will energies to dissipate glamour, starting with his own personal glamour. As he makes progress with this, he increasingly must contribute consciously to dissipating glamour for humanity as a whole.

Dissipation of glamour includes freeing our consciousness (through the Technique of Light provided by Master DK) of energies that hold humanity captive – not only materialism and greed which are so prominent and obvious to a detached observer of today’s world, but also ancient glours such as fear, as well as the many, many other glours including judgment, superiority, etc. Glamour – distortion in the emotional vehicle that blocks the inflow of Buddhic energies – is so characteristic of humanity that

freeing oneself of control by glamour is a long and typically difficult process (particularly in this second solar system with dominance of the 'soft-line' energies), hence the multiple lifetimes from first initiation to second. In dissipation of glamour, the lower mind directs the light of the soul onto the astral plane. This process necessarily utilizes the Will aspect, as seen, for example, in the Act of Direction in the Technique of Light,¹⁰⁶ *direction* being a Will/first aspect characteristic.

Dispel Illusion

As significant progress is made in the process of dissipating glamour, the aspirant/disciple increasingly works on dispelling illusion (distortion in the substance of the lower mental plane) with the light of Buddhi. This renders the lower mind a more receptive instrument for impression not only from the plane of Buddhi, but also from the plane of Atma via the higher/abstract mind.

Service

Master DK has defined service as *being* soul, because being or embodying vibrationally higher energies makes those energies more accessible to humanity. With progress on the Path of Return, this will translate to *being* Triadal energies. What we are vibrationally is our most essential contribution or service to the whole.

Humanity's immediate goal is the Externalization of the Hierarchy and Return of the Christ. This will represent a "fusion of the objective and subjective worlds, and the consequent emergence of the fifth kingdom in nature [the spiritual kingdom or kingdom of souls]"¹⁰⁷ into expression in form. Necessary for this to occur is the first initiation of humanity as a whole. As noted above, the first initiation is not usually worked toward consciously, so it is the responsibility of aspirants and disciples in the New Group of World Servers to contribute to the progress of humanity as much as possible.

In addition to working toward the dissipation of glamour and subsequently the dispelling of illusion, other forms of subjective service can also contribute powerfully to the stage of humanity as a whole on the Path of Return. This may be in the form of work with Triangles, and/or stabilizing certain energy patterns that may be helpful to the progress of humanity, and/or the ASK project as provided by Michael and Tuija Robbins of the Morya Federation, etc. The aspirant/disciple can access recordings from the ASK project (and many other valuable Webinars and written works by Michael Robbins, and Webinars by other faculty of the Morya Federation) at makara.us.

Master DK has further stated that "it is meditation which is responsible for transforming the desire of the ordinary human being upon our planet into the spiritual will."¹⁰⁸ Thus, meditation is an essential component of the process of not only (apparently individual) progress on the Path, but of service. In addition to his own meditation, the aspirant/disciple must increasingly, as appropriate to his current level of awareness, facilitate the process and proper use of meditation by (apparent) 'others.' Additionally, apparently individual meditation makes the vibrationally higher energies in which the meditator is focusing more available to (apparent) 'others.'

The aspirant/disciple must make a conscious effort to understand and express the spiritual Will to the best of his ability, again, depending upon his stage on the Path of Return. Initially the aspirant/disciple tends to think in individual terms, but with progress on the Path the disciple/initiate increasingly recognizes the group (macrocosm) as primary. As the Will is received and expressed more directly, in less stepped-down form, due to its potency at the level of Shamballa it *must* be received as a group. Master DK has stated that the right use of the Shamballa energy (Shamballa being the planetary head center, corresponding to the first/Will aspect) requires group use and understanding.¹⁰⁹

As he consciously serves, the initiate necessarily expresses the Will energies in attempting to bring to fuller expression the Plan and Purpose of the Planetary Logos.

Progress on the Path of Return

Progress on the Path of Return is valuable not for advancement of the (apparent) individual, but for the increased ability to serve that progress on the Path confers. It is for its value to the progress of the group/macrocsm (at the many levels of microcosm-macrocosm) that the aspirant/disciple must increasingly endeavor to facilitate his own apparently individual progress on the Path of Return.

As a part of the process leading to progress on the Path, in meditation the disciple must establish alignment with the soul, and specifically alignment of soul-mind-brain. With further progress, this alignment must extend further into Triadal levels to the plane of Atma such that the brain, the mind (which is the highest/first aspect of the personality and ultimately an agent of the Will), and the Will aspect of the Spiritual Triad, i.e., the plane of Atma, are brought into vibrational resonance. Soul-mind-brain, the alignment sought by the aspirant/disciple, becomes Atma-mind-brain with progress on the Path for the disciple/initiate. This is part of the process known as 'constructing the Antahkarana.' Master DK has given us specific techniques to follow in this process.

The mind, therefore, ultimately functions as the agent or reflector of the Will. Earlier on the Path, to awaken this capacity, the lower mind must be shifted in its orientation from 'horizontally' oriented to the world of form (desire being the lowest expression of the Will), to being 'vertically' oriented to the realms of the soul and eventually higher vibrational levels. In the 'horizontal' orientation, the mind functions as 'slayer of the real' by blocking inflow of impression from soul and vibrationally higher levels. As it shifts to a 'vertical' orientation, it allows for impression from soul and higher levels and thus functions as 'revealer of the real.' As part of this process, rather than manifesting in its lowest expression as desire, the Will increasingly opposes desire and dissipates glamour, ultimately allowing for alignment of Will-mind-brain with further progress on the Path of Return. Alignment with Atma in turn will allow for alignment with the Monad following yet further progress on the Path.

Bringing the personal will in line (in resonance) with the will of the soul, and eventually in resonance with Atma more directly, requires earnest persistence and endurance. Progress on the Path of Return does not lead the disciple to make choices that other human individuals in his personal life would necessarily consider the best choice, but does lead him along his true optimal line of development as known by soul and ultimately Monad. The Will is a dynamic energy that ultimately impels the persistence and determination necessary to progress on the Path. As part of the process of dissipating glamour and dispelling illusion, the aspirant/disciple frees himself of the glamour of making choices based upon whether those choices would be approved by other individuals in his personal life.

In our current fifth root race, higher and lower manas are to approximate. That is, the root race that is the current expression of humanity is to reach the point where lower mind resonates directly with (and ultimately as) higher mind.¹¹⁰ This means that our current root race is to reach the point where the soul is no longer needed, hence Master DK's statement that the plane of Buddhi is a goal for humanity,¹¹¹ polarization on this plane following the dissipation of the causal vehicle at the fourth initiation. As noted above, the soul provides a temporary bridge or link between the levels of higher and lower mind until we can bridge them with our own awareness. When this point is reached, the fourth initiation is reached. At that time, polarization will be within the plane of Buddhi, no longer within the mental plane (not even in the abstract subplanes, the vibrational levels of the soul). It is not only the concrete mind

that is involved in alignment with Atma; the abstract mind is impressed first from Atma, with vibrational step-down to the concrete mind.

Laws of the Soul

As a part of the process of actively working toward progress on the Path of Return, the aspirant/disciple should be endeavoring to work with the energies of the Laws of the Soul to the best of his ability, as appropriate to his stage on the Path of Return.

When he has reached the point of being aware that he is working with Will energies, the aspirant/disciple is likely beginning to invoke and evoke the energies of the Law of Repulse, energies from Atma to soul. This is possible in a direct sense to the extent that the disciple lives/expresses as soul. To the extent that he is not yet resonant with soul, the aspirant/disciple tends to experience these energies in further stepped down form from soul to personality as the first Law of the Soul, the Law of Sacrifice. As he progresses on the Path, the initial Laws of the Soul remain in effect as part of the disciple's expression in the three worlds, but he has reach the point where he can more directly work with the higher octave of these energies. Because the mind is the agent or reflector of the will, an aspirant/disciple who is not yet mentally polarized and whose consciousness is still controlled by astral distortion (glamour) is not yet able to work very directly with the Atmic energies known as the Law of Repulse. He increases his ability to work with energies of the Will when he begins to use the mind in dissipating glamour.

Cultivate Experience/Expression of the Second Aspect

We know from Master DK's teachings that in this second solar system, it is the second aspect that is to come to full expression, the love-wisdom aspect (hence Buddhi being a goal of humanity). He gives a very helpful description of the relation of the energies between Atma and Buddhi as experienced by the disciple/initiate who has the Antahkarana sufficiently developed to be in resonance with both of these Triadal levels in stating that "the spiritual will must be present as a quiet deep pool of power behind all expression of the energy of love."¹¹² (Master DK's physical reference with the term "pool" is a useful reminder that all of the solar systemic planes are substance from a cosmic perspective.) This ensures that the expression of love is not stepped down vibrationally to personality levels as personal attachment or any of the many glours that characterize the personal expression of "love" on the astral plane. This also reflects the fact that it is the Will energy that ultimately impulses all progress on the Path of Return.

Cultivate Experience/Expression of the First Aspect

This is as appropriate to the aspirant's/disciple's/initiate's current stage on the Path of Return. The spiritual will is currently veiled to humanity at two levels: first, by the individual self-will, which is still oriented to the astral plane for much of humanity currently; and second, by the will of the soul,¹¹³ itself a veil or vibrational step-down/filter compared to vibrationally higher levels, including Triadal levels. The former (the personal self will) is rendered functionally secondary to the will of the soul at the third initiation (it has been secondary in occult fact all along). At that stage on the Path of Return, the initiate can register the Will from the plane of Atma more directly;¹¹⁴ it is no longer as veiled. He is then able to begin to identify with the purpose of the Planetary Logos.

Master DK has stated that the shift from aspiration and devotion to focused will is an indication that the aspirant/disciple is transitioning from the Probationary Path. Use of the spiritual will depends upon right orientation of the mind, i.e., 'vertically' rather than 'horizontally.'¹¹⁵ Initially the aspirant expresses the personal will as the will to self-betterment. This is replaced gradually and eventually with

the will to serve humanity; this is replaced by goodwill; and finally goodwill is replaced by the will-to-good.¹¹⁶ The first/will aspect is more veiled at earlier stages on the Path of Return. With progress on the Path of Return, the Will is progressively more directly revealed and embodied.

In terms of the process of emanation, another way to view the disciple's/initiate's responsibility is that he must consciously and intentionally facilitate the process of retraction or de-emanation, i.e., progress on the Path of Return back to *awareness of* and *identification with* the emanating Unity, again in progressive stages. This includes not only his individual retraction/de-emanation/progress on the Path, but more importantly, facilitating this process for the apparently 'other' emanated sparks of the Divine whom he has the opportunity to serve – service being a facilitation of this retraction process.

The metaphor of the Antahkarana is useful in explaining this retraction process. Building the Antahkarana is an "extension in consciousness"¹¹⁷ – the emanated Divine spark thereby becomes aware of a more encompassing unity from which it emanated, thus expanding the emanated Divine spark's ring-pass-not as it retracts another level into a broader unity. There are many levels or iterations of retraction into awareness of, and identification with, a progressively more comprehensive unity as each level of emanated Divine spark becomes aware of, and progressively experiences itself *as*, a greater Life of which it is an emanation.

'Building' the Antahkarana

It is of note that the construction of the Antahkarana is consciously undertaken and self-initiated. Leading up to the first initiation, progress on the Path is usually not consciously undertaken, as noted above, and it may not be conscious through many lifetimes between first and second initiation. Then with progress toward the second initiation, the aspirant/disciple begins, at least to an extent, to consciously facilitate the process. Conscious effort to advance on the Path of Return starts on the Probationary Path, and accelerates on the Path of Discipleship. With progress on the Path, the four ethers in the individualized etheric vehicle increasingly function as channels for, or reflectors of, the four cosmic ethers (Atma being the third). This is a result of development of the Antahkarana to the point where the temporary bypass of the soul is eventually no longer needed, and the Triad reflects/expresses directly in the personality.¹¹⁸ Many of these processes such as progress on the Path, constructing the Antahkarana, etc., are different ways of referring to or viewing the process of Return to awareness of a higher level of emanating Unity (retraction/de-emanation).

Rules for Aspirants/Rules for Disciples and Initiates

When he reaches the appropriate stage on the Path where he is approaching/working toward the third initiation (and prior to this, in preparation), the disciple/initiate should be studying and contemplating, and in the process invoking/evoking the energies of, the Rules for Disciples and Initiates.¹¹⁹ Master DK has stated that the main significance of these rules is related to the first aspect, the Will. Aspirants/disciples at an earlier stage should start by studying the Rules for Aspirants.

Will-to-Good

In the process of working toward progress on the Path, the aspirant/disciple is cultivating the focused will-to-good. Humanity expresses goodwill; the Hierarchy expresses the will-to-good. This entails the use of harmlessness, which is not a passive state as it might be interpreted at personality levels to be. Rather, harmlessness involves the use of dynamic, electric energy, energies from the plan of Atma, under intuitive direction from the plane of Buddhi.¹²⁰

Harmlessness

This apparently simple term encompasses much. Only an initiate of the third degree or higher is truly harmless, because only at this level is the personality under control of the soul, and therefore only at this level is the disciple/initiate no longer adding to the glamour and illusion of humanity overall. Harmlessness is not a passive acquiescence to the personality level wishes/desires of 'others,' but is a pure embodiment of at least soul energies, and increasingly Triadal energies, free of separative personality energies of the disciple/initiate. Harmlessness may and often does involve use of the destructive aspect of Will energies, but all is in service of Plan and Purpose, none in service of personality level agendas of the disciple or apparent 'others.'¹²¹

Many of the terms used by Master DK, although perhaps with a seemingly obvious and simple surface meaning, similarly have deeper and more occult meanings.

Helping 'Ordinary' Humanity

Each stage on the Path contains the seed, germ, or nucleus from which the next stage will develop. It is that seed or nucleus that becomes occultly radioactive or radiant in responding to the magnetism of a vibrationally higher level. This is the case 'even' with ordinary humanity.

We may tend, until our personal astral vehicle has been largely cleared of glamour, to look upon humanity with judgment for being so glamourised by materialism, etc. While well-intentioned, and perhaps all the aspirant/disciple is capable of at certain stages on the Path, this judgment is itself glamour. The disciple must learn to see each stage on the Path of Return as a right and appropriate stage within the overall cycle of each cosmos or universe progressing through the emanatory process of manifestation, and back through the de-emanatory or evolutionary process that is often referred to as the Path of Return. Each stage on the Path of Return represents progress initially, and subsequently becomes a stage to be transcended.

The desire aspect of humanity is the lowest manifestation or expression of the will aspect. The divine will, in other words, is latent within humanity. Master DK states that the functions of humanity's very active desire body (the astral vehicle) are the "ingredients" of eventual focused (conscious) meditation. This includes "desires, longings, wishes, visions, and dreams," including those for material betterment.¹²² The functions of the lower mind, very gradually and in step-wise fashion with progress on the Path, transform into their higher octave, meditation.

As humanity eventually undergoes the first initiation and the energy of the Christ awakens in the 'cave of the heart,' this transformation will begin. It is a very slow process from the perspective of the individual human scale, as there are typically many lifetimes from first initiation to second (and, of course, a great many lifetimes prior to the first initiation). Once the consciousness, which has been for long eons identified with the form in the three worlds (etheric-physical, astral/emotional, and lower mental), begins to respond in however nascent a manner to the Divine spark at its very core, it has begun the process of transforming the desire nature into the spiritual will. This, again, is a long (from the individual human perspective) and overlapping step-wise process whereby identity, the sense of self, shifts from the personality and its constituent vehicles in the lower three worlds first to the soul and its three aspects, then to the Spiritual Triad in its three aspects, and eventually beyond.

New Group of World Servers (NGWS)

The term *New Group of World Servers (NGWS)* refers to advanced humanity who bridge vibrationally between humanity and Hierarchy, corresponding on a lower turn of the spiral to the Nirmanakayas who

bridge between Shamballa and Hierarchy. As aspirants/disciples/initiates at stages on the Path of Return a bit beyond ordinary humanity, it increasingly becomes our responsibility as Divine sparks within the NGWS to assist with the progress of humanity as a whole. The more we are aware of this, the more responsible we are for contributing to the whole.

Part of this responsibility includes facilitating one's own progress on the Path of Return, which we can do more consciously the further along we are as an (apparent) individual on the Path of Return; however, at the same time, with increasing awareness at vibrationally higher levels, the more we are aware that the value of (apparently) individual progress is in, and only in, its contribution to the whole. At early stages, this may appear to the personality levels to be a sacrificial or self-denying type of statement. However, again, with progress on the Path, it becomes directly perceived knowledge (i.e., via soul or eventually Buddhic awareness) that the group is of greater reality *because vibrationally more similar to the emanating unity* than apparent individuality. Individuality is derivative/differentiation, an extension of the group, the group being the primary entity (a process that repeats at the many levels of microcosm-macrocosm). This is a reversal of the typical view at the personality level of the individual as primary and the group as a collection of individuals.

It is indeed sacrifice, a 'giving for,' to assist those earlier on the Path, but the understanding of sacrifice is transformed with progress on the Path from the personality's concept of sacrifice as a grudging 'giving up', into a joyous soul expression (and eventually a blissful Triadal expression) of the known underlying emanatory Unity. The individualized apparently 'other' Divine sparks that the individualized disciple/initiate is helping on their return journey are known by the disciple advancing on the Path as being expressions of the same Oneness with which the awareness of the disciple is increasingly identified. Sacrifice is the "giving of the greater for the lesser" ¹²³ based in the occult fact that apparent *otherness* is increasingly recognized as illusory. As we progress, we begin to know self to be Atma, Spirit itself, with each apparently separated Divine spark as a 'spark in the one great Flame' ¹²⁴ – the "one great Flame" being the emanating Unity. This process involves "right use of the mental body, working under the influence of Atma or Spirit." ¹²⁵

Manifestation is itself the Great Forgiveness¹²⁶ ('giving for'). The greater lives such as Planetary Logoi and Solar Logoi (and Cosmic Entities at yet higher levels) have taken on form to redeem the lesser lives within the sphere of their ring-pass-not.

The disciple/initiate will eventually reach a point in his evolution where he responds habitually to Hierarchical impression.¹²⁷ Master DK has told us that the theme of hierarchical meditation is the Plan as it embodies Divine Purpose.¹²⁸ Therefore, this should be a component of the disciple's/initiate's meditation, increasingly so as he progresses gradually from a more peripheral to a more central location (vibrationally speaking) within Hierarchy.

Endeavor to Develop "The Mind that is in Christ"

The aspirant/disciple must endeavor to develop "the mind that is in Christ," ¹²⁹ i.e., the mind reflecting Atma, the spiritual will. With right use of the mind, as discussed above, the mental plane functions as a reflector of the plane of Atma. The expression to be developed in this second solar system is that of the second aspect, Love-Wisdom, as demonstrated by Christ; *behind* this second aspect expression, again, must be the "quiet deep pool of power behind all expression of the energy of love," ¹³⁰ i.e., the Will, as noted above. It will be in the next solar system that the first aspect will come to full expression. Master DK uses another physical metaphor (comparable to "pool" of power), that of "the mass of will energy" to refer to "Atmic realisation," ¹³¹ an impulsing energy which the Hierarchy uses in service of Plan and

Purpose. The physical metaphor reminds us that all seven systemic planes, including Atma, are subplanes of the cosmic physical plane.

"Quiescent Waiting"

Master DK refers to "quiescent waiting" as a quality that distinguishes higher initiates.¹³² This refers not to a condition of passivity or orientation toward external instruction, but rather to an understanding via direct (soul and/or Buddhic) perception of *right timing*. The disciple/initiate in a state of "quiescent waiting" is acutely oriented to both Hierarchical energies and the needs of humanity, i.e., impression from higher vibrational levels and invocation from lower vibrational levels, and responds in a manner and timing consistent with Plan and Purpose. In contrast, the well-meaning aspirant/disciple earlier on the Path, still substantially affected by glamour and illusion, tends to act based upon modifications in his personality vehicles, i.e., glamour and illusion (for example, such as a desire to be recognized, or personal thoughts as to how best to "serve"), rather than direct perception of energies in relation to Plan and Purpose.

Maintain Vigilance Regarding Glamour and Illusion

The aspirant/disciple must beware the personality's tendency to pretend that it is more evolved than it is, which can result in the personal will being in control rather than the will of the soul or the spiritual will.

Orientation toward the Whole

Early on the Path, the focus tends to be on the individual's progress. With advancement on the Path of Return, the focus of the aspirant/disciple is increasingly on service to the whole(s) of which he is a component/to which he is microcosm. The more aware the disciple is of the need to embody the Will, the more responsible he is for doing so.

The disciple's/initiate's tasks involve expression of the Will aspect because it is the final, culminating expression that synthesizes the other two aspects. The will aspect, again, is to come to full development/expression in the next solar system. The aspirant/disciple's tasks do not include cultivating expression of the third aspect because it is the 'default' aspect, carried over from the previous solar system, latent in the substance of this solar system.

The injunction to cultivate the mind aspect within the personality vehicle is in reality an injunction to begin cultivation of the *first* or will aspect (as yet unconscious in the early stages), not the third aspect. Although in a 'bigger picture' intelligence is the third aspect, in microcosm within the personality, the mind represents the first aspect. This is a lower iteration or microcosm of the Spiritual Triad, within which the plane of Atma represents the first aspect, although at a more macrocosmic level the plane of Atma represents the third aspect. As noted above, the mind reflects the will.

The disciple advancing on the Path will also realize that much of the terminology is relative, such as microcosm-macrocosm. Even *incarnation* is a relative term, as is *orientation toward manifestation*, as we see from a consideration of the reiterative process of emanation occurring at multiple levels. For example, to the personality level, the Monad would be a point of high attainment, but the Monad is nonetheless within cosmic physical vibrational levels, itself microcosm to yet higher levels.

The disciple advancing on the Path will also recognize that the above are various perspectives from which the process of Return/retraction/de-emanation can be viewed, which it increasingly becomes his responsibility to consciously facilitate in service.

CONCLUSIONS

The plane of Atma is an excellent example of the close relation between first and third aspects. The plane of Atma is also an exemplary context for discussion of the emanatory process in which each emanated vibrational level is microcosm to that level which emanates it, and at the same time macrocosm to levels that it emanates. Within the cosmic physical plane, Atma is the third subplane and thus expresses the energies of the third aspect. At a more microcosmic level, the plane of Atma is the highest vibrational level within the Spiritual Triad, the reflection of the threefold Monad, and as such expresses the first aspect. The plane of Atma corresponds on a higher turn of the spiral to the mental plane, which reiterates the process at a vibrationally lower level. The mental plane is an expression of the third aspect, but at the same time within the vibrational levels of the personality represents the first aspect.

The energies of the Will ultimately impel all progress on the Path of Return. The Will energies impelling progress on the Path of Return are the energies of the spiritual will from the plane of Atma (initially in stepped-down form) through the fifth initiation, until the plane of Atma is transcended at the sixth initiation, when Atmic energies are replaced by vibrationally higher Will energies. The energies of Atma are vibrationally stepped down several levels early on the Path. Desire (glamour, distortion in the astral vehicle) is the lowest manifestation of the will, and only higher vibrational expressions of the Will can transform desire into progressively higher expressions of the Will.

The aspirant begins to make conscious use of the will energy, initially stepped down via the soul, in working toward the second initiation. In this process, he utilizes the light of the soul, directed by the mind, to dissipate glamour on the astral plane such that the astral plane can increasingly and eventually fulfill its intended function as conduit of Buddhic energies into the lower 18 subplanes. With the concomitant development of mental polarization, the mind reorients from 'horizontal' to 'vertical' (from objective to subjective levels), and is progressively rendered a more fit instrument to accurately register and reflect the Will.

Vibrational synchronization initially between lower mind and soul constitutes the first stage of the Antahkarana. The second stage of the Antahkarana between soul and higher mind brings lower and higher mind into yet greater resonance to the point where lower mind directly reflects higher mind, and eventually the temporary bridge or link provided by the egoic lotus is no longer needed. The Atmic energies then are reflected directly in progressive step-down to higher mind-lower mind-brain (the latter via the etheric vehicle). As this process continues, the disciple/initiate is increasingly able to directly embody and express Atmic energies.

The *apparent* complexities of these processes involved in progress on the Path of Return are an effect of attempting to express them in language, which involves vibrational step-down from the Idea on the plane of Buddhi to ideal in mental substance.

In occult fact, the issue of stage on the Path of Return is simply a matter of the *vibrational level with which one is identified/in which one's awareness is focused*. This can also be referred to as the *focal point of one's awareness*, or "*point of tension*," the latter being a term that Master DK uses frequently. The implications of the temporary limitation of the Divine spark's experience while identified with the

lower vibrational levels are, in part, the reason for describing this *focus* with more elaborate terminology such as *initiations*, *ring-pass-not*, etc.

Progress on the Path is simply a *shift of the vibrational level with which one is identified*, i.e., a shift in the vibrational level of one's habitual *focus* to a higher vibrational level – for example, from astral to lower mental levels, then from lower mental to soul levels, then to Buddhic levels, then to Atmic levels, and eventually to Monadic levels and beyond.

It is our responsibility as disciples/initiates to cultivate resonance with the Will aspect and express/embody it to the greatest extent that we are able, because in so doing we optimize our contribution to the wholes of which we are a component at the many levels of macrocosm-microcosm: Humanity, Hierarchy, Planetary Logos, etc. The opportunity to serve the expanding wholes within which we progressively know ourselves to be a component Divine spark is the value of apparently individual progress on the Path of Return.

Eventually, with progress on the Path of Return, the interaction between the personality level of the disciple (the three vehicles and their totality, the personality) and the plane of Atma will be that of Spirit-matter as the matter (third) aspect comes to reflect more and more accurately the Spirit (first aspect).

The disciple's most essential contribution is the vibrational state which he embodies. By facilitating his apparently individual progress on the Path of Return, the disciple serves the various concentric wholes to which he is microcosm. Thus the disciple adds his contribution to the bringing of the third aspect into closer reflection of the first aspect, contributing to the manifestation of Plan and Purpose.

ENDNOTES

¹ Alice A. Bailey, *The Light of the Soul*, 1927 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1989), p. 73.

² Alice A. Bailey, *The Destiny of the Nations*, 1949 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1977), p. 137.

³ Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1925 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), p. 498 and p. 521. In the current second solar system the goal is to bring the second aspect to full expression; the goal of the previous (first) solar system was to bring the third aspect to full expression; and the goal of the next (third) solar system will be to bring the first aspect to full expression.

⁴ The masculine pronoun is used throughout, as it is in Master DK's works, to refer to an aspirant/disciple/initiate of either gender, because humanity is the 'masculine,' 'positive' or *impressing* line of evolution. With progress on the Path of Return, the disciple/initiate is no longer identified with the physical vehicle or its gender (although he is manifesting through a vehicle of one gender or the other in the current root race which is characterized by this dichotomy). The parallel devic evolution is the 'feminine,' 'negative,' or *receptive* line of evolution. These are eventually united, with progress on the Path of Return, in the Buddhic frequencies (for which reason the phrase "Divine hermaphrodite" is sometimes used to refer to this union on the Buddhic plane).

⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, Volume II, 1955 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1983), p. 158.

⁶ *Ibid*; also see Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 1951 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), p. 631; Alice A. Bailey, *Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 1957 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1985), p. 592; and Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 1953 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1981), p. 395.

⁷ *Duality* or *separation* is only a connotation or implication of the term *creation*, not its denotation. In ordinary terms, the denotation is the primary meaning of a word, and connotations are additional concepts invoked in the mind of the listener/reader by the term, in addition to the primary meaning of the term. Occultly speaking, connotations are additional thoughtforms associated or linked with a main thoughtform in the substance of the lower/concrete mind, so that when focus is in/on the main thoughtform, i.e., when energy is directed to the main thoughtform, those linked thoughtforms are also energized and included within that focus, even if subconsciously.

The difficulty with connotations in attempting to use ordinary language to communicate occult truths is that they often introduce and/or strengthen illusion and thus substantially affect the clarity with which the concrete mind is able to comprehend the underlying occult truth being communicated. The presence of associated connotative thoughtforms, along with the consequent strengthening of illusion, tends to increase the tendency of the thoughtform to block rather than facilitate inflow of higher energies such as those of the soul and Buddhi. That is, the presence of connotative thoughtforms linked to a primary thoughtform contributes to the lower mind initially functioning as 'slayer of the real.'

Connotations or secondary thoughtforms associated or linked with a primary thoughtform are often not recognized consciously early on the Path of Return. The impact of connotations on the thought process may not be consciously and consistently recognized until the process of bringing the lower mind under control of the soul is well underway and inflow of Buddhist energies has made significant progress in dispelling illusion.

It is because their influence is subconscious that connotative thoughtforms are able to contribute so powerfully to maintaining illusion and functioning as 'slayer of the real.' The aspirant/disciple, prior to dispelling illusion, faces a thorny thicket of tangled thoughtforms impeding inflow of soul and Buddhist energies. He must work consciously to dispel illusion so that the lower mind can increasingly fulfill its intended function as 'revealer of the real' and receive impression from soul and Buddhist levels (this is possible once progress has been made in the process of dissipating glamour, as substantial dissipation of glamour generally precedes dispelling illusion). Language is heavily imbued with connotations, which is part of the reason why the vibrational step-down from Buddhist to mental substance and further into language introduces distortion, i.e., illusion.

⁸ Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, Volume II, 1955 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1983), p. 625.

⁹ For example, Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, Volume I, 1962 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1990), p. 215.

¹⁰ Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 1960 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1988), p. 476.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 264.

¹² Blue sphere image from

- ²⁸ Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1925 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), p. 336; there are seven rays, which are expressions of energy or quality. The first three are the rays of aspect; rays four through seven are the rays of attribute, which as noted are synthesized by the third aspect.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 1224.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 191.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 659.
- ³² Alice A. Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation*, 1950 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1978), p. 220.
- ³³ Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1925 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), p. 584.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 336.
- ³⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle*, 1950 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 2001), p. 112.
- ³⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation*, 1950 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1978), p. 86.
- ³⁷ Alice A. Bailey, *The Light of the Soul*, 1927 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1989), p. 379.
- ³⁸ Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1925 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), p. 659.
- ³⁹ Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 1960 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1988), p. 494.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 541-542.
- ⁴¹ The reference to “petals” is an analogy in physical terms used to describe energy patterns that comprise the egoic lotus.
- ⁴² Identification with each plane corresponds to a particular stage on the Path of Return, and subsequently becomes a limitation to be overcome.
- ⁴³ Dis-identification from the physical vehicle constitutes the first initiation; dis-identification from the astral vehicle constitutes the second initiation; and dis-identification from the lower mind and personality as a whole constitutes the third initiation.
- ⁴⁴ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, Volume II, 1942 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1970), pp. 55-58, full discussion of Laws of the Soul on pp. 85-200; and Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1925 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), p. 1220, full discussion of Laws of the Soul on pp. 1216-1222. The Laws of the Soul are also known as the Laws of Group Work or Laws of Group Life because it is with polarization at soul levels that the disciple becomes directly aware of the primacy of the group rather than the individual (corresponding to expressing from the heart center rather than the solar plexus center).
- ⁴⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, Volume II, 1955 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1983), p. 309.
- ⁴⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem*, 1950 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1978); the Technique of Light is presented on pp. 171-172, and discussed by Master DK in detail on pp. 190-241.
- ⁴⁷ Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 1960 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1988), p. 598.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 340.
- ⁵⁰ Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle*, 1950 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 2001), p. 145.
- ⁵¹ Just as humanity has advanced (and is continuing to advance), so has the Hierarchy. In the past, Masters were polarized in the upper mental subplanes, then the Buddhic plane; more recently, Mastership refers to polarization in the Atmic plane.
- ⁵² Alice A. Bailey, *Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 1957 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1985), p. 522.
- ⁵³ Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1925 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), p. 485.
- ⁵⁴ Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 1960 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1988), pp. 169-170.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 357.
- ⁵⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *The Light of the Soul*, 1927 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1989), p. 23.
- ⁵⁷ Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, Volume II, 1955 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1983), p. 210.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁹ Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle*, 1950 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 2001), p. 122.
- ⁶⁰ Alice A. Bailey, *The Destiny of the Nations*, 1949 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1977), p. 138.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 137.
- ⁶² Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1925 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), p. 337.
- ⁶³ Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle*, 1950 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 2001), p. 156.
- ⁶⁴ Master DK has specifically stated that in the human kingdom (and only in the human kingdom) the etheric vehicle is currently composed of all four types of etheric substance [which would allow the human advancing on

the Path of Return into the fifth or spiritual kingdom to increasingly embody/reflect the four cosmic ethers in the corresponding four systemic ethers]. Ibid., p. 153.

- ⁶⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, Volume I, 1962 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1990), p. 419.
- ⁶⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, Volume II, 1955 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1983), p. 321.
- ⁶⁷ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, Volume I, 1962 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1990), p. 419.
- ⁶⁸ Alice A. Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation*, 1950 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1978), p. 226.
- ⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 227.
- ⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 220.
- ⁷¹ Ibid., p. 226.
- ⁷² Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, Volume I, 1962 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1990), p. 419.
- ⁷³ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 1951 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), p. 354.
- ⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 195.
- ⁷⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, Volume I, 1962 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1990), p. 419.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷⁷ Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle*, 1950 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 2001), p. 167.
- ⁷⁸ Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1925 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), p. 165.
- ⁷⁹ Ibid.
- ⁸⁰ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 1953 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1981), pp. 147-148.
- ⁸¹ Ibid., p. 148.
- ⁸² Ibid.
- ⁸³ Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, Volume II, 1955 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1983), p. 370.
- ⁸⁴ Ibid., pp. 46-47.
- ⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 172.
- ⁸⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *The Light of the Soul*, 1927 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1989), p. 343.
- ⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 323; and Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1925 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), p. 187.
- ⁸⁸ Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1925 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), pp. 188-190.
- ⁸⁹ Alice A. Bailey, *The Light of the Soul*, 1927 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1989), p. 355.
- ⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 336; and Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1925 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), p. 192.
- ⁹¹ Alice A. Bailey, *The Light of the Soul*, 1927 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1989), p. 342; and Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1925 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), p. 192.
- ⁹² Alice A. Bailey, *The Light of the Soul*, 1927 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1989), p. 335.
- ⁹³ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 1953 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1981), p. 413.
- ⁹⁴ Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1925 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), p. 535.
- ⁹⁵ Ibid.
- ⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 583.
- ⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 584-585.
- ⁹⁸ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 1953 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1981), p. 405.
- ⁹⁹ Alice A. Bailey, *Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 1957 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1985), p. 342.
- ¹⁰⁰ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, 1951 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), p. 195.
- ¹⁰¹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰² Alice A. Bailey, *Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 1957 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1985), p. 314.
- ¹⁰³ Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle*, 1950 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 2001), p. 112.
- ¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 122.
- ¹⁰⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 1957 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1985), p. 342.
- ¹⁰⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem*, 1950 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1978), p. 233 and p. 239.
- ¹⁰⁷ Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, Volume II, 1955 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1983), p. 57.
- ¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 197.
- ¹⁰⁹ Alice A. Bailey, *Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 1957 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1985), p. 344.
- ¹¹⁰ Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1925 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), p. 599.
- ¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 498 and p. 521.
- ¹¹² Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 1953 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1981), pp. 527-528.
- ¹¹³ Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 1960 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1988), p. 140.
- ¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 141.

- ¹¹⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 1960 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1988), p. 469.
- ¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 652.
- ¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 471.
- ¹¹⁸ Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle*, 1950 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 2001), p. 156.
- ¹¹⁹ Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 1960 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1988), listed pp. 19-24; discussed in depth pp. 24-321.
- ¹²⁰ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 1953 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1981), p. 670.
- ¹²¹ Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic*, 1951 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), pp. 101-103.
- ¹²² Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, Volume II, 1955 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1983), pp. 212-213.
- ¹²³ Alice A. Bailey, *Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 1957 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1985), p. 166.
- ¹²⁴ Alice A. Bailey, *Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, 1925 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1979), p. 1237.
- ¹²⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology*, Volume II, 1942 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1970), p. 242.
- ¹²⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *Externalization of the Hierarchy*, 1957 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1985), p. 166.
- ¹²⁷ Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, Volume II, 1955 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1983), p. 212.
- ¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 211.
- ¹²⁹ Alice A. Bailey, *The Reappearance of the Christ*, 1948 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1996), p. 67.
- ¹³⁰ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Healing*, 1953 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1981), pp. 527-528.
- ¹³¹ Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle*, 1950 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 2001), p. 69.
- ¹³² Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, Volume II, 1955 (Reprint, New York: Lucis Trust, 1983), p. 65.

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