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A STUDY IN HUMAN NATURE

by

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Mental plane, and globes B and F on the Astral Plane; and these four are therefore invisible to ordinary physical sight. But globe C is the planet Mars, globe D is our earth, and globe F is the planet Mercury; so that three out of the seven are visible physical planets, and the other four are invisible.¹

There is only one other septenary Chain that also has three physical planets, namely the Neptune Chain; for there are two physical planets existing beyond Neptune that belong to his Chain. And this fact shows that the evolutions represented by the earth and Neptune are, spiritually, both at the same stage of evolution, namely the fourth stage or *manvantara*, because only at this stage are there three physical planets in one Chain. The first and seventh incarnations of any Chain have no planet lower than the mental; in the second and sixth the lowest planet of the Chain is astral; in the third and fifth one is physical; in the fourth three are physical.

The seven planetary Logoi are represented on the physical plane by the planets Vulcan, Venus, the Earth, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. Each of these is globe D in a septenary Chain; so that although the Earth and Neptune are at the same evolutionary stage, they belong to quite different types. The Sun, the eighth, is the great Father of the seven Fathers; for each of these seven Planetary Logoi is the "Father in Heaven" of those souls who belong to His type of spiritual evolution.

Our Solar System is one organic living conscious Whole, and there are millions of such systems, some smaller, some enormously larger, within the total universe. It receives one particular type of life and consciousness through the Solar Logos, who is in conscious union with the vaster universe beyond, receiving life from it and returning life to it, just as each planet sends forth and takes back within the system. This life received from outside may be compared to a ray of white light, one and uniform in itself but immediately decomposed into three fundamental bases of colour corresponding to the three aspects or Persons of the Solar Logos, and then analysed into the seven colours of the spectrum, corresponding to the seven Planetary Logoi, each of whom receives from the Solar Logos a different type of life and of consciousness resulting from this decomposition and analysis.

¹ For full details about the planetary chains, rounds, etc., the *Secret Doctrine* should be consulted, but a useful outline will be found in the sixpenny manual on "Theosophy" in Messrs. T. C. and E. C. Jack's series of *The People's Books*.

THE SEVEN PLANES

Starting afresh at this stage, we see in imagination each Planetary Logos receiving a special type of life and consciousness, and utilising it for the purposes of the kind of evolution carried on upon the Chain of globes over which he presides. For instance, the Planetary Logos of our earth Chain has his own special "colouring"; and the ray which he receives is again split into seven sub-rays, one of which belongs to each of the seven globes in the Chain. At our present stage of knowledge it would seem that each such globe is itself animated by a Being called the Spirit of the globe, whose body the globe appears to be, and who receives and adapts to the type of evolution carried on there the sub-ray which is transmitted to him through the Planetary Logos.¹ Just as the Solar Logos sends forth seven sub-rays to the seven Planetary Spirits of his Chain, so there is a general correspondence between rays and sub-rays according to the septenary scale. What the seven globes are to the Chain as a whole, that the seven Chains are to the Solar system as a whole; but what is the precise order of correspondence we have not yet sufficient information to enable us to decide.

The solar system is one organic whole, and in a subordinate sense each Chain of seven globes is also an organic whole. Each whole is composed of parts, but these are mutually interdependent. In the case of a Chain, a circulation of physical and other forces and of vitality is constantly going on between the seven globes, although the point of greatest activity is centred sometimes upon one globe and sometimes upon another, according to the stage of evolution reached. So that the seven globes of a Chain are more closely associated with each other, more dependent upon each other for the interchange of vital and conscious influences, than are the various physical planets. This is a department of occult astrology of which practically nothing is known as yet; but in some mysterious way the position and conditions of the seven physical planets previously mentioned are a clue to the conditions and influences of the seven Chains.

With regard to the seven planes of which the solar system is composed, a similar sub-division and correspondence is found. The Physical plane is the lowest, the Astral plane is the next, the Mental

¹ In the view of later knowledge this idea has been modified but the information obtained cannot as yet be clearly expressed.

follows the astral, then comes the intuitional plane, then the Atmic or spiritual, then the Anupadaka and the Adi, or super-spiritual planes ; each higher plane being more ethereal, subtler, and greater in extent than the one below it. Upon the lower three planes, as we have previously seen, all the seven globes of the earth Chain are situated. Each plane is divided into seven sub-planes, which are to the plane as a whole what the seven planes are to the solar system as a whole, and the sub-planes of any plane correspond in order to the seven planes. In what follows it is necessary carefully to distinguish between statements applying to planes and those applying to sub-planes.

On the physical plane, the lowest four sub-divisions are solids, liquids, gases, and ethers ; which answer to what are called earth, water, fire, and air. These four enter into the composition of each physical planet, and are specialised in some way in doing so, for atoms are said to vary their combining proportions on every planet. The three higher sub-planes of the physical, which are sometimes referred to as the higher ethers, but which also bear the names of super-etheric, sub-atomic, and atomic, the latter being the highest, are not specialised in this way but are common to the whole solar system and are the channels through which various forms of energy and vitality are transmitted from one planet to another, including astrological influence in so far as this is physical.

The types of life and consciousness that characterise the seven planes of the solar system are summed up in seven great Intelligences, the Rulers of the planes, who correspond to and are aspects of the seven Planetary Logoi. Two of these planes, the highest two, are altogether beyond our comprehension at our present stage of development, and do not enter into our evolutionary activity ; so that only five may be considered as actual for us at present. These are the Lords of—the Physical plane, earth, Kshiti or Kubera ; the Astral plane, water, Varuna ; the Mental plane, fire, Agni ; the Buddhic or intuitional plane, air, Vayu ; and the Atmic or spiritual plane, æther or akasha.

These are also connected with the Tattvas, modes of motion in matter, which determine the shape and properties of the ultimate atoms on each plane, which correspond to the five platonic solids, and which appeal to us through our five active senses as follows, Earth, smell ; Water, taste ; Fire, sight ; Air, touch ; Akasha, sound.

The four states or planes are universally permeated by the Fifth, æther or akasha, which is itself triple, in a sense, because it includes the

B

higher two that lie beyond it, to which we are not yet separately responsive. Upon this akasha is imprinted the memory of all that takes place in nature, every thought, word, and deed, on each of the other planes. The five planes have certain qualities exceedingly difficult to describe, resulting naturally from the structure of the matter of the plane as expressed in the ultimate atoms and tattvas, and capable of expression either in terms of matter or of consciousness. Earth, contraction and cohesion, action ; Water, the balance of expansion and contraction, feeling ; Fire, expansion, separation, individualisation, self-consciousness ; Air, interpenetration, relation, wisdom ; Akasha, space, unity, will.

Each of the five states or elements is polarised, being positive and negative, out-breathing and in-breathing, descending and ascending, making ten in all ; and these, with the two that lie beyond, make twelve, corresponding to the signs of the zodiac.

PLANES AND SUB-PLANES

It will be seen that such a term as "earth," as used for a state of matter, is applied sometimes to the physical plane as a whole and sometimes to the lowest sub-division of it ; and similarly that "water" sometimes signifies the astral plane and sometimes the second or liquid sub-division of the physical. This is because planes and sub-planes correspond exactly to each other ; in fact, in a sense, the "water" of the physical plane may be said to result from the influence of the astral plane being thrown down upon the physical ; so that the sub-division of the lower plane is in direct touch with the higher plane as a whole, and it is possible to pass from the one to the other.

The septenary classification is the clue to the solar system whether in terms of consciousness or of matter. It results from the three aspects of all manifested things, and it gives rise to the twelve-fold classification familiar in the zodiac. It has been pointed out that the four lower sub-divisions of the physical plane enter into the composition of the physical globes, and that the three higher are common to the whole system. The influence of the three higher acting upon the four lower gives the three varieties of each of these four ; twelve in all ; and the same principle may be applied in a more extended manner to include the planes of the solar system and the bodies of man. Judged by the number of globes, the influence of the duodenary prevails at present on the physical plane ;

duodenary.

for the number of actual physical planets is eleven, including Vulcan and the two outside Neptune, and then the Sun makes up the twelve. This number, however, apparently varies at different periods in the vast history of the whole system, and changes occur in enormously long rhythms to which science has as yet no clue. Our earth Chain has three of its globes on the physical plane, and the same is true of the Neptune Chain; but this was not the case in the far past, nor will it always be so in the long distant future.