

Deity, Cosmos and Man

by Geoffrey Farthing

Published in the late 1900's

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CONTENTS			
Document 1 on web	FOREWORD		
	BIBLIOGRAPHY		
	Key to abbreviated titles		
	BOOK - I -	INTRODUCTION	
		CHAPTER 1	ABOUT ESOTERIC SCIENCE
		CHAPTER 2	THE SCOPE AND FRAMEWORK OF THE SCIENCE
		CHAPTER 3	THE OCCULT CONSTITUTION OF COSMOS AND MAN
		CHAPTER 4	THE HIERARCHIES OF BEINGS
		CHAPTER 5	AKASHA AND THE ASTRAL LIGHT
		CHAPTER 6	ELEMENTS AND ELEMENTALS
		CHAPTER 7	LAW IN COSMOS AND HUMAN LIFE
		CHAPTER 8	DEATH AND REBIRTH
		CHAPTER 9	ORIGINS
		CHAPTER 10	GLOBES, ROUNDS AND RACES
		CHAPTER 11	EVER-BECOMING - THE PROCESSES OF EVOLUTION
CHAPTER 12		SPIRITUALISM AND PSYCHISM	
CHAPTER 13		SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT	
CHAPTER 14	RELIGION		

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

Document 2 on web	BOOK - II -		
		INTRODUCTION	
		CHAPTER 1	ABOUT ESOTERIC SCIENCE
		CHAPTER 2	THE SCOPE OF THE SCIENCE
		CHAPTER 3	THE OCCULT CONSTITUTION OF COSMOS AND MAN
		CHAPTER 4	THE HIERARCHIES OF BEINGS
		CHAPTER 5	AKASHA AND THE ASTRAL LIGHT
		CHAPTER 6	ELEMENTS AND ELEMENTALS
		CHAPTER 7	LAW IN COSMOS AND HUMAN LIFE
		CHAPTER 8	DEATH AND REBIRTH
		CHAPTER 9	ORIGINS
		CHAPTER 10	GLOBES, ROUNDS AND RACES
		CHAPTER 11	EVER-BECOMING, THE PROCESS OF EVOLUTION
		CHAPTER 12	SPIRITUALISM AND PSYCHISM
		CHAPTER 13	SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT
		CHAPTER 14	RELIGION
		EPILOGUE	
GLOSSARY			

FOREWORD

A thread of Esotericism runs through the chronicled events of the world's history. Although the origins of the esoteric tradition are lost in the mists of time, the tradition itself may be discerned in the myths and fairy-tales of many cultures, with their stories of giants, dragons, magicians and wise men. As we approach historical times, we come to the legendary semi-divine figures of Krishna in India, Hermes in Egypt, Mithras in Persia, followed in due course by the great historical teachers known to us as Gautama the Buddha, Lao-tse and Jesus. In the west, the esoteric tradition is evident in the Greek philosophers such as Pythagoras and Plato, as also among the Gnostics, Valentinus, Basilides and Simon Magus among others. Ruthlessly suppressed by the Christian Church, it nevertheless emerges among the mediaeval Rosicrucians, Alchemists and Hermetists, and is in part made explicit in the works of individual writers such as Robert Fludd and Jacob Boehme.

The condition of western thought in the latter part of the 19th century, with religion in conflict with materialistic science, made it necessary for the Guardians of the esoteric tradition to let its existence be more openly known. For the first time in recorded history some parts of the teachings were given out publicly in the early literature of the theosophical movement.

The author of the present work has attempted to offer an outline of the teachings of Esoteric Science, with abundant reference to the great literature in which the student may discover for himself something of the scope and grandeur of the Wisdom tradition.

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The compilation of the work has gone on over many years and it has seen many changes. The author is very grateful particularly to two editors: Miss Muriel Daw, one time editor of the Buddhist Society's magazine, who did an extensive preliminary edit of this work; it was later felt, however, that there was too much material in it and Miss Ianthe H. Hoskins, then General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in England, did some ruthless pruning, virtually rewriting the book and adding some further apt quotations, to make it more readable and informative for the general reader. The author is also particularly grateful to Jill Leslie for much typing and her patient work on the index. The author, as a non-literary man, is very grateful to these ladies for the great help he received from them. Thanks are also due to Eldon Tucker, for managing the book material for printing, and for more careful work on the index.

The author also acknowledges an irredeemable debt of gratitude to H.P. Blavatsky and her Adept Teachers who made what knowledge of Esoteric Science we have available to us.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

There is a very wide literature covering the subjects dealt with in this book but, as explained in the introduction, the writings of H.P. Blavatsky have been taken to be the most informative and authoritative that there are available. Her knowledge was from two sources, one her Initiate Teachers and second her own insights, her own apperception, her intuition resulting from great inherent gifts and intense training. Her Teachers also committed much to writing, a very rare occurrence where genuine Occultism is concerned.

Books by H.P. Blavatsky are as follows:

1. **ISIS UNVEILED** : 1877; J.W.Bouton, New York; subtitle: A Master-Key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology; a large work in two volumes of over 600 pages each.

This is a mine of information, some of it very little known, and a mass of enlightened comment on the science and theology of the day. While some of this is out of date, much in the book is of an enduring nature. This book, while being regarded by some as iconoclastic, is liberating. It helps us to free ourselves from our prejudices and preconceptions. It is in a number of editions, by various publishers, but the text is the same in them all.

2. **THE SECRET DOCTRINE** : 1888; The Theosophical Publishing Company, London; subtitle: The Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy; two volumes of some 1500 pages altogether.

This is a massive work of great erudition, some 1100 other works being referred to in the text. It outlines the vast scheme of knowledge of the nature and function of Cosmos available to mankind in the extensive world literature on the subject and adds some items of great significance, not previously given out. In spite of the work's extent and depth, H.P.B. says that in it only "a corner of the veil" was lifted.

In her preface H.P.B. says, "The aim of this work may thus be stated: to show that Nature is not 'a fortuitous concurrence of atoms' and to assign to man his rightful place in the scheme of the Universe, etc. etc.". She further says that it, *The Secret Doctrine*, is as much as 20th century man can apprehend.

3. **THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY** : 1889; numerous editions about 250 pages; "Dedicated by H.P.B. to all her pupils that they may Learn and Teach in their turn".

This book covers the main aspects of the teaching as they affect mankind. She discusses among others the Wisdom-Religion, Occultism, Spiritualism, God and Prayer, the septenary Nature of Man, the After-death states, Reincarnation, the Complex Nature of Mind, Karma, etc. etc.; all this by way of question and answer.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

4. *THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE* : 1889; numerous editions; about 250 pages; subtitle: Chosen Fragments from the "Book of the Golden Precepts" - for the Daily Use of Lanoos [Disciples]; it is "dedicated to the Few".

This is a book small in volume but massive in content. It is in three Fragments: the first entitled The Voice of Silence, of 100 verses; the second, The Two Paths, of 95 verses; the third, The Seven Portals, of 120 verses. This is a work intended for the aspirant after true, or self, knowledge, aiming to play a significant part in helping mankind along its arduous evolutionary path to ultimate self-redemption and liberation.

5. *THE COLLECTED WRITINGS* : edited by Boris de Zirkoff; 14 volumes.

This is a collection of H.P.B.'s numerous writings by way of articles, published letters, stories and so on, written during the period 1875 to 1891, arranged chronologically. These writings contain much teaching which supplements (and is entirely consistent with) what is contained in her books.

Some of the material gives an insight into how the teachings could affect the lot of humanity in the circumstances of earth life, having regard to its traditions, institutions, ignorances, superstitions and so on. They are particularly illuminating on such subjects as spiritualism, the Christian religion, and Occultism generally. Always H.P.B. has an eye to essentials, to objective facts, which she sees clearly against the background of her encyclopaedic knowledge. In these works is to be found much wisdom and inspiration.

6. *THE MAHATMA LETTERS TO A.P.SINNETT* : 1923; first published by Rider & Co., London; 500 pages.

This is a volume of letters received from H.P.B.'s two initiate Teachers, in answer to questions put to them mostly by A.P. Sinnett with some by A.O. Hume. The letters contain much metaphysical and philosophical teaching in the occult tradition, among much material relating to the early days of the Theosophical Society and the people in or associated with it. Many aspects of the teaching, among them those relating to the after-death states, are unique, having been kept secret up to that time. This is a book essential to any serious student of modern Occultism. It is the source of the main principles of the subject given and elaborated in H.P.B.'s writings.

7. *TRANSACTIONS OF THE BLAVATSKY LODGE* : Theosophical University Press, Covine, California.

A collection of notes, in question and answer form, taken at a series of meetings of the Lodge, in the first six months of 1889, at which H.P.B. was present.

8. *FOUNDATIONS OF ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY* : from the writings of H.P. Blavatsky; compiled by I.H. Hoskins; The Theosophical Publishing House; 66 pages including a

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

glossary and as an appendix THE SECRET DOCTRINE AND ITS STUDY.

This booklet is a compilation from *The Secret Doctrine and Isis Unveiled*, of excerpts which summarize the principle aspects of the great teaching.

9. *MADAME BLAVATSKY ON HOW TO STUDY THEOSOPHY* : The Theosophical Publishing House; 15 pages.

This is a booklet, referred to in the text as the 'Bowen Notes', containing material written down by Robert Bowen from talks which Madame Blavatsky gave to those near her during the close of her life. The content is in the form of important hints to students.

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There are many other books, more or less reliable, which are virtually commentaries on the above source books. Some of these purport to be in the same tradition and to be expansions and extensions or even up-datings of the originals. Students are advised, however, to become really familiar with what H.P.B. and her Masters gave out, before studying later versions.

Some books do follow the teachings faithfully and in so far as they give another point of view, or summarize or systematize the vast mass of information in the original works, do help the student. Books of this type are:

10. *ESOTERIC BUDDHISM* : A.P. Sinnett; Theosophical Publishing House.

A book first published in 1885 from material received by A.P. Sinnett in letters (see 6 above) from the two Adepts who instigated through H.P.B. the founding of the Theosophical Society. It made a connected narrative of much information about the esoteric side of Nature, not made public before.

11. *THE DIVINE PLAN* : Geoffrey A. Barborka; 1964; The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, India; 520 pages.

This book deals with aspects of the subject as doctrines, twelve of them. Within each of these, information relating to it throughout the main work has been collected together in an orderly fashion; a valuable student book.

12. *LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME* ; W.Q. Judge.

He was one of H.P.B.'s early collaborators in founding the Theosophical Society and was himself a long-

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

time pupil of her Master.

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As an aid to getting a feeling for the subject and to obtaining a perspective view of H.P.B. in the setting of contemporary life, of her character and of the enormous and distressing difficulties she encountered, but which she largely overcame, readers are recommended to read one or two of the reliable biographies, of which the following is a selection:

BOOKS BY HER CONTEMPORARIES

My Guest - H.P. Blavatsky : Francesca Arundale

Reminiscences of H.P. Blavatsky : Bertram Keightley

Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky : A.P. Sinnett

Reminiscences of H.P. Blavatsky and the Secret Doctrine : Countess Wachtmeister

BOOKS BY LATER BIOGRAPHERS

Blavatsky and Her Teachers : Jean Overton Fuller

When Daylight Comes : Howard Murphet

Personal Memoirs of H.P. Blavatsky : Mary K. Neff

LIST OF ABBREVIATED TITLES OF THE BOOKS REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT

I.U. is ISIS UNVEILED (2 Vols) by H.P. Blavatsky

M.L. is THE MAHATMA LETTERS TO A.P. SINNETT edited by A.T. Barker. References are to 1st/2nd Ed., and 3rd Ed.

S.D. is THE SECRET DOCTRINE - 2,3 or 5 Vols (and indexes) according to edition - by H.P. Blavatsky. References are given to the three editions in current use in date order thus:
1st Ed. (1888); 3rd Ed. (1893); Adyar 6 Volume Ed.

KEY is THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY by H.P. Blavatsky. All page numbers refer to the original edition.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

- V.S. is THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE by H.P. Blavatsky
- C.W. is the volumes in the series THE COLLECTED WRITINGS OF H.P. BLAVATSKY (14 Vols) edited by Boris de Zirkoff.
- T.G. is THE THEOSOPHICAL GLOSSARY by H.P. Blavatsky (and others).
- T.B.L. is TRANSACTIONS OF THE BLAVATSKY LODGE
- E.B. is ESOTERIC BUDDHISM by A.P. Sinnett
- B.N. is MME BLAVATSKY ON HOW TO STUDY THEOSOPHY by Robert Bowen
- W.Q.J. is LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME by W.Q. Judge
- E.W. is THE ESOTERIC WRITINGS OF H.P. BLAVATSKY by L.H. Leslie-Smith
- D.P. is THE DIVINE PLAN by Geoffrey Barborka

BOOK - I -

INTRODUCTION

ESOTERIC SCIENCE may be defined as the body of religious, philosophical and scientific teachings that form the core of a universal and timeless Wisdom tradition: religious, for it is concerned with the ultimate source of being and man's relation to it; philosophical, for it embraces the great questions of the origin and nature of man and the universe and the inter-relatedness of the parts within the whole; scientific, for its methods are essentially empirical, its exponents having individually and independently tested and corroborated the teachings received from earlier generations of wise men. Esoteric Science is, then, knowledge of the truths of existence, a knowledge acquired from time immemorial through the development of faculties which all mankind possesses but which remain in most of us in a state of latency.

Every religion and culture has its tradition of prophets and seers. In the literature of Esotericism, reference is made to them under various names - Adepts, Initiates, Rishis, Mahatmas, Maha-gurus, Masters of Wisdom. Although fully human, they have by their own effort broken through the limitations of common humanity. By means of a long and rigorous self-training through many lifetimes, they have passed beyond the levels of ordinary men and women in intellectual stature, sanctity of life and spiritual enlightenment. In accordance with the laws of the occult fraternity into which they have entered, their powers - well recognized in the literature of yoga - are utilized only for the advancement of the human race in its evolutionary progress. What is more, they affirm that the knowledge and powers which they possess and demonstrate are accessible to all who will undergo the disciplines by which, and by which alone, such attainment is possible.

The literature of Esoteric Science is extensive, in both its ancient and its modern presentations. Its doctrines are shown to be the source of the world's great religions, although time, ignorance and human corruption have distorted the original truths and obscured the profound significance of the symbolism in which they were inevitably clothed. There is no doubt that a return to the pure source must radically disturb entrenched attachment to the familiar exoteric teachings. It requires courage to break free from popular and generally accepted ways of thought, abandoning thereby the security of common patterns of belief for the as yet unexplored territory of the esoteric traditions.

To the task of liberating the mind of western man from its subservience to convention and authority - (we are here in the last decade of the 19th century) - Madame Blavatsky set her courageous hand. She attacked on three fronts, opposing the religious dogmatism and scientific conceit of the day as well as the ignorant and gullible spiritualism then prevalent. But the vigorous polemics of her earlier writings were a necessary preliminary to the work that was to follow - the restoration of the esoteric tradition. Inevitably she made herself the target for hostility and personal abuse, but there is a curious endorsement of the validity of the doctrines of Esotericism that she was enunciating in the fact that her enemies were unable to find any weapon against her teachings other than slander against her person - a position which continues to this day.

Reliable accounts of Madame Blavatsky's life and of the launching of the theosophical movement are

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

given in the Bibliography, together with a list of her voluminous writings. The extent of this literary output is indeed remarkable, especially so when one bears in mind that it was produced in a language foreign to her, during seventeen years of frequent travel and almost continuous ill-health.

Before proceeding to the text, the student who would be guided in his approach to the vast field of Esoteric Science is strongly recommended to study carefully the Preliminary Note that follows.

PRELIMINARY NOTE

The subject matter of this work is presented in chapters, each of which treats of one facet of Esoteric Science. The chapters of Book I are introductory and discursive, their aim being to offer an overall view of the field. Although introductory, they cannot be elementary, for at all stages the study of Esoteric Science demands a sustained effort on the part of the student. Book II, divided into similar chapters, offers supplementary and supporting material, with many extracts from the original literature. These extracts are selected for their explanatory value, and for their elaboration of the information outlined in Book I.

The student is recommended to make himself familiar with the contents of Book I first, by reading it with attention, preferably more than once, noting as he proceeds not only the questions that arise in his mind but also what appear to him to be the most significant statements of the science as presented under each chapter heading. When he has assimilated the essential data given in this first part, he would do well to read once more each of the chapters of Book I, but turning now, after each one, to the study of the corresponding chapter in Book II. Here the compiler has made what is inevitably a personal selection of significant and interesting supporting passages from the source books. Later on, the student is recommended to study these passages in their context, hence the provision of ample references which, if followed, will lead him into an inexhaustible mine of information and inspiration.

One of the most important documents to which attention is directed is the small compilation of Madame Blavatsky's final instructions to students known as "the Bowen notes". These are published in a pamphlet entitled *Madame Blavatsky on How to Study Theosophy*, and are reproduced in the *Foundations of Esoteric Philosophy* (see Bibliography). In these notes, recorded only three weeks before her death, we find not only her personal advice to her students on how to approach the study of *The Secret Doctrine*, but also one more statement of the basic ideas of Esoteric Science, the first of which - it cannot be too often repeated - is that of the essential unity of existence: "all existence is ONE THING". The moment one loses sight of this fundamental unity, she warns, "the idea of SEPARATION supervenes, and the study loses its value".

The field of Esoteric Science is limitless, its horizon ever receding as the student advances towards it. Its exploration is not easy, but the satisfaction - the excitement, even - of the insights awaiting discovery is the reward assured to every adventurer.

Do but set out; you could be on your way into a new and wonderful world.

CHAPTER 1 [BOOK - I -]

ABOUT ESOTERIC SCIENCE

There is a tradition throughout the world of a Golden Age, a time when there were Divine Teachers instructing a young humanity in the skills and knowledge necessary for its survival and development. It was a time when the Gods moved among men, when there were heroes who performed mighty deeds of daring and endurance, when there were saints and prophets, magicians and wise men. Much of this tradition is preserved in folk-lore, in legends and fairy-stories which fire the imagination. While we know that the tales are merely tales, we recognize an underlying truth beneath the fiction of the story. We instinctively admire the virtues and the heroic qualities of the principal characters, adopting them as ideals and seeking to imitate them, in imagination if not in act. Yet the question may suggest itself: is there indeed the possibility, for the ordinary individual, of becoming other than ordinary? - of developing qualities and powers similar to those of the heroes and saints? - of acquiring the secret knowledge possessed by the magicians and wise men of the tales of our childhood?

The universality of the traditions of folk-lore suggest that the popular stories are the cloak of a profound science, a genuine knowledge of Nature and her laws. The hero attains his goal by obedience to the conditions imposed upon him, persevering in his quest through the utmost trials and temptations. Similarly, the one who would penetrate the secrets of Nature has to conform himself to Nature's own laws, developing in understanding and moral strength as he commits himself to the one-pointed pursuit of his goal.

This book is written for those in whom the desire to *know* has awakened and who are prepared to make the necessary effort, intellectual and moral, required for the treading of the ancient but ever-present way. The Wise Ones who have trodden that way have left us all the information we need for the undertaking. Their instructions include rules of conduct for everyday living, warnings about the dangers and difficulties that will surely be encountered, and detailed information about the nature of man - our nature - and his potentialities.

While much of the teaching has necessarily remained secret, in order to preserve its purity and to prevent its abuse, enough has always been available in the Scriptures of the great religions and in the writings of mystics and enlightened philosophers for those who have earnestly sought to respond to the call of the inner life. In the 19th century, however, because of the threat posed by materialistic science to the spiritual evolution of humanity, some parts of the secret teaching were for the first time made public through the theosophical movement and in particular through the writings of H.P.Blavatsky.

On the title-page of her encyclopaedic work, *The Secret Doctrine*, Mme Blavatsky describes it as "the synthesis of science, religion and philosophy", a description that indicates the all-embracing nature of Theosophy, which is Occult Science. "The Secret Doctrine", she writes (referring here to the archaic tradition), "was the universally diffused religion of the ancient and prehistoric world" [The Secret Doctrine-I, xxxiv/1, 18 /1, 56]. Yet Theosophy is not a religion in any sectarian sense, for it is not a belief-system, nor can its origins be traced to any particular teacher. Founders of religion, she states further, "were all *transmitters*, not original teachers. They were the authors of new forms and interpretations, while the

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

truths upon which the latter were based were as old as mankind" [The Secret Doctrine-I, xxxvi /I, 20 /I, 58]. For Theosophy is *knowledge* (sophia) - "the last word of possible human knowledge" [The key to theosophy - I, 7] - embracing the universe in its totality, that is, Nature visible and invisible.

Just as the physical sciences learn more and more about external nature by the development of new instruments and techniques of observation and experiment, so Occult Science has arrived at the knowledge of the facts of existence by the development, in the investigators themselves, of the requisite faculties. These investigators, the great Adepts recognized in every tradition, had "developed and perfected their physical, mental, psychic and spiritual organizations to the utmost possible degree. No vision of one adept was accepted till it was checked and confirmed by the visions - so obtained as to stand as independent evidence - of other adepts, and by centuries of experience" [The Secret Doctrine-1, 273 /I,294 /I, 316]. In insisting that Occult Science is not a body of hypothesis but "*knowledge based on observation and experience*", Mme Blavatsky writes further:

The methods used by our scholars and the students of psycho-spiritual sciences do not differ from those of students of the natural and physical sciences ... Only our fields of research are on two different planes, and our instruments are made by no human hands, for which reason perchance they are only the more reliable. The retorts, accumulators, and microscopes of the chemist and naturalist may get out of order; the telescope and the astronomer's horological instruments may get spoiled; our recording instruments are beyond the influence of weather or the elements. [The key to theosophy - VI, 87]

The path to enlightenment, which is the path to direct knowledge, is a common feature of the great Scriptures and mystical writings of all cultures. Under various disguises, it is the subject of myths and legends and is transmitted in the simplest of fairy-tales. It is the way of self transformation, beginning with the conscious determination to set out, imperfect as one knows oneself to be, towards the goal of human perfection and the realization of "the *deific* powers in man and the possibilities contained in nature" [The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnett -I, 2:2].

CHAPTER 2 [BOOK - I -]

THE SCOPE AND FRAMEWORK OF THE SCIENCE

The field of Esoteric Science is as vast as life itself, for it embraces the whole of Nature, visible and invisible. Nevertheless, the more one advances in its study, the more one recognizes that this limitless scheme of things, though having "neither conceivable beginning nor imaginable end", is an orderly, integrated whole, in which every part is intimately related to every other part. It may be compared to a wheel in which the hub, spokes and rim, although distinctive in form and function, are inseparable parts of one whole. It follows that the student may begin his exploration from any point he chooses; sooner or later, he will reach every corner of the field.

In this book, the order in which the various aspects of the subject are approached is determined by the three principles which are characteristic of the whole system. These are: the principle of unity, the principle of law and the principle of evolution. The contents of the chapters in which the subjects are studied in greater detail are briefly summarized in the numbered sections below.

1. *The unity of all things.*

All existence is ONE THING. This ONE THING is variously called the One Life, the One Reality; it is the source of Being, and of all beings; it is in everything - in fact, it *is* everything, for there is nothing else.

the root of all nature, objective and subjective, and everything else in the universe, visible or invisible, is, was and ever will be one absolute essence, from which all starts, and into which everything returns ... [The key to theosophy - III, 43]

In all subsequent study, this fundamental fact must never be lost from sight; all forms that come into being, from atoms to men, are animated by the same Life; the forms disintegrate, the Life remains. We human beings are one with it; our life is that Life.

Explaining how Theosophy views "God, Soul and Man", Mme Blavatsky states:

In their origin and in eternity, the three, i.e. God, the soul and man, like the universe and all therein, are one with the absolute unity, the unknowable deific essence ... [The key to theosophy - VI, 83]

Although for purposes of study we divide the field of Esoteric Science into various aspects, it must constantly be reaffirmed that the aspects are facets of a UNITY. The moment one lets this idea slip from the mind, "... (and it is most easy to do so when engaged in any of the many intricate aspects of the Esoteric Philosophy) the idea of SEPARATION supervenes, and the study loses its value". [Madame

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

Blavatsky on how to study theosophy -, 9]

2. *Origins.*

The universe and all that is in it are subject to a timeless process described as "Days and Nights", alternating periods of activity and rest. According to the occult teaching, there is no *creation*, in the sense of something being made out of nothing. There is indeed nothing new under the sun.

We believe in no *creation*, but in the periodical and consecutive appearances of the universe from the subjective on to the objective plane of being, at regular intervals of time, covering periods of immense duration. [The key to theosophy - VI, 83]

There is therefore nothing that can properly be called a beginning, for what is commonly called creation is only the periodical re-emergence of things - forms or entities - which already existed. With the coming of night, everything seems to disappear, merged into a uniform darkness; as the sun rises, all things once more reappear - temporarily, just as their disappearance had been temporary. The time-scale may vary from the few hours of life of an insect or the three-score years and ten of the life of man to the almost incalculable duration of a sun or a universe. Nevertheless, whether the periods be long or short, the alternation remains, a manifestation of the universal law of periodicity.

3. *The sevenfold nature of Cosmos and man.*

One of the esoteric keys to the understanding of life is analogy, as given in the Hermetic axiom, "As above, so below". The universe is the macrocosm, the great ordered whole, and man is its miniature reflection, the microcosm. Our experience of ourselves shows us that, as human beings, we function in a variety of ways, in physical action and in such modes of consciousness as thinking, feeling and dreaming. Esoteric Science teaches that these modes of consciousness occur at different levels, from the sensory or objective to the deeply inner or subjective. Furthermore, these levels themselves are a reflection, in the individual, of universal planes of being: just as individual physical action takes place on the physical plane, using the material of that plane, so mental activity - thought - takes place on the mental plane, using the material of that plane. There are, according to Esoteric Science, seven such planes in Nature, and similarly there are seven states of consciousness in man, in which he "can live, think, remember and have his being" [The key to theosophy - VI, 89].

4. *The Hierarchies of Beings.*

The Scriptures and religious traditions of all cultures make frequent reference to non-human entities, variously termed Angels, Devas, Gods, Spirits of one kind or another. In mythology these beings appear as Nature-spirits, Fairies, Sylphs, Salamanders, to name but a few. Esoteric Science supports universal tradition in affirming that the different planes of Nature are peopled by hierarchies of beings, each with characteristic properties and modes of functioning. In the Bible there are well-known instances of angelic appearances, singly as "the angel of the Lord" or as "a multitude of the heavenly host". The "thrones,

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

dominions, principalities and powers" mentioned several times by St Paul are terms well recognized in angelology for some of the non-human hierarchies. Everywhere in Nature there is life, manifesting through infinite gradations of individual lives, for there is neither empty space nor inanimate matter anywhere in the universe.

5. *Elements and Elementals.*

These are examples of the hierarchical structure of the Cosmos. The Elements, in Esoteric Science, are seven in number, the four familiar ones of Earth, Air, Fire and Water, to which it adds a semi-material Ether that is still invisible to us, and two others which are "as yet absolutely beyond the range of human perception" [The Secret Doctrine -I, 12 /I, 40 /I, 78]. Yet all of these, it must always be remembered, are aspects of the One Universal Element, the source of all objective existence.

These seven elements with their numberless Sub-Elements ... are simply *conditional* modifications and aspects of the ONE and only Element. [Wisdom of Solomon (Apocrypha)]

Elementals is the term used to refer to beings who are beginning a course of evolutionary growth, and who thus are in the *elemental* state of growth. In general the term refers to beings who are below the mineral kingdom in the evolutionary scheme. Their existence is universally recognized in folk-lore under such names as fairies, elves, gnomes and suchlike, as mentioned earlier. But they are best understood as forces in Nature rather than as beings having miniature or ethereal human shapes.

6. *Universal Law.*

It is apparent even to superficial observation that the universe operates according to Law. All our sciences and technologies are based on the recognition of this fact. This law is not imposed from outside but is the very nature of the Cosmos. Fundamentally it is the law of cause and effect, action and reaction, by which the Cosmos as a whole, and all its parts individually, are ordered and regulated. The Law is in itself Wisdom, Intelligence and Power; it is the Wisdom that "mightily and sweetly ordereth all things" [Wisdom of Solomon (Apocrypha)], operating through the Hierarchies of beings by which the Cosmos is made and maintained as one harmonious whole.

7. *Akasha and the Astral Light.*

Here there is introduced a teaching that goes far beyond anything known to today's sciences. Although not easy to grasp at first, it will be found to throw much light on areas of experience at present little understood even by psychology, for example, the mystical and psychic.

It has been stated (in paragraph 4 above), that there is no such thing as empty space in the universe. Esoteric Science teaches that the entire cosmos is pervaded by Akasha, primordial substance, or rather the *noumenon* - the non-sensuous reality - beyond substance. In the *Theosophical Glossary*, Akasha

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

(from a Sanskrit word meaning "brilliant" or "luminous") is described as "the subtle, supersensuous spiritual essence which pervades all space". This primordial substance differentiates into all the forms of matter, those of the invisible as of the visible regions of the universe. Hence the definition of Akasha as "the Universal Soul ... from which all that exists is born by separation or differentiation. It is the cause of existence; it fills all the infinite Space".

The lowest region of Akasha, immediately above the gross physical plane, is termed the Astral Light. It is "the invisible region that surrounds our globe" and everything in it, and corresponds to the subtle vehicle or "double" in man, the *linga sharira*. In it is impressed indelibly everything that takes place in the physical, psychical and mental realms. It is thus the storehouse of memory, both in the cosmos and in mankind.

8. *Rebirth.*

In the study of the constitution of man according to Occultism, two aspects of his inner nature are recognized, one mortal - the psyche or soul, and the other immortal - the spiritual essence. (In everyday parlance, and in much religious usage, the words "soul" and "spirit" are used loosely and often interchangeably. Particular attention must be paid to the precise meaning attached to them in the present study.) The spiritual essence in man, a persistent entity, attaches itself periodically to a succession of personalities which it projects into the objective world. In so doing, it obeys the universal cyclic law that operates throughout Nature. The temporary personality comprises a complex mortal non-physical component, the psyche or soul, housed in a body of flesh.

It will be seen that rebirth, or reincarnation, is not a peculiarity of mankind; it is a particular instance of that law of alternation of activity and rest, that may be observed in the natural world - the cyclic process of birth, growth, decay and death of the form, and the persistence of the life through successive forms.

9. *After-Death States.*

The preceding section states that in the life of man there are alternating periods of activity and rest, or, more precisely, periods of incarnation - that is, life in a body of flesh - alternating with periods of discarnate existence, analogous to the twenty-four hour cycle of wakefulness and sleep. In Section 3 of this chapter, some information was outlined concerning the seven planes of Nature and the seven states of consciousness. Incarnation is the process of assuming vestures or vehicles through which consciousness can function in the lower planes; death is the process of withdrawal from these vestures. It must already be evident to the student that every aspect of Esoteric Science is inextricably related to every other aspect. To understand death and the after-death states, one must study the sevenfold constitution of man and cosmos, and this must lead to - or be preceded by - the study of Akasha and the Astral Light. Nevertheless, whatever aspect is being considered, it must be seen as part of a whole, the functioning of which, in all its parts, is subject to universal law. At every stage of the study it is necessary to remind oneself of these facts.

10. *The Nature of Spiritualistic Phenomena.*

Much confusion is caused by the ignorant association of the word "spiritualistic" with the word "spiritual". What are commonly called spiritualistic phenomena are in fact *psychic* phenomena, that is, phenomena explicable in terms of the lower levels of the next plane, little removed from the physical world perceived by the ordinary senses. For the most part, this physical world is the only one of which we are aware, because we do not possess faculties responsive to stimuli on higher planes. In some people - mediums and sensitives - psychic faculties are more or less developed, enabling them to hear and see things of which others are not aware. However, there is nothing spiritual in the possession of such faculties, unless they have been brought under the control of the will of the individual; such conscious control alone can properly be termed spiritual, for it is a manifestation of the awakened power of the essential man, the Spirit.

11. *Evolution.*

Evolution is the emergence of the possibilities inherent in Nature from latency into active expression. The word means, literally, unfolding, and it implies the prior process of involution by which the potentialities of spirit are communicated to matter.

Esoteric Science affirms the universality of the evolutionary process:

The whole order of nature evinces a progressive march towards a *higher life*. There is design in the action of the seemingly blindest forces. The whole process of evolution with its endless adaptations is a proof of this. [The Secret Doctrine-I, 277 /I, 297 /I, 320]

Here we must return to the Hierarchies of Sections 4 and 5, for the evolutionary process is not a mechanical one but is "guided, controlled and animated by an almost endless series of Hierarchies of sentient Beings" [The Secret Doctrine-I, 274 /I, 295 /I, 317].

12. *Rounds and Races.*

These are the terms used to indicate states in the great evolutionary cycles. In our cosmic scheme, they are applied particularly to our Earth and its humanity. Like everything else in Nature, planets have their period of activity and rest, their days and nights, analogous to human life and death. A grand evolutionary programme is in operation throughout the Cosmos, each part of which - whether it be planet or kingdom of nature or human group - has to pass through sequential phases of development towards its particular goal.

In the study of the programme for humanity, it will be important to note that the term "Race" indicates a stage in the evolution of humanity consciousness. It applies to the development of mental and psychic faculties as well as to the superficial physical characteristics such as skin colour or hair type.

13. *Spiritual Development.*

If examined in the light of Esoteric Science, this term appears to be a misnomer. Mankind is a stage in an immense journey, the pilgrimage of "the Many to the Everlasting One" [The Meaning of Man, by Clifford Bax]. The object of the journey is the realization of the essential unity of life, the experience of the One consciousness which pervades the whole. The development is in effect the increase in the responsiveness of living instruments, so that the consciousness of the individual becomes identified eventually with, or merged into, that of the other units of humanity who have transcended the limitations of purely personal existence.

Human life, with its vicissitudes and suffering, has appropriately been called a training ground, the school of life, in which the main lesson to be learned is the elimination of selfishness in all its forms. Selfishness, the "great dire heresy", is a denial of the fact of unity and will be seen as the source of many of the problems of mankind. Similarly, all that contributes to breaking down the walls of separateness - altruism, compassion, love - must promote the spiritual evolution of the individual and of the human race.

14. *Religion.*

Various terms have been used to refer to the esoteric tradition, Theosophy. It is Esoteric Science, the Ancient Wisdom, the Secret Doctrine and the Wisdom-Religion. But in using this last term, care must be taken not to see in it a religion comparable to Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity or any other of the religions of man. The Wisdom-Religion is the source of all of these, and the study of the similarities in their traditions, forms and doctrines will show that in essentials they must stem from a common origin.

One of the aims that Mme Blavatsky set before herself in *The Secret Doctrine* is particularly relevant:

to rescue from degradation the archaic truths which are the basis of all religions, and to uncover, to some extent, the fundamental unity from which they all spring. [The Secret Doctrine-I, viii /I, xxi /I, 9]

The state of religion today, the perpetuation of forms in ignorance of the truths they represent, shows the need for the wide dissemination of Esoteric Science if that aim is to be achieved.

Throughout the study of Esoteric Science, it should be recognized that what is presented to us here is not speculation or hypothesis but *knowledge* - knowledge possessed by men who, by the development within themselves of the necessary faculties, made themselves able to investigate at first hand the hidden side of Nature.

The Secret Doctrine is the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages, and its cosmogony alone is the most stupendous and elaborate system: e.g., even in the exotericism of the Puranas. But such is the mysterious power of Occult symbolism, that the facts which have actually occupied countless generations of initiated seers and prophets to marshal, to set down and explain, in the

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

bewildering series of evolutionary progress, are all recorded on a few pages of geometrical signs and glyphs. The flashing gaze of those seers has penetrated into the very kernel of matter, and recorded the soul of things there, where an ordinary profane, however learned, would have perceived but the external work of form. But modern science believes not in the "soul of things", and hence will reject the whole system of ancient cosmogony. It is useless to say that the system in question is no fancy of one or several isolated individuals. That it is the uninterrupted record covering thousands of generations of Seers whose respective experiences were made to test and to verify the traditions passed orally by one early race to another, of the teachings of higher and exalted beings, who watched over the childhood of Humanity. That for long ages, the "Wise Men" of the Fifth Race, of the stock saved and rescued from the last cataclysm and shifting of continents, had passed their lives *in learning, not teaching*. How did they do so? It is answered: by checking, testing and verifying in every department of nature the traditions of old by the independent visions of great adepts; *i.e.*, men who have developed and perfected their physical, mental, psychic, and spiritual organizations to the utmost possible degree. No vision of one adept was accepted till it was checked and confirmed by the visions - so obtained as to stand as independent evidence - of other adepts, and by centuries of experience. [The Secret Doctrine-I, 272 /I, 293 /I, 316]

CHAPTER 3 [BOOK - I -]

THE OCCULT CONSTITUTION OF COSMOS AND MAN

In this chapter we take up the themes outlined in the third paragraph of Chapter 2, beginning with the Hermetic axiom, "as above, so below". Like every science, Esoteric Science has its special terminology, and much of this chapter will serve as an expanded glossary of the terms used in Occultism in the study of man and the universe.

Man is a microcosm reflecting in miniature the composition and processes of the macrocosm, the total universe. What we find in the one is to be found in the other, and consequently, by studying the one we may learn, by analogy, the corresponding picture of the other.

A familiar division of the human constitution describes man as threefold - body, soul and spirit. Esotericism makes use of the same division (found also in Plato and Paul), but shows the complex nature of each of the three parts. The body itself is regarded as threefold, consisting - in addition to the gross physical part - of a subtle or ethereal counterpart and of a vital principle or life-force, *prana*. Soul is composed of two elements recognized in experience as the feeling and thinking aspects of ourselves. Body and soul together constitute the human *personality*. The *spiritual* nature of man is also threefold and is the true *individuality* which, during incarnation, becomes associated with, or focused in, the personality. English has no precise term for the three aspects of Spirit, hence the use in theosophical literature of the Sanskrit terms *atma*, *buddhi* and *manas*, which are explained in the paragraphs that follow. The distinction between *personality*, the ordinary man, and *individuality*, the spiritual man, should be particularly noted.

In *The Key to Theosophy* (Chapter VI) this information is set out clearly in a table describing each of the seven aspects, usually referred to as principles, and giving their Sanskrit names. Further information is given in Chapters 8 and 9. In this chapter the relevant statements from all three chapters have been gathered together, but students are recommended to refer to the passages in the *Key* itself in order to build up their own picture of the occult constitution of man.

[Note: The transliteration of Sanskrit characters into the letters of the English alphabet presents a difficulty. At the time when the early theosophical books were being published, the method of transliteration had not been standardized, and writers attempted to give a phonetic approximation to the Sanskrit sounds. In later years, with advances in scholarship, changes in the system of transliteration have been made to represent more accurately sounds which, in some cases, do not exist in spoken English. The addition of diacritical marks is a further aid to correct transliteration, but as these marks will not have meaning for the general reader, they have not been used in this book.]

According to Esoteric Science , there are then in man seven principles or aspects:

1. The physical body: the vehicle of all the other principles or aspects during life.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

Skt. *rupa*, or *sthula sharira* (*rupa*: a visible form; *sthula*: bulky, thick, gross; *sharira*: that which easily moulders or is dissolved, the outward aspect, suggesting impermanence).

2. The vital principle or life-force that permeates and animates the physical body. It is necessary only to the aspects numbered 1, 3 and 4 in this table, and to the mental functions that operate through the physical brain.

Skt. *prana* (breath, spirit, vital air).

3. The subtle or ethereal counterpart of the physical body. It has been variously termed the astral body or double, the phantom body, the model body. *The Secret Doctrine* affirms "the birth of the *astral* before the *physical* body, the former being a model for the latter" [The Secret Doctrine-II, 1 /II, 1 /III, 15]. Skt. *linga-sharira* (*linga*: a characteristic mark, hence "model" or "pattern").

4. The vehicle of the grosser desires and passions. As no precise term exists in English, the Sanskrit term *kama-rupa* is generally translated as the "desire-body". This does not become a distinct body until after death. It is said to be "the seat of animal desires and passions". This fourth principle, being the middle one of the seven, is further described as "the centre of the animal man, where lies the line of demarcation which separates the mortal man from the immortal entity" [The key to theosophy - VI, 91], but see paragraph 5 below. Skt. *kama-rupa* (*kama*: desire).

These four together form the lower quaternary or the fourfold *personality*, the mortal man, conditioned by the previous life, but formed anew according to karmic law for each incarnation.

Clearly distinguished from the mortal quaternary is the immortal spiritual entity, the *individuality*, termed "the upper imperishable triad". Its three aspects are:

5. The principle of mind which links the higher with the lower, the individuality with the personality. It is taught that formed anew, *manas*, the mind-principle, is "dual in its functions". During life, it may "gravitate downward to *kama-rupa*", that is, it may become so identified with the lower or passionate nature that it must finally disintegrate with it; or it may "gravitate upward" towards the spiritual consciousness, the true Ego (see below), and so win its immortality. *Manas*, the mental faculty, "makes of man an intelligent and moral being, and distinguishes him from the mere animal" [The Theosophical Glossary -]. Skt. *manas* (the mind, from a root meaning to think).

6/7. The Monad, the essential unit of active, universal life which, together with *manas*, becomes the conscious reincarnating Ego, the spiritual entity overshadowing every personal man. The Monad is the combination of *atma*, pure spirit (ineffective by itself) and its vehicle *buddhi*, termed "the Spiritual Soul". As the Monad is one and indivisible, it is not an individual entity, it is the One Universal Life. *Atma* is regarded as "one with the Absolute, as its radiation". It can act in the lower planes only when in combination with its vehicle, *buddhi*, and can then only be regarded as a unit component of man's Ego when in association with *Manas*, man's individual mind, i.e. Ego is Monad plus *Manas*.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

In an attempt to clarify these difficult concepts Mme Blavatsky writes:

I. *Atma*, the "*Higher Self*", is neither your Spirit nor mine, but like sunlight shines on all. It is the universally diffused "*divine principle*", and is inseparable from its one and absolute *Meta-Spirit*, as the sunbeam is inseparable from sunlight.

II. *Buddhi* (the spiritual soul) is only its vehicle. Neither each separately, nor the two collectively, are of anymore use to the body of man than sunlight and its beams are for a mass of granite buried in the earth, *unless the divine Duad is assimilated by, and reflected in, some consciousness* ... This consciousness or mind is III. *Manas* ... It is, therefore, when inseparably united to the first two, called the SPIRITUAL EGO ... This is the real Individuality, or the divine man ... It is that Ego, that "Causal Body", which overshadows every personality Karma forces it to incarnate into ... [The key to theosophy - VIII, 135]

Each of the seven principles in man, the microcosm, is related to corresponding principles in the macrocosm. In the case of the physical body, this is seen at once; its constituent materials are the materials of the world around us, the physical plane, the plane of objective materiality. Prana, the vital principle in man, is shared by all the kingdoms of Nature, for "Prana or Life permeates the whole being of the objective universe" [The key to theosophy - IX, 176]. The subtle or ethereal counterpart of the physical body finds its correspondence in the invisible region that surrounds the globe and all objects in it, the Astral Light (see Chapter 2). Similarly, the energy that expresses itself in the instinctive life of the individual and in his desire-nature is drawn from an inner plane of subtle matter imperceptible to the physical senses. Further, Esoteric Science teaches that there is a Mind-principle in Nature; it is termed *Mahat*, Universal Mind, of which *Manas*, the individual mind, is a derivative. *Buddhi* is that universal, passive principle that makes possible any manifestation of *Atma*, the limitless, active, indefinable, indivisible Reality, the dynamism of the Universe.

A word of caution is appropriate here. In the everyday world of physical phenomena perceptible by the senses, we easily classify objects into their various categories. Such an approach is inappropriate when we are considering realms of being that are entirely out of the reach of the senses and remain, for the most part, beyond our experience. When, in the 1880's, Mme Blavatsky's Teachers began to give out information about the esoteric system - for the first time in English - they had first to find an appropriate vocabulary to refer to phenomena of the hidden worlds completely unknown to western philosophy. Our ordinary vocabulary is adequate for dealing with experience in a three-dimensional world and in serial time (past, present and future). The literature of Esoteric Science must of necessity use this same vocabulary to describe the realities of a totally different order of existence. It would be unwise therefore to treat the information given as though it applied to concrete phenomena similar to those of the objective world of daily experience. Our universe is one integrated whole and functions as such, not as a magnified layer-cake with a sponge base, a filling of cream and jam and a topping of chocolate and nuts. Similarly a human being is a single entity, the various principles being but "aspects and states of consciousness". Man, "the one *real* man", is "an embodied consciousness ... enduring through the cycle of life and immortal in essence, if not in form" [The key to theosophy - VI, 100]. Such was the warning given by Mme Blavatsky to her London students when she explained to them that the mode of thinking required in the study of *The Secret Doctrine* was

what the Indians call Jnana Yoga. As one progresses in Jnana Yoga, one finds conceptions

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

arising which, though one is conscious of them, one cannot express nor yet formulate into any sort of mental picture. This is a time to be on guard and refuse to be deluded with the idea that the new-found and wonderful picture must represent reality. It does not. As one works on, one finds the once admired picture growing dull and unsatisfying, and finally fading out or being thrown away. This is another danger point, because for the moment one is left in a void without any conception to support one, and one may be tempted to revive the cast-off picture for want of a better to cling to. The true student will, however, work on unconcerned, and presently further formless gleams come, which again in time give rise to a larger and more beautiful picture than the last. But the learner will now know that no picture will ever represent the TRUTH. This last splendid picture will grow dull and fade like the others. And so the process goes on, until at last the mind and its pictures are transcended and the learner enters and dwells in the World of NO FORM, but of which all forms are narrowed reflections. [Madame Blavatsky on how to study theosophy -, 10]

A further word of explanation may also be necessary. Buddhi has been referred to as the vehicle of Atma. The word *vehicle* perhaps conveys its own meaning, but why is a vehicle for Atma necessary? Similar questions can be asked: for example, what exactly is a *principle* of man, and what is a *plane* of Nature?

The Unity of Cosmos has been stressed. There is One Life, the root and origin of everything. All is living and every being a life expressing some aspects of the One Life. A further fundamental concept in Esoteric Science is that of a basic duality - a polarity inherent in everything.

In metaphysical terms the One Life manifests the duality of Spirit and Matter (discussed more fully in Chapter 5). They are inseparable. Spirit is regarded as active and positive and Matter as passive and negative. This polarity reflects into the duality, energy-matter, at the physical level; the energy being that which is locked up in - but under certain circumstances interchangeable with - matter, the material of all things at our ordinary level of objective existence. The positive-negative combination might be thought of as life-matter. As we have seen, everything in its own way is living. It derives its being, in all respects, from Life.

"As it is below so it is above - as is the outer so is the inner". In the different levels of being which constitute the inner planes of Cosmos there cannot be activity or function without active beings, that is, someone or something doing something, for which it is fitted. Each such being must have what we may call its life side and its matter side. This duality is often thought of as life and form. It is the matter or form side which is referred to as the vehicle giving a means of expression to the life side. But both life and form are aspects of life. They are living.

The matter of the seven planes of Cosmos and the principles in man must be seen in this light. They consist of lives, each with its two aspects.

Rudimentary units of life are referred to as life-atoms. Living beings are composed of hierarchies of constituent life-atoms, little *lives*. Planes are made up of such lives. Man and his principles are made up of such lives. There is no matter, as such, of planes, even though this expression is often used, for matter is composed of *lives*. Similarly man's principles can only be thought of as having a base of matter, i.e.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

matter of the corresponding plane, if it is remembered that the matter is in fact living. All is composed of living beings. A being in this sense is as a drop of water to an ocean: there is only water.

Sometimes the matter of the inner (i.e. non-physical) planes is referred to as substance, that which underlies matter. The planes are, in this sense, substantial, but the substance of the planes becomes more and more tenuous as the condition of pure spirit is approached. Another way of regarding this is to say that the component life atoms and the beings composed of them become, as the planes are ascended, smaller and more rarified. This is the language of the physical plane where the concept of three dimensions rules. The inner planes are dimensionless. Inner space has no extension. This, however, is an abstruse complication that needs only to be mentioned here.

A principle is then the living vehicle of a human faculty, a particular mode of function. It is an enabling agent giving effect to what would otherwise be abstract, that is, thinking or feeling as mere ideas. Spirit as such, by itself, is also regarded as a mere abstraction. A plane, like a principle is also a mode of cosmic function which can only operate through lives developed and conditioned to work in a particular way.

CHAPTER 4 [BOOK - I -]

THE HIERARCHIES OF BEINGS

In outlining the subject of Hierarchies in Chapter 2, certain fundamental ideas were set out: life is universal; it is expressed in an almost infinite variety of forms throughout Nature; there are no empty spaces and no inanimate matter anywhere. In Chapter 3 a beginning was made to present another basic principle, that of correspondence or reflection summarized in the Hermetic axiom, "As above, so below". This preparation will assist the understanding of the esoteric teaching of Hierarchies of Beings.

Life is universal: Esoteric Science shows "... every atom of substance, no matter of what plane, to be in itself a LIFE" [Madame Blavatsky on how to study theosophy -, 9]. Where there is life, there is consciousness: "Everything in the universe, throughout all its kingdoms, is CONSCIOUS, i.e., endowed with a consciousness of its own kind and on its own plane of perception" [The Secret Doctrine-I, 274 //, 295 //, 317]. During this century, scientific research has corroborated statements such as these by demonstrating responsiveness not only in plants but even in metals with the consequent elimination of any firm line of demarcation between the animate and so-called inanimate realms of Nature (vid. *The Secret Life of Plants*: Tompkins and Bira). Yet Mme Blavatsky was writing long before the development of such tools of research as the electron microscope and other supersensitive instruments.

The human body presents a miniature model of the hierarchical structure of the cosmos. The chemical atoms and molecules that constitute the material of cells are living structures; a high degree of organization is present in the living cells, which contribute to the formation of tissues, bones and organs - the next hierarchical level - until we come to the functioning whole, the body itself. Each unit - from the chemical atom, the cell, the organ, to the body - has its individual consciousness, while at the same time functioning within the consciousness of a larger unit within the hierarchical structure. Each unit is in communication with the rest of the system of which it is a part, transmitting and receiving messages in a manner which, in our own human activities, we would describe as intelligent.

The physical body, however, is only one aspect of the sevenfold man, whose inner aspects repeat the hierarchical pattern which, as described earlier, reflects the structure of the Cosmos. Each plane of the sevenfold universe is peopled by *lives*, as varied in the degree of consciousness they display and in the functions they fulfil in the cosmic scheme as are the hierarchies of lesser lives in the body of man.

The whole Kosmos is guided, controlled and animated by almost endless series of Hierarchies of sentient Beings, each having a mission to perform ... They vary infinitely in their respective degrees of consciousness and intelligence ... [The Secret Doctrine-I, viii //, xxi //, 8].

The definition of the word *hierarchy* is curiously indicative of the occult teaching. The *Oxford Dictionary* gives the etymology of the word: from the Greek *hieros*, meaning sacred, and *archein*, to rule. It then defines *hierarchy* as "the collective body of angels, grouped in three divisions and nine orders of different power and glory". The definition then names each of the three divisions in each of the three groups according to the Christian classification, and adds, "classification in graded subdivisions, a body

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

classified in successively subordinate grades, priestly government".

All these beings that together constitute the planes of Nature are themselves individually, and their hierarchies collectively, parts of the evolutionary process. Before the human stage is reached, they are irresponsible agents of the Law which operates throughout the universe. They are termed Elementals, and are associated with the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms, as well as constituting three pre-mineral kingdoms. Beyond the human stage are hierarchies of a still higher Consciousness, a Logos, as a collective Being, is the Life of the whole grand scheme.

One of the aims that Mme Blavatsky set before herself in presenting *The Secret Doctrine* to the public was "to assign to man his rightful place in the scheme of the universe" [The Secret Doctrine-I, viii /I, xxi /I, 8]. What that place is becomes evident as we understand the evolution of consciousness through the hierarchical structure of the universe. For the man-stage is that stage in the total process in which spirit and matter are in equilibrium - a stage symbolized by the interlaced triangles of Solomon's Seal, the one representing matter, pointing downwards, the other representing spirit, pointing upwards, the direction of future progress. Man occupies a central position in the cosmic evolutionary scheme; as we shall see, he is the archetypal model for the whole process and in him the highest Spirit and lowest Matter are joined by mind. The man-stage and its relation to the pre- and post-human stages is clearly stated in a passage in *The Secret Doctrine*:

In sober truth ... every so-called "Spirit" is either a *disembodied* or a *future man*. As from the highest Archangel (Dhyan Chohan) down to the last conscious "Builder" (the inferior class of Spiritual Entities), all such are *men*, having lived aeons ago, in other Manvantaras, on this or other Spheres, so the inferior, semi-intelligent and non-intelligent Elementals are all *future men*. The fact alone, that a Spirit is endowed with intelligence, is a proof to the occultist that such a Being must have been a *man*, and acquired his knowledge and intelligence throughout the human cycle. [The Secret Doctrine-I, 277 /I, 297 /I, 320]

The three kingdoms of form preceding the human in the physical world are the mineral, plant and animal. Similarly, there are three groups of post-human entities, Dhyan Chohans, "Lords of Light", defined as "the divine Intelligences charged with the supervision of Kosmos" [The Theosophical Glossary -]. Mme Blavatsky points out that they correspond to Archangels recognized in the Roman Catholic system. Each of the three groups has its particular place in the hierarchical structure, and its particular function. Of the first group it is taught that

they build, or rather rebuild, every "system" after the "Night". The second group of the Builders is the Architect of our planetary chain exclusively; and the third, the progenitor of our humanity - the Macrocosmic prototype of the microcosm. [The Secret Doctrine-I, 128 /I, 153 /I, 186]

In the story of the formation and evolution of man as given in *The Secret Doctrine*, various terms are used for the categories of non-physical beings who take part in the process, some fulfilling a directive role while others carry out the orders of their superiors. This is not the place for going into further detail, but mention must be made of one particular group who have a distinctive role in relation to man. These are the Lipikas, the Recorders or Scribes, of whom it is said that they "impress on the (to us) invisible

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

tablets of the Astral Light - the "great picture-gallery of eternity" - a faithful record of every act, and even thought, of man, of all that was, is, or ever will be, in the phenomenal universe" [The Secret Doctrine-I, 104 /I, 130 /I, 165]. The tradition of "an angel writing in a book of gold" is no empty myth but the fragmentary recollection, in the framework of a particular religion, of the ancient knowledge.

There is another sense in which the word hierarchy is used in Occultism, apart from the beings of successive states of seniority in the scheme of things. In the formation of a Cosmos the First Beings to be emanated from the Logoic Unity are known as the Seven Supreme Lords. Each of these can be thought of as the head of a 'Ray' shining down through all the planes of being. Each Ray imparts the quality of its Lord to every thing and being on all the levels. All things share these qualities, or have them inherent in their natures, but not equally; one or more qualities predominate. These Rays are sometimes symbolized by colours: violet, yellow, green, blue, red, orange, white (the synthesis). All the beings along one predominant ray are sometimes referred to as a hierarchy. The Ray colours have many correspondences in the natures of the planet, the principles of man, the qualities of substances, sound, the parts of the body, man's senses and even states of consciousness.

CHAPTER 5 [BOOK - I -]

AKASHA AND THE ASTRAL LIGHT

Occult Science lays before the student certain facts of Nature which are unknown to the science of today. Until a person develops within himself the faculties necessary to corroborate the teaching, he may take these facts as hypotheses which, as he will see, may help to explain psychic and spiritualistic phenomena, extra-sensory perception and other aspects of the paranormal.

The facts under consideration in this chapter are, first, the existence of a primordial Root Substance, Akasha, that manifests after the long Night or Pralaya of the universe, and second, the gradations of this substance throughout the planes of Nature, causing our physical globe, for example, to be enveloped in the lower of these grades, termed in this literature the Astral Light. We shall now look more closely at these two, Akasha and the Astral Light.

The first fact affirmed in Esoteric Science is, as given in the First Fundamental Principle of *The Secret Doctrine*, the One Absolute Reality, the "Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless and Immutable PRINCIPLE", unmanifest, without attributes, beyond the power of the human mind to conceive or of human language to describe. Periodically, in accordance with universal law, the processes of manifestation begin again and a new universe, with all the beings that comprise it, emerges from the Nirvanic Pralaya for another period of activity. In the procession of cosmic Days and Nights, the time-scale is unimaginably long, but within each Manvantara or Day there are cycles within cycles, beginnings and endings, greater and lesser periods of growth and decay.

A statement in *The Secret Doctrine* anticipates the question: How can the Absolute be said to produce a universe, since this implies action and relationship, which cannot be attributed to the Absolute?

In Occult metaphysics there are, properly speaking, two "ONES" - the One on the unreachable plane of Absoluteness and Infinity; and the second "One" on the plane of Emanations. The former can neither emanate nor be divided, as it is eternal, absolute and immutable; but the Second, being, so to speak, the reflection of the First One ... can do so. It emanates from itself ... the seven Rays or Dhyan Chohans; in other words, the Homogeneous becomes the Heterogeneous, the Protyle differentiates into the Elements ... [The Secret Doctrine-I, 130 /I, 154 /I, 188]

(Note: *Protyle* was a term coined by Sir William Crookes to designate the first homogeneous, primordial substance - The Secret Doctrine-I, 328 fn.)

The originating One is described as the Rootless Root of all existence. Once we pass in thought from the Absoluteness of that One, then, says *The Secret Doctrine*, "duality supervenes in the contrast of Spirit (or consciousness) and Matter, Subject and Object" [The Secret Doctrine-I, 15 /I, 43 /I, 80]. These two are not to be regarded "as independent realities, but as the two facets or aspects of the Absolute (Parabrahman), which constitute the basis of conditioned being whether subjective or objective". Nature, therefore, is

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

pervaded by duality: in the physical world of our experience it is recognized in the polarity of active power, energy or force on the one hand, and passive matter on the other; in the positive and negative in electricity; in male and female functions in the natural world around us, in the north and south poles of a magnet.

Akasha (or Akasa) is the Sanskrit term that designates the primordial Root Substance. It is defined as "the subtle, supersensuous spiritual essence which pervades all space". Just as force or energy requires a substantial connection or vehicle for its expression, so spirit also, if it is not to remain an abstraction, requires a vehicle through which to manifest. In the literature of Occultism, that aspect of the Absolute that we have called Spirit or Primordial Consciousness is regarded as the first aspect and is variously termed: it has, as a third part of its trinitarian nature, the Divine Thought, Cosmic Ideation, Universal Mind. The second aspect, Matter, is Primordial Substance, Akasha. As there can be no manifestation of this root of consciousness without an appropriate vehicle, these two - whether we call them simply Spirit and Matter, or use the more expressive terms of Cosmic Ideation and Cosmic Substance - are the "Alpha and Omega of Being ... the two *facets* of the One Absolute Existence" [The Secret Doctrine-I, 326 /I, 347 /II, 39].

We can now see that the seven planes which constitute the cosmos are in fact Akasha and six differentiations of it, and that this same Akasha, known to the ancient philosophers as Aether

not the *modern* Ether ... with all its mysterious and occult properties [contains] in itself the germs of universal creation. *Upper* Aether or Akasha is the celestial virgin and mother of every existing form and being, from whose bosom, as soon as "incubated" by the Divine Spirit, are called into existence Matter and Life, Force and Action ... Electricity, magnetism, heat, light and chemical action are so little understood even now that fresh facts are constantly widening the range of our knowledge. Who knows where ends the power of this protean giant - Aether; or whence its mysterious origin? Who, we mean, that denies the spirit that works in it, and evolves out of it all visible forms? [The Secret Doctrine-I, 332 /I, 354 /II, 45]

Each plane of Nature is Akasha in one of its seven states. Leaving aside the lowest of these, the earth itself, the next lowest is termed the Astral Light. This is defined as "the invisible region that surrounds our Globe, as it does every other ... a subtle Essence visible only to a clairvoyant eye". It has been described as the great picture-gallery of Nature, for on it is indelibly impressed every act and thought that occurs in the physical or psychic realms. As it interpenetrates the grosser forms of matter on our plane, it is perceptible to the clairvoyant whose sight is able to pass beyond the external opaque form. The psychometer also, sensitive to the Astral Light, is able to perceive the past events in which a particular object, a fragment of stone, a papyrus, has been involved. At the time when Mme Blavatsky was writing *Isis Unveiled*, psychometry was newly discovered, and it offered immediate evidence of the existence of the Astral Light.

One of the most interesting discoveries of modern times is that of the faculty which enables a certain class of sensitive persons to receive from any object held in the hand or against the forehead impressions of the character or appearance of the individual or any other object with which it has previously been in contact. Thus a manuscript, painting, article of clothing or jewelry - no matter how ancient - conveys to the sensitive a vivid picture of the writer, painter or wearer, even though he lived in the days of Ptolemy or Enoch. Nay, more: a fragment of an ancient

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

building will recall its history and even the scenes which transpired within or about it. A bit of ore will carry the soul-vision back to the time when it was in process of formation. [Isis Unveiled - I, 182]

This faculty, she added, "proves that every occurrence in nature - no matter how minute or unimportant - leaves its indelible impress upon physical nature; and, as there has been no appreciable molecular disturbance, the only inference possible is, that these images have been produced by that invisible, universal force - Ether, or astral light" [Isis Unveiled - I, 182]. She illustrated the subject by referring to a remarkable example of the exercise of the psychometric faculty given in a contemporary work, and then quotes from its author, Professor Denton - a geologist - a paragraph entirely descriptive of the Astral Light.

Not a leaf waves, not an insect crawls, not a ripple moves, but each motion is recorded by a thousand faithful scribes in infallible and indelible scripture. This is just as true of all past time. From the dawn of light upon this infant globe, when round its cradle the steamy curtains hung, to this moment, nature has been busy photographing everything. What a picture-gallery is hers! [Isis Unveiled - I, 183]

In this manner does a physical scientist express the conclusions of his researches - conclusions which do but echo the affirmations of Esoteric Science.

It is on the indestructible tablets of the astral light that is stamped the impression of every thought we think and every act we perform: and that future events - effects of long-forgotten causes - are already delineated as a vivid picture for the eye of the seer and prophet to follow. Memory - the despair of the materialist, the enigma of the psychologist, the sphinx of science - is to the student of old philosophies merely a name to express that power which man unconsciously exerts, and shares with many of the inferior animals - to look with inner sight into the astral light and there behold the images of past sensations and incidents. Instead of searching the cerebral ganglia for "micrographs of the living and the dead, of scenes that we have visited, of incidents in which we have borne a part", they went to the vast repository where the records of every man's life as well as every pulsation of the visible cosmos are stored up for all Eternity! [Isis Unveiled - I, 178]

In the above paragraph Mme Blavatsky quotes a sentence from a work by a contemporary scientist for whose writings she had a high regards; this was Dr Draper, a chemist with a special interest in photography and a pioneer in that field. She saw a parallel between the invisible record made by the camera - invisible, that is, until chemical processes bring out the hidden pictures - and the record made on the "tablets of the astral light", perceptible to those in whom appropriate faculties are developed. A little later she gives another passage from the same source:

A shadow never falls upon a wall without leaving thereupon a permanent trace, a trace which might be made visible by resorting to proper processes ... The portraits of our friends, or landscape views, may be hidden on the sensitive surface from the eye, but they are ready to make their appearance as soon as proper developers are resorted to. A spectre is concealed on a silver or glassy surface, until by our necromancy we make it come forth into the visible world. Upon the walls of our most private apartments, where we think the eye of intrusion is altogether

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

shut out, and our retirement can never be profaned, there exist the vestiges of all our acts, silhouettes of whatever we have done." [Isis Unveiled - I, 186]

More than one hundred and fifty years earlier, Sir Isaac Newton had advanced a theory of attraction based on his recognition of "the great universal, magnetic agent" which Esoteric Science terms the Astral Light. The identity of the two is shown by Newton's description of his "divine sensorium":

"Here the question is of a very subtile spirit which penetrates through all, even the hardest bodies, and which is concealed in their substance. Through the strength and activity of this spirit bodies attract each other and adhere together when brought into contact. Through it electrical bodies operate at the remotest distance, as well as near at hand, attracting and repelling; through this spirit the light also flows, and is refracted and reflected, and warms bodies. All senses are excited by this spirit, and through it the animals move their limbs. But these things cannot be explained in few words, and we have not yet sufficient experience to determine fully the laws by which this universal spirit operates." [Isis Unveiled - I, 177]

Later in this study we shall see how the recognition of the Astral Light assists our understanding of psychic phenomena, including those of the seance room with its apports, materializations and medium-transmitted information and messages.

CHAPTER 6 [BOOK - I -]

ELEMENTS AND ELEMENTALS

The subject matter of this chapter relates both to Akasha and to the Hierarchies of Chapter 4. The Elements of the occult system are differentiations of the One Element, Akasha; they must not be confused with the elements of chemistry, although these are derived from the occult Elements. Elementals are defined as "the Spirits of the Elements".

An informative passage in *The Secret Doctrine* sets out the basic facts:

For clearer understanding on the part of the general reader, it must be stated that Occult Science recognizes *Seven* Cosmical Elements - four entirely physical, and the fifth (Ether) semi-material, as it will become visible in the air towards the end of our Fourth Round, to reign supreme over the others during the whole of the Fifth. The remaining two are as yet absolutely beyond the range of human perception. These latter will, however, appear as presentments during the 6th and 7th Races of this Round, and will become known in the 6th and 7th Rounds respectively. These seven elements with their numberless Sub-Elements (far more numerous than those known to Science) are simply *conditional* modifications and aspects of the ONE and only Element. This latter is not *Ether*, not even *Akasha*, but the *Source* of these. The Fifth Element, now advocated quite freely by Science, is not the Ether hypothesized by Sir Isaac Newton - although he calls it by that name, having associated it in his mind probably with the Aether, "Father-Mother" of antiquity." [The Secret Doctrine -I, 12 /I, 40 /I, 78]

(Note: the term Round is used to denote a vast evolutionary cycle. This, and the meaning of Race in the literature, are more fully discussed in Chapter 12.)

To summarize the significance of this abstruse teaching, it may be said that it shows how the properties of substance and life, or matter and form, inherent in the primordial fabric of the universe, are reflected in every level of manifestation where, in their consequent modifications, they are experienced by our senses.

Elementals are centres of living energy, the "souls" or "Spirits" of the Elements. The term is applied particularly to these entities - for such they are - as they occur in the three kingdoms that precede the mineral in our physical world.

According to the ancient doctrines, every member of this varied ethereal population, from the highest "Gods" down to the soulless Elementals, was evolved by the ceaseless motion inherent in the astral light. Light is force, and the latter is produced by the *will*. As this will proceeds from an intelligence which cannot err, for it is absolute and immutable and has nothing of the materials of *human* thought in it, being superfine pure emanation of the ONE LIFE itself, it proceeds from the beginning of time, according to immutable laws, to evolve the elementary fabric requisite for

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

subsequent generations of what we term human races.

These evolutions were from the world of Spirit into the world of gross Matter: and through that back again to the source of all things ... In this complete chain of unfoldings the elementary, spiritual beings had as distinct a place, midway between the extremes of Spirit and dense Matter as Mr. Darwin's missing link between the ape and man. [Isis Unveiled - I, 285]

In *Zanoni*, one of Bulwer Lytton's characters puts forward the teaching of the all but infinite number of invisible inhabitants of the world:

... if even man himself is a world to other lives, and millions and myriads dwell in the rivers of his blood, and inhabit man's frame as man inhabits earth, common sense ... would suffice to teach that the circumfluent infinite which you call space - the boundless Impalpable which divides earth from the moon and stars - is filled also with its correspondent and appropriate life ... no mechanical tube is yet invented to discover the nobler and more gifted things that hover in the illimitable air. Yet between these last and man is a mysterious and terrible affinity ...

Now, in space there are millions of beings, not literally spiritual, for they have all, like the animalculae unseen by the naked eye, certain forms of matter, though matter so delicate, air-drawn, and subtle, that it is, as it were, but a film, a gossamer that clothes the spirit ... Yet, in truth, these races differ more widely ... some of surpassing wisdom, some of horrible malignity; some hostile as fiends to men, others gentle as messengers between earth and heaven. [Isis Unveiled - I, 286]

In an article in Mme Blavatsky's magazine *Lucifer* there is the following passage:

The essential difference between the body of an embryo and an Elemental proper is that the embryo - the future man - contains in himself a portion of each of the four great kingdoms, to wit: fire, air, earth and water; while the Elemental has but a portion of one of such kingdoms ... Elementals of the fire are not found in water, nor those of air in the fire Kingdom. And yet, in as much as a portion of water is found not only in man but also in other bodies, Elementals exist really in and among each other in every substance just as the spiritual world exists and is in the material. But the last are the Elementals in their most primordial and latent state ... Another class are those elemental beings which will never evolve into human beings in the present Manvantara, but occupy, as it were, a specific step of the ladder of being, and, by comparison with the others, may properly be called nature-spirits, or cosmic agents of nature, each being confined to its own element and never transgressing the bounds of others ... [The Collected Writings of H.P.Blavatsky -VI, 197]

At this point it becomes necessary to introduce another term, *tattva*, without which some important aspects of the occult system cannot be explained. The subject is an abstruse one, but an attempt to grasp its essential principle will facilitate later study. The Sanskrit word *tattva* has no exact equivalent in English; it is defined as "thatness", truth, reality, the essential nature of things. A further explanation

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

states that the tattvas are "the substratum of the seven forces of Nature", as also "the substance out of which the universe is formed" and "the power by which it is sustained". They are both Force and Matter, for "the degree of the solidity of matter and the degrees of the power that ensouls it must go hand in hand". Again, "they are both Substance and Force, or atomic Matter and the Spirit that ensoul it" [--- The Secret Doctrine-III, 492 /V, 469 /The Collected Writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 605 /The Esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 391]. In Sanskrit works, the word for "primordial and elemental" Matter is Prakriti, and as this is sevenfold, the tattvas also - "the principles of the Universe and also of man" - must be seven in number [--- The Secret Doctrine-III, 492 /V, 469 /The Collected Writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 605 /The Esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 391].

Throughout the study of the occult system, it will be observed that Nature is septenary in all her aspects. There are seven planes in Cosmos, seven principles in man, seven senses (two as yet latent), the septenary scale in music, the septenary spectrum in colours. What follows from this is that there are correspondences between the members of every septenate. Did Baudelaire know this when he wrote: "les formes, les couleurs et les sons se repondent", a reverberation, so to speak, by which all the phenomena of Nature are linked and kin? Under the heading "The Tattvic Correlations and Meaning" we read:

In Nature, then, we find seven Forces, or seven Centres of Force, and everything seems to respond to that number, as for instance the septenary scale in music, or Sounds, and the septenary spectrum in Colours. [--- The Secret Doctrine-III, 479 /V, 474 /The Collected Writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 610 /The Esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 395]

In humanity at present only five senses are developed, and consequently we cannot be aware of more than the five lower tattvas. The reader is informed that "the doctrine of the seven Tattvas (the principles of the universe and also of man) was held in great sacredness and therefore secrecy, in days of old, by the Brahmans ..." [--- The Secret Doctrine-III, 492 /V, 469 /The Collected Writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 605 /The Esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 391], but as our humanity has reached only the Fifth Race, and as two of his seven senses remain latent, the Hindu systems give only five Tattvas.

The five physical senses are made to correspond with the five lower Tattvas; the two yet undeveloped senses in man, and the two forces, or Tattvas, forgotten by Brahmans and still unrecognized by Science, being so subjective and the highest of them so sacred, that they can only be recognized by, and known through, the highest Occult Science. It is easy to see that these two Tattvas and the two senses (the sixth and the seventh) correspond to the two highest human principles, Buddhi and the Auric Envelope, impregnated with the light of Atma. Unless we open in ourselves, by Occult training, the sixth and seventh senses, we can never comprehend correctly their corresponding types. [--- The Secret Doctrine-III, 479 /V, 474 /The Collected Writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 610 /The Esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 395]

There follows a list of the seven Tattvas with brief explanatory notes, and the further comment that "all these correspond to our Principles, and to the seven senses and forces in man" [--- The Secret Doctrine-III, 498 /V, 476 /The Collected Writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 612 /The Esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 396], followed by a table of correspondences [--- The Secret Doctrine-III, 501 /V, 478 /The Collected Writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 614 /The Esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 398].

The Secret Doctrine introduces the Occult Tibetan term that designates "the ever-present electrical

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

energy and ceaseless destructive and formative power" in the universe; this is Fohat, "the universal propelling Vital Force, at once the propeller and the resultant" [The Theosophical Glossary -]. In the symbolism of the Stanzas on which *The Secret Doctrine* is based, Fohat - "the constructive force of Cosmic Electricity" - is made to appear as an Entity, a Being with whom are associated *seven sons* who are *his brothers*. In the passage that follows (the quotation is extensive, because of the light it throws on the nature of the Elementals), the term Maya should be noted. Although usually translated as "illusion", it is more correctly understood as

the cosmic power which renders phenomenal existence and the perceptions thereof possible. In Hindu philosophy that alone which is changeless and eternal is called *reality*; all that which is subject to change through decay and differentiation and which has therefore a beginning and an end if regarded as *maya* - illusion. [The Theosophical Glossary -]

The commentary on the operations of Fohat and his "son-brothers" continues:

The Seven "son-brothers", however, represent and personify the seven forms of Cosmic magnetism called in *practical Occultism* the "Seven Radicals", whose co-operative and active progeny are, among other energies, Electricity, Magnetism, Sound, Light, Heat, Cohesion, etc. Occult Science defines all these as super-sensuous effects in their hidden behaviour, and as objective phenomena in the world of senses; the former requiring abnormal faculties to perceive them; the latter, our ordinary physical senses. They all pertain to, and are the emanations of, still more super-sensuous spiritual qualities, not personated by, but belonging to, real and conscious CAUSES. To attempt description of such ENTITIES would be worse than useless. The reader must bear in mind that, according to our teaching, which regards this phenomenal Universe as a great *Illusion*, the nearer a body is to the UNKNOWN SUBSTANCE, the more it approaches *reality*, as being removed the farther from this world of *Maya*. Therefore, though the molecular constitution of their bodies is not deducible from their manifestations on this plane of consciousness, they nevertheless (from the standpoint of the adept-Occultist) possess a distinctive objective if not material structure, in the relatively noumenal - as opposed to the phenomenal - Universe. Men of science may term them Force or Forces generated by matter, or "modes" of its motion", if they will; Occultism sees in these effects "Elementals" (forces), and, in the direct causes producing them, intelligent DIVINE Workmen. The intimate connection of these Elementals (guided by the unerring hand of the Rulers) - their correlation we might call it - with the elements of pure Matter, results in our terrestrial phenomena, such as light, heat, magnetism, etc., etc. [The Secret Doctrine-I, 145 /I, 169 /I, 201]

Further in the commentary Mme Blavatsky explains that "all the so-called Forces of Nature, Electricity, Magnetism, Light, Heat, etc. ... in their ultimate constitution", are not "modes of motions of material particles" but the differentiated aspects of the One Universal Motion - just as, for example, the colours of the spectrum are made to appear when the white light, which contains them all, is passed through a prism. The commentary thus gives a grand comprehensive picture of the internal processes of Cosmos. All the differentiations in Nature, whether of energy or of substance, are living, for they are differentiations of the One Life manifesting as the manifold lives with their variety of properties and powers according to their stage of evolutionary development. The lower ones are Elementals, the higher ones the Rulers, each class with intelligence according to its degree, and each having its vehicle, its base or means of expression, which is itself a manifestation of life.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

Little information is given about the three Elemental kingdoms that precede the Mineral. However, some interesting facts about Elementals were given by Mme Blavatsky at different times in conversations with W.Q. Judge, a founding member of The Theosophical Society. These conversations were originally published in *The Path*, a magazine started by Judge in 1886. On one occasion she told him that she would cause a particular Elemental to produce a bell sound according to her precise instructions, and this it accordingly did some days later. Speaking about this Elemental when they met, Mme Blavatsky gave Judge some further information:

This one has no form in particular but is more like a revolving mass of air. But it is, all the same, quite definite, as you know from what he has done. There are some classes with forms of their own. The general division into fiery, airy, earthy and watery is pretty correct but it will not cover all the classes. There is not a single thing going on about us, no matter what, that elementals are not concerned in, because they constitute a necessary part of nature, just as important as the nerve currents in your body. Why, in storms you should see them, how they move about. Don't you remember what you told me about that lady *** who saw them change and move about at that opera? It was due to her tendencies and the general idea underlying the opera." (It was the opera of Tristan and Isolde by Wagner. - J.) "In that case, as Isolde is Irish, the whole idea under it aroused a class of elementals peculiar to that island and its traditions. That's a queer place, Judge, that Ireland. It is packed full of a singular class of elementals; and, by Jove! I see they even have emigrated in quite large numbers. Sometimes one quite by accident rouses up some ancient system, say from Egypt; that is the explanation of that singular astral noise which you said reminded you of a sistrum being shaken; it was really objective. But, my dear fellow, do you think I will give you a patent elemental extractor? - not yet. [The Collected Writings of H.P.Blavatsky -X, 271/2]

Although this was spoken in light vein, the information given is valid; first, that elementals are everywhere - behind the scenes, so to speak; secondly, that they directly affect what goes on in the world; and thirdly, that they are subject to the will of one who has the necessary knowledge and power. In earlier issues of *The Path*, other such conversations are recorded in the form of a dialogue between a Student and a Sage. Here we find a good deal more information about Elementals - too much to reproduce here, but a few extracts are given to show some of the detailed ramifications of the subject:

Every person has about him a fluid, or plane, or sphere, or energy, whichever you please to call it, in which are constantly found elementals that partake of his nature. That is, they are tinted with his colour and impressed by his character. There are numerous classes of these. Some men have many of one class or of all, or many of some and few of others. And anything worn upon your person is connected with your elementals. [The Collected Writings of H.P.Blavatsky -IX, 124]

As to the moral character of elementals, they have none: they are colourless in themselves - except some classes - and merely assume the tint, so to speak, of the person using them. [The Collected Writings of H.P.Blavatsky -IX, 113]

In answer to the question, Are elementals beings?, the Sage gave this reply:

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

It is not easy to convey to you an idea of the constitution of elementals; strictly speaking, they are not, because the word *elementals* has been used in reference to a class of them that have no being such as mortals have. It would be better to adopt the terms used in Indian books ... Many things well known about them cannot be put into ordinary language.

Student: Do you refer to their being able to act in the fourth dimension of space?

Sage: Yes, in a measure. Take the tying in a endless cord of many knots, - a thing often done at spiritist seances. That is possible to him who knows more dimensions of space than three. No three-dimensional being can do this; and as you understand "matter", it is impossible for you to conceive how such a knot can be tied or how a solid ring can be passed through the matter of another solid one. These things can be done by elementals. [The Collected Writings of H.P.Blavatsky -IX, 109]

It is pertinent to refer here to some comments made in *The Secret Doctrine* on the subject of the dimensions of space:

... it is worthwhile to point out the real significance of the sound but incomplete intuition that has prompted ... the use of the modern expression, "the fourth dimension of Space". To begin with, of course, the superficial absurdity of assuming that Space itself is measurable in any direction is of little consequence. The familiar phrase can only be an abbreviation of the fuller form - the "*Fourth dimension of MATTER in Space*". But it is an unhappy phrase even thus expanded, because while it is perfectly true that the progress of evolution may be destined to introduce us to new characteristics of matter, those with which we are already familiar are really more numerous than the three dimensions ... Meanwhile, the expression is far more incorrect than even the familiar one of the "Sun rising or setting. [The Secret Doctrine-I, 251 //, 271 //, 295]

Turning again to the conversation between *Student* and *Sage*, the former asks whether the elementals are not all of one class. The *Sage* replies:

No. There are different classes for each plane, and division of plane, of nature. Many can never be recognized by men. And those pertaining to our plane do not act in another. You must remember, too, that these "planes" of which we are speaking interpenetrate each other. [The Collected Writings of H.P.Blavatsky -IX, 110]

The "Conversations on Occultism" recorded by Judge run to some fifty pages in Volume IX of the *Collected Writings*, with important information - and warnings - about its relevance to the question of spiritualistic phenomena. In introducing the subject, the *Student* himself makes a summary of the facts:

an elemental is a centre of force, without intelligence, without moral character or tendencies, but capable of being directed in its movements by human thoughts, which may, consciously or not, give it any form, and to a certain extent intelligence; in its simplest form it is visible as a

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

disturbance in a transparent medium, such as would be produced by "a glass fish, so transparent as to be invisible, swimming through the air of the room", and leaving behind him a shimmer, such as hot air makes when rising from a stove. [The Collected Writings of H.P.Blavatsky -IX, 104]

The term Elementaries is also introduced into the conversation. Here a brief explanatory note will be sufficient to avoid the confusion that arises because of the similarity of the words. Elementaries - defined here as shells, or "half dead human beings" - are the vivified remains of deceased persons, galvanized into a semblance of life by the presence of a medium. The Elementals that enter into them enable the shells to produce the phenomena of the seance room. The subject will be mentioned again in Chapter 12.

CHAPTER 7 [BOOK - I -]

LAW IN COSMOS AND HUMAN LIFE

In recent years the word Karma has passed into our language, with the general connotation that whatever happens in life is the consequence of some previous action, event or circumstance. This meaning is correct, but the teaching of Esoteric Science shows how far the operation of Karma exceeds the simplistic picture of rewards and punishments affecting human lives.

Karma is Law. *The Key to Theosophy* gives a short but comprehensive definition of the term:

We consider it as the *Ultimate Law* of the universe, the source, origin and fount of all other laws which exist throughout Nature. Karma is the unerring law which adjusts effect to cause, on the physical, mental and spiritual planes of being. As no cause remains without its due effect from greatest to least, from a cosmic disturbance down to the movement of your hand, and as like produces like, Karma is that unseen and unknown law *which adjusts wisely, intelligently and equitably* each effect to its cause, tracing the latter back to its producer. Though itself *unknowable*, its action is perceivable. [The key to theosophy - XI, 201]

Law, as used in this statement, means in effect *the way things are in Nature*, and the way they behave, phrases which gives recognition to the many aspects of Karma expressed in such descriptive definitions as: the law of alternation, the law of causation, the law of balance and harmony, the law of evolution, the law of innate intelligence. Students of the cosmic process have also chosen to describe the varied operations of Karma in other terms, such as: the law of coming into being, the law of motion, the law of orderly change, the law of essential unity, and so on. Let us look at some of these descriptions.

The Law of Essential Unity.

In answer to a question about the nature of "God, the Soul and Man", Mme Blavatsky states that "in their origin and in eternity the three, like the universe and all therein, are one with the absolute Unity". When, according to the law inherent within itself, the Unity must again put forth a universe, a polarity can be said to arise within it, expressed as Spirit and Matter: the former is the active, positive, energetic aspect, described as male, while the latter is the passive, receptive, substantial aspect, described as female. However, the two are in no sense separate; neither can be said to have any existence without the other, for they are but aspects of the One Life.

The Law of Alternation or Periodicity.

This is the second of three Fundamental Propositions that are at the root of the esoteric philosophy. After the statement of the Law as the causative principle behind the manifestation of a universe, *The Secret Doctrine* gives a few examples to illustrate its operation on the scale of human experience.

An alternation such as that of Day and Night, Life and Death, Sleeping and Waking, is a fact so

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

perfectly universal and without exception, that it is easy to comprehend that in it we see one of the absolutely fundamental laws of the Universe. [The Secret Doctrine-I, 17 /I, 45 /I, 82]

The principle operates throughout Nature, whether the scale be that of man and his twenty-four hour cycle or of a universe and its periods of scarcely imaginable duration. Nothing therefore can be considered in isolation from what went before or from what followed after, either in the days of a man's life or in the life of a universe.

Our "Universe" is only one of an infinite number of Universes, all of them "Sons of Necessity", because links in the great Cosmic chain of Universes, each one standing in the relation of an effect as regards its predecessor, and being a cause as regards its successor. [The Secret Doctrine-I, 43 /I, 74 /I, 115]

The emergence of a material universe is therefore not a *creation*, in the usual sense of making a new thing *ex nihilo*, but is rather

the periodical and consecutive appearances of the universe from the subjective on to the objective plane of being, at regular intervals of time, covering periods of immense duration. [The key to theosophy - VI, 83]

The process may be seen as analogous, on a cosmic scale, to the resumption of a man's activities after a night of sleep for the purpose of furthering the "unfinished business" of the previous day.

The Law of Harmony and Balance.

The very word Cosmos, from the Greek kosmos, meaning order, is applied to the universe - according to the Greek Lexicon - because of its "perfect arrangement". Karma, explains *The Key to Theosophy*, is the "Law of readjustment which ever tends to restore disturbed equilibrium in the physical, and broken harmony in the moral world" [The key to theosophy - XI, 205]. It is this aspect of Karma that is often emphasized in popular presentations of the teaching, both because it is easier to grasp and because of its obvious relevance to human life. In this form it has been taught in the world's Scriptures, as for example in the *Dhammapada*: "if a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage", and in the saying of Jesus, "With the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again". The analogy with sowing and reaping used by St Paul: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal.vi 7), is shown in the Buddhist teaching to apply to the sequence of lives in the doctrine of rebirth: "Like everything else in nature, the life of man is subject to the law of cause and effect. The present reaps what the past has sown, and the future is the product of the present".

The Law of Retribution.

When the emphasis is put on painful experiences as the consequences of evil acts in the past, Karma is appropriately described as the Law of Retribution, but it is also the Law of compensation and reward.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

This aspect of karmic law should not, however, obscure either the fact that the same law governs the entire universe in all its parts, from atom and microbe to man and planetary system, or the fact that man himself is a responsible agent of that law. This introduces the question of free-will; by choosing the seed he will plant, the farmer chooses the crop he will harvest; similarly, by choosing how he will act today, a man chooses his own future, for better or worse. The answer has been well summarized in the lines:

Destiny today is master,
Man was master yesterday.

Karma is the Law of Evolution.

In summarizing the essential teachings of Esoteric Science in *The Secret Doctrine*, Mme Blavatsky indicates the vast sweep of karmic operations in Nature.

The whole order of nature evinces a progressive march towards a *higher life*. There is design in the action of the seemingly blindest forces. The whole process of evolution with its endless adaptations is a proof of this. The immutable laws that weed out the weak and feeble species, to make room for the strong, and which ensure the "survival of the fittest", though so cruel in their immediate action - all are working toward the grand end. The very *fact* that adaptations *do* occur, that the fittest *do* survive in the struggle for existence, shows that what is called "unconscious Nature" is in reality an aggregate of forces manipulated by semi-intelligent beings (Elementals) guided by High Planetary Spirits (Dhyan Chohans), whose collective aggregate forms the manifested *verbum* of the unmanifested LOGOS, and constitutes at one and the same time the MIND of the Universe and its immutable LAW. [The Secret Doctrine-I, 277 /I, 298 /I, 320]

The Law of Innate Intelligence.

The Passage just quoted draws attention to another aspect of the cosmic process, that of universal Intelligence. When the *Wisdom of Solomon* declares that "Wisdom reacheth from one end to another mightily, and sweetly doth she order all things", and again, "being but one, she can do all things", the writer of this apocryphal text does but echo the occult philosophy in recognizing an intelligent principle at every level and in every operation of Nature. In the language of human experience, it could be said that every organism in Nature knows what it has to do and carries out its appointed task. Stars keep to their orbits, atoms combine with some other atoms but not with all, plants select their needed nutrients from the soil, birds and animals mate and rear their young and migrate according to clearly determined patterns. What is instinct but a term to conceal our ignorance of the causative factors in animal behaviour? The Hierarchies (see Chapter 4) further illustrate the presence of an Intelligent Principle in Nature, for each one not only acts out its unique role in the grand scheme but also maintains its appropriate relationship with the Hierarchies above and below itself.

A useful collection of Aphorisms on Karma was given by W.Q. Judge in his magazine *The Path*. The following selection show the universal and unerring nature of Karmic law and its relevance in human life:

Karma operates on all things and beings from the minutest conceivable being up to Brahma. Proceeding in the three worlds of men, gods and the elemental beings, no spot in the manifested universe is exempt from its sway.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

The Karma of this earth is the combination of all the acts and thoughts of all beings of every grade which were concerned in the preceding Manvantara or evolutionary scheme from which ours flows. In the life of worlds, races, nations and individuals, Karma cannot act unless there is an appropriate instrument provided for its action, and until such appropriate instrument is found, that Karma related to it remains unexpended.

Karma is both merciful and just. Mercy and Justice are only opposite poles of a single whole; and Mercy without Justice is not possible in the operations of Karma. That which man calls Mercy and Justice is defective, errant and impure.

Its action may be known by calculation from cause to effect; and this calculation is possible because effect is wrapped up in and is not succedent to the cause. [Echoes of the Orient I, 313/5]

There is no finer statement of the Law in the vast sweep of its operations than the memorable verses from Sir Edwin Arnold's *The Light of Asia*; they speak of the universality of karmic law, which governs the movement of the stars, the wonders of the natural world and the circumstances of human life; they speak too of the power that each man has over his own destiny and of the observance of the law as the key to freedom. The verses that follow are selected from the last Book of the poem:

It knows no wrath nor pardon; utter-true
Its measures mete, its faultless balance weighs;
Times are as nought, to-morrow it will judge,
Or after many days.

By this the slayer's knife did stab himself;
The unjust judge hath lost his own defender;
The false tongue dooms its lie; the creeping thief
And spoiler rob, to render.

Such is the Law which moves to righteousness,
Which none at last can turn aside or stay;
The heart of it is Love, the end of it
Is Peace and Consummation sweet. Obey!

CHAPTER 8 [BOOK - I -]

DEATH AND REBIRTH

Esoteric Science shows the Cosmos to be one functioning whole, governed by inherent Law, one aspect of which is expressed in the alternation of periods of activity with periods of rest. This alternation permeates the whole of the manifested universe, manifestation itself being subject to it. All things, on whatever scale of being, visible and invisible, subjective and objective, reflect the universal process, having their days and nights, their coming and going. Only THAT, the ONE ABSOLUTE PRINCIPLE, without beginning or end or change, endures for ever.

As above, so below. As an objective universe comes and goes, so does objective man, that is, man as we know him in experience, living in a physical body and manifesting all the attributes of personality. An understanding of the occult constitution of man as described in Chapter 3 is a necessary preparation for the study of the after-death states. Let us recapitulate briefly: man as a unit of consciousness functions through seven principles. These principles may be grouped in various ways. For the understanding of the death and rebirth processes, they may be conveniently grouped as follows:

I The Upper Triad. Following the system of numbering given in *The Mahatma Letters*, these are: Atma, Universal Spirit (7); Buddhi, the vehicle of Spirit (6); Manas, or Mind in its higher aspect (5). Neither Atma nor Buddhi is an individual human principle. They are universal and only relate to man when in conjunction with his manasic principle. This Upper Triad is often referred to as the Ego or *Individuality*, and is immortal.

II The Middle Duad. During incarnation, Manas may be said to project a portion of itself into the lower planes of being, where it becomes associated with Kama (4), the principle of desire or emotion, thus forming a Kama-Manasic duality, referred to as the psyche and the mortal soul.

III The Lower Triad. This comprises the life principle, Prana (3); its vehicle, the Linga Sharira (2) or Astral Body; and the Sthula Sharira (1) or physical body. This Lower Triad, together with the Middle Duad, form the *Personality*. The Lower Triad is subject to birth and death as we know it and the Middle Duad after death to disintegration, hence the mortality of the psyche.

Antahkarana, defined as "the bridge between lower and higher Manas", becomes, when developed, the means of communication between the two. The two highest principles, Atma (7) and Buddhi (6), are sometimes referred to as the Upper Duad, or, since they really comprise a single Unit, as the Monad. The combination of Monad with Manas is the Immortal Man. Although we go through life identified, for the most part, with the evanescent Personality, the Esoteric Science insists that the real Self in us is an enduring manifestation of an inner Divine Essence, the Universal and ONE SELF.

Here it is important to distinguish between the subjective and objective states of consciousness. The normal experience of things, people and events in the environment - the common experience of life in the

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

physical world - is objective; ordinary reality shared with others. Our reactions to those same things, people and events are subjective, constituting the private world of each individual, one into which no one else can enter. The distinction is an important one in the study of the after-death states of consciousness.

The account of the processes of death and the post-mortem states is derived largely from the teaching given by the Mahatmas in their correspondence with Mr A.P. Sinnett. Some of it is reiterated in *The Key to Theosophy*, in which Mme Blavatsky summarizes and explains what she had received on the subject from the same Adept Teachers. Nowhere else is such detailed teaching to be found; it is unique both for the information it gives about the process of dying and what happens thereafter. It also shows how the understanding of all that death involves depends on a proper understanding of the constitution of man and the total cosmic life process which it reflects.

In general terms, the conditions in and experiences of the post-mortem states are intimately related to the life just lived, as has always been taught in exoteric religion. Some of the factors that will determine what happens include the way in which the previous life was lived, the aims and motives and the dominant interests of the individual, the way in which he used his talents and opportunities, how he faced the difficulties he encountered, his relationship with his fellow men, and such obvious factors as the length of his life and the manner of his dying.

According to the account given by the Mahatmas, the death of the physical body is only the beginning of a long and complicated process, for, since man is a complex being, the withdrawal of life from his other vestures or principles must also be complex.

In the last moments of his life, before the brain ceases to function, the dying person reviews in detail the life just ending. Every incident is dislodged, as it were, from the dying brain, and each is seen in its proper perspective. According to the kind of person he has been, the dying man will pay more attention to some memories than to others. This is the moment of truth when he sees himself as he really was, not as he had habitually tried to imagine himself to be. His last thoughts, as he sees his own past passing before him, will cast their influence on to the next personality which he will assume when the time comes for his return, and because of its crucial importance for his future, the very private concentration of this period should not be disturbed.

With the ending of this review and the consequent striking of the keynote for the next incarnation, unconsciousness supervenes. Whatever the manner of death, consciousness goes out "like a snuffed candle flame". Life gradually withdraws from the lower vehicles, firstly from those of the lower triad and then much more slowly from the middle duad. As life departs from them, the vehicles sooner or later disintegrate and their constituents return to the general pool of living stuff to be reused.

The testimony of people who have been pronounced clinically dead but who subsequently recovered and related their experiences (as for example in Dr Moody's *Life after Life*) provides evidence that before, during or after the review, the individual may become conscious of an impressive, intimate and powerful Presence. It may be experienced simply as light, or a holy light, or a luminous being, sometimes likened to Christ or the Deity. In theosophical terms, this might be an awareness of the Divine Spiritual Ego shining into consciousness in this last extremity. The review itself is frequently reported among the

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

recorded cases. Another common experience is that of being aware of a barrier that prevents further advance; some felt they were in a tunnel or a dark valley that had to be traversed in order to reach the light beyond. Perhaps reaching the light would have been the moment of death, which in these cases was not reached.

The next phase, after the loss of consciousness that follows the review, is described in *The Mahatma Letters* as a "death" struggle - an unfortunate term, perhaps, since it seems to connote an acutely painful and conscious experience: the struggle, as appears from the later information, is rather an automatic separation of the Egoic from the personal elements in the man's nature. As was shown earlier in this chapter, the Manasic or Fifth principle is dual in incarnation, partly, its higher aspects, remaining associated with the Monad and partly, its lower aspects, becoming attached to Kama, the Fourth or desire principle. These two modes of functioning of the one Manasic principle explain the terms "upper" and "lower" Manas. In association with the Monad the higher Manas forms thus the Upper Duad, while in association with Kama the lower Manas forms the Lower Duad. The struggle is between these two.

When man dies, his second and third principles die with him; the lower triad disappears, and the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh principles form the surviving Quaternary ... Thenceforth it is a "death" struggle between the Upper and Lower dualities. If the upper wins, the sixth, having attracted to itself the quintessence of *Good* from the fifth - its nobler affections, its saintly (though they be *earthly*) aspirations, and the most Spiritualised portions of its mind - follows its divine *elder* (the 7th) into the "Gestation" State; and the fifth and fourth remain in association as an empty *shell* ... [The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnett -16, 101:103]

Where there are no unusual circumstances the Gestation State continues until - many years later (in terms of earth time) - consciousness returns. Then follows a second review of the life just past, succeeded by a gradual emergence into a state of blissful happiness, with an awareness of familiar surroundings and of dear relatives and friends. These experiences, however, are entirely subjective, like a vivid dream, but they have at least as much reality as those of what we call real life. This state, which for the dreamer is reality, is known as Devachan.

Devachan, a Sanskrit word meaning "the dwelling of the gods", is defined in the *Theosophical Glossary* as

a state intermediate between two earth-lives, into which the Ego (Atma-Buddhi-Manas, or the Trinity made One) enters, after its separation from Kama Rupa and the disintegration of the lower principles on earth.

The nature of Devachan as a state, not a place, is underlined in another definition where it is described as

a condition, a state of mental bliss. Philosophically a mental condition analogous to, but far more vivid and real than, the most vivid dream. It is the state after death of most mortals. [The key to theosophy - VI, 100]

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

While in that condition, the entity is referred to as a Devachanee. He has about him all those he loved during life, in idealized surroundings; furthermore, he experiences the fulfilment of cherished dreams and worthy ambitions, everything that was most noble in his earthly aspirations. The state is an entirely spiritual one, devoid of any baser elements; it is a state of bliss, rest and recuperation, and of recompense for suffering. Being subjective, however, it is a private world that cannot be shared with anyone else, similar in this respect also to the private world of dreams: in short, in spite of its vivid actuality, it is a state of self-created illusion. Our friends there, and our environment, are not objective reality.

The question of a return to the world that the Ego has left is categorical: the vehicles necessary for existence in the lower planes have disintegrated, and consequently no return is possible. The Devachanee in his private world can have no knowledge of what is happening in the world he has left. At the Egoic level he may on occasions communicate with other Egos, including those who are still living in the physical world. But the ability of those still on earth to be aware of such communication in their waking consciousness will depend on their development and sensitivity; where the conditions allow, their consciousness may, according to Mme Blavatsky, be so impressed as to give them a sense of having been in touch with a departed one and to be comforted thereby.

Like all other states and processes, this phase of the after-death experience eventually comes to an end. As it began gradually, so it ends gradually, and once more unconsciousness supervenes, but in the normal case only after a period corresponding to many years of earth life. Then the time comes for a new incarnation, the lowest inner principles are re-formed, partly from material discarded from the old ones. When the new birth is imminent the Ego has a pre-vision of the main bent of the life to come and of what it should accomplish. Unconsciousness then returns until infant eyes look out again upon earth.

The circumstances of the child's birth, the environment of time and place, of family and circumstances, the tendencies that accompany the return and the likely events to be encountered, all this is determined by Karma. They are the accumulated balance not only of the preceding incarnation but of all previous lives.

Where an incarnation is cut short prematurely, as by illness, accident, war or suicide, the normal cycle of experiences between death and rebirth will undergo corresponding variations. For example, in the case of death in early childhood, those phases described as the review, the struggle and the gestation period will be short, since there will be little experience to be assimilated. It may happen, when death occurs in infancy, that the child's inner principles do not disperse but return to the new body. This is reincarnation in the very literal sense. A young person meeting sudden death - a soldier, for example - may not even realize for a time that he is dead, until the time for the disintegration of the principles, normally a gradual process, arrives. Then he will become unconscious, and the normal death processes will start. Meanwhile, so long as some degree of consciousness survives in the lower principles, as is usually the case, and until the departure of the Ego into Devachan, some real communication may take place, but only through a medium. Once the normal processes of death begin to take their course, and the Ego departs, there is no such possibility; thereafter only the shell, the abandoned middle duad, can be contacted.

Suicide presents a different picture. Unlike the soldier, the suicide is deliberately responsible for his own

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

death. It is said that he retains a degree of consciousness. He may suffer remorse, remaining in an unhappy state until such time as his life would have ended normally, but his mental state will depend upon his motive for ending his life on earth. Suffering will also be the lot of those who die with some still ruling abnormally strong passion, such as uncontrolled desire for the physical satisfactions of food, drink, sex or material possessions, or a compelling ambition still unsatisfied. Apart from the suffering that an individual brings upon himself by his attachment to gross physical satisfactions, there is no experience corresponding to the traditional hell. Nor is there any post-mortem punishment for evil conduct while in the body, for Karma redresses the balance on this earth for the wrong-doing that took place here; what is sown in the physical world must be reaped in the physical world, for the Law is perfectly just.

Some further information, including the more technical aspects of the subject, will be presented in Book II. In the Esoteric Science, death is seen to be a release from the cares and sufferings of earth life, and an end too to its joys which are inevitably temporary. When the time comes, it is welcomed by many people for it is the long sleep "that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care, the balm of hurt minds, Great Nature's second course" that prepares us for another day of life on earth.

CHAPTER 9 [BOOK - I -]

ORIGINS

In the preceding chapters, a vast scheme of existence has been outlined. Infinite in its diversity, it is nonetheless a Unity, experienced by human consciousness as both objective and subjective, as visible and invisible, as phenomenal and noumenal. The seven planes of the manifested universe are formed of hierarchies of lives in gradations ranging from the unimaginably minute to hosts of incalculable magnitude, the whole being subject to inherent, unerring and invariable laws. The very words and phrases used in the literature of Esoteric Science, if their significance be examined in depth, convey something of the grandeur and complexity of the cosmic process, viz.: primeval origins; manifestation; undifferentiated primordial substance; the majestic sequence of processes according to immutable Law; septenary manvantaric differentiations; the ALL of manifested Nature in activity.

Today many of the wonders of this small part of the whole, our Earth, have become part of everyone's experience through the television screen. At one end of the scale, the electron microscope reveals the marvellous intricacies of the cell, while at the other end the radio-telescope brings within the reach of the ordinary man information about the remotest parts of the immediate universe. Yet Esoteric Science affirms that there are other systems, other universes, and that there are other modes of being, especially in the inner worlds, besides the world of "things and lives and minds" of everyday human experience.

It is time to look at the question of origins. Whence the almost unbelievable diversity of living things? Whence the ordered complexity, the design and form, of moss and tree, of butterfly and eagle, and of man himself, of whom Carlyle said, "We are the miracle of miracles, - the great inscrutable mystery of God"? Esoteric Science speaks both of the external world perceived by the senses, the phenomenal world of form, colour and sound, and also of the inner realms of feeling, thought, power and force, of the noumena behind the phenomena.

There are certain general principles that pertain to the total process: the universality of law, the process of evolution as a becoming "from within outwards", the alternation of phases of activity and phases of rest. The second of these principles is particularly relevant to the question of origins; the Cosmos is projected from the noumenal or subjective states of being into the phenomenal or objective planes, by a process that may be regarded analogously as a gradual densification of the spiritual into the material, as water-vapour is condensed into ice. This means in effect that everything in the Cosmos, and the Cosmos itself, exists already before it *becomes*. The occult teaching says:

Nothing is created, but is only transformed. Nothing can manifest itself in this universe - from a globe down to a vague, rapid thought - that was not in the universe already; everything on the subjective plane is an eternal IS; as everything on the objective plane is an *ever-becoming* - because transitory. [The Secret Doctrine-I, 570 /I, 623 /II, 293]

In a footnote to her commentary on the process of the becoming of a universe, Mme Blavatsky underlines the fact that

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

Creation is an incorrect word to use, as no religion ... believes in creation out of *nihil*, as Christians and Jews do, but in evolution out of pre-existing materials. [The Secret Doctrine-I, 233 fn /I, 253 /I, 279]

She returns later to the same theme:

Modern exact Science, as soon as it began to grow out of its teens, perceived the great, and, to it, hitherto *esoteric* axiom, that nothing - whether in the spiritual, psychic, or physical realm of being - could come into existence out of nothing. There is no cause in the manifested universe without its adequate effects, whether in space or time; nor can there be an effect without its primal cause, which itself owes its existence to a still higher one - the final and absolute cause having to remain to man forever an incomprehensible CAUSELESS CAUSE. [The Secret Doctrine-I, 569 /I, 622 /II 293]

The periodic emergence of a universe from the plane of subjectivity into the plane of objectivity is the theme of an important explanatory passage in *The Key to Theosophy* - explanatory, but by no means easy for the mind to grasp, for the "final and absolute cause" referred to above is "an abstraction, on the verge of which human reason - however trained to metaphysical subtleties - trembles, threatening to collapse" [The Secret Doctrine-I, 569 /I, 622 /II 293]. The dialogue between Enquirer and Theosophist proceeds as follows:

ENQ. But who is it that creates each time the Universe?

THEO. No one creates it. Science would call the process evolution; the pre-Christian philosophers and the Orientalists called it emanation: we, Occultists and Theosophists, see in it the only universal and eternal *reality* casting a periodical reflection of *itself* on the infinite Spatial depths. This reflection, which you regard as the objective *material* universe, we consider as a temporary *illusion* and nothing else. That alone which is eternal is *real*.

ENQ. All this does not explain to me how this illusion called the universe originates; how the conscious *to be* proceeds to manifest itself from the unconsciousness that *is*.

THEO. It is *unconsciousness* only to our finite consciousness. Verily may we paraphrase verse v, in the 1st chapter of St. John, and say "and (Absolute) light (which is darkness) shineth in darkness (which is illusionary material light); and the darkness comprehended it not". This absolute light is also absolute and immutable law. Whether by radiation or emanation - we need not quarrel over terms - the universe passes out of its homogeneous subjectivity on to the first plane of manifestation, of which planes there are seven, we are taught. With each plane it becomes more dense and material until it reaches this, our plane, on which the only world approximately known and understood in its physical composition by science is the planetary or Solar system - one *sui generis*, we are told.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

ENQ. What do you mean by *sui generis*?

THEO. I mean that, though the fundamental law and the universal working of laws of Nature are uniform, still our Solar system (like every other such system in the millions of others in Cosmos) and even our Earth, has its own programme of manifestations differing from the respective programmes of all others. We speak of the inhabitants of other planets and imagine that if they are *men*, *i.e.* thinking entities, they must be as we are. The fancy of poets and painters and sculptors never fails to represent even the angels as a beautiful copy of man - *plus* wings. We say that all this is an error and a delusion; because, if on this little earth alone one finds such a diversity in its flora, fauna and mankind - from the seaweed to the cedar of Lebanon, from the jellyfish to the elephant, from the Bushman and Negro to the Apollo Belvedere - alter the conditions cosmic and planetary, and there must be as a result quite a different flora, fauna and mankind. The same laws will fashion quite a different set of things and beings even on this our plane, including in it all our planets. How much more different then must be *external* nature in other Solar systems, and how foolish it is to judge of other *stars* and worlds and human beings by our own, as physical science does! [The key to theosophy -, 84]

Now the titles of the two volumes of *The Secret Doctrine*, Cosmogogenesis and Anthropogenesis, indicate the two aspects into which the subject of origination may usefully be divided for purposes of study and exposition - the becoming of the Cosmos and the becoming of Man. Yet, although they may be studied separately, the student is warned against allowing himself to regard them as two unrelated fields.

Let us study Man, therefore; but if we separate him for one moment from the Universal Whole, or view him in isolation ... we shall either land in black magic or fail most ingloriously in our attempt. [--- The Secret Doctrine-III, 437 /V, 419 /The Collected Writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 517 /The Esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 350]

The reason for this is clear; both Cosmos and Man arise in the One, and indeed *are* that one:

If the student bears in mind that there is but One Universal Element, which is infinite, unborn, and undying, and that all the rest - as in the world of Phenomena - are but so many various differentiated aspects and transformations (correlations, they are now called) of that One, from Cosmical down to microcosmical effects, from superhuman down to human and subhuman beings, the totality, in short, of objective existence - then the first and chief difficulty will disappear and Occult Cosmology may be mastered. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 75 /I, 104 /I, 142]

At the end of the first part of Volume I of *The Secret Doctrine*, Mme Blavatsky attempts to recapitulate some of the basic teachings thus far expounded. In the following passage from a comprehensive summary of the whole process, the footnotes have been incorporated into the paragraph:

The active Power, the "Perpetual motion of the great Breath", only awakens Kosmos at the dawn of every new Period, setting it into motion by means of the two contrary Forces [the centripetal and the centrifugal forces, which are male and female, positive and negative, physical and

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

spiritual, the two being the one *Primordial Force*], and thus causing it to become objective on the plane of Illusion. In other words, that dual motion transfers Kosmos from the plane of the Eternal Ideal into that of finite manifestation, or from the *noumenal* to the *phenomenal* plane. Everything that *is, was, and will be*, eternally IS, even the countless forms, which are finite and perishable only in their objective, not in their *ideal* Form. They existed as Ideas, in the Eternity [Occultism teaches that no form can be given to anything, either by nature or by man, whose ideal type does not already exist on the subjective plane. More than this; that no such form or shape can possibly enter man's consciousness, or evolve in his imagination, which does not exist in prototype, at least as an approximation], and, when they pass away, will exist as reflections. Neither the form of man, nor that of any animal, plant or stone, has ever been *created*, and it is only on this plane of ours that it commences "becoming", *i.e.* objectivizing into its present materiality, or expanding *from within outwards*, from the most sublimated and supersensuous essence into its grossest appearance. Therefore *our* human forms have existed in the Eternity as astral or ethereal prototypes; according to which models, the Spiritual Beings (or Gods), whose duty it was to bring them into objective being and terrestrial Life, evolved the protoplasmic forms of the future *Egos* from *their own essence*. After which, when this human *Upadhi* or basic mould was ready, the natural terrestrial Forces began to work on those supersensuous moulds *which contained, besides their own, the elements of all the past vegetable and future animal forms of this globe in them*. Therefore, man's *outward* shell passed through every vegetable and animal body before it assumed this human shape. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 282 /I, 302 /I, 324]

What is stated here with regard to the forms of the different kingdoms of Nature, that is, that their archetypes existed in the Eternity before they were brought forth and given physical expression - is equally true of their subtle counterparts in each of the planes of Nature. The origins of the inner principles of man, as of everything else, are to be sought in the primordial Substance that comes into being with the polarization of the One Element and its differentiation into the primary Elements. All potentialities, all the capabilities of Life, are here present, involved during earlier cycles of manifestation and now to be evolved during the present one. Every faculty we have as human beings has been developed in this way, to be further developed by use in our humanity. The cyclic process has, it has been well said, no conceivable beginning or imaginable end, yet each recurrent cycle "evinces a progressive march towards a *higher life*" [The Secret Doctrine -I, 277 /I, 297 /I, 319]. The active period of phenomenal existence, the Manvantara, expresses in the time-space world the possibilities impressed into the dormancy or "non-existence" of noumenal being, the Pralaya.

Three distinct representations of the Universe in its three distinct aspects are impressed upon our thought by the esoteric philosophy: the PRE-EXISTING (evolved from) the EVER-EXISTING; and the PHENOMENAL - the world of illusion, the reflection, and shadow thereof. During the great mystery and drama of life known as the Manvantara, real Kosmos is like the object placed behind the white screen upon which are thrown the Chinese shadows, called forth by the magic lantern. The actual figures and things remain invisible, while the wires of evolution are pulled by the unseen hands; and men and things are thus but the reflections, *on* the white field, of the realities *behind* the snares of *Mahamaya*, or the great Illusion. This was taught in every philosophy, in every religion, *ante-* as well as *post-*diluvian, in India and Chaldea, by the Chinese as by the Grecian Sages. In the former countries these three Universes were allegorized, in exoteric teachings, by the three trinities emanating from the central eternal germ and forming with it a Supreme Unity: the *initial*, the *manifested* and the *creative* Triad, or the three in One. The last is but the symbol, in its concrete expression, of the first *ideal* two. Hence Esoteric philosophy

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

passes over the necessarianism of this purely metaphysical conception, and calls the first one only the Ever-Existing. This is the view of every one of the six great schools of Indian philosophy - *the six principles of that unit body of WISDOM of which the "gnosis", the hidden knowledge, is the seventh.* [The Secret Doctrine -I, 278 /I, 298 /I, 320]

CHAPTER 10 [BOOK - I -]

GLOBES, ROUNDS AND RACES

The subject matter of this chapter illustrates several times over the Great Hermetic Axiom, expressed by Mme Blavatsky in these words:

As is the Inner, so is the outer; as is the Great, so is the Small; as it is above, so it is below; there is but ONE LIFE AND LAW; and he that worketh it is ONE.

[Bowen Notes]

As the first example, Occult Science shows that universal law, which links every effect to an antecedent cause, must apply to the earth itself just as it applies to every being on it. If every life-form had its causative antecedents, so also must the planet have had its preceding cause in another mode of existence. The recognition that this must be so extends our view of the history of life on earth into a past of scarcely imaginable duration, into world systems that existed before ours - and similarly forwards into a future with no conceivable limit.

Furthermore, Occult Science rejects the notion of creation *ex nihilo*, replacing it by the universal principle of the periodical projection "from within outwards" of pre-existent already conditioned subjective being into objective manifestation.

As no outward motion or change, when normal, in man's external body, can take place unless provoked by an inward impulse ... so with the external or manifested universe. [The Secret Doctrine - I, 274 /I, 295 /I, 317]

Again, as man is a sevenfold entity, having his seven principles, so also are the planets sevenfold, each having its seven corresponding principles. The parallel between man and planet is given in some detail by one of the Adept Teachers:

Law in Nature is uniform and the conception, formation, birth, progress and development of the child differs from those of the globe only in magnitude ... The correspondence between a mother-globe and her child-man may be thus worked out. Both have their seven principles. In the Globe, the elementals (of which there are in all seven species) form (a) a gross body, (b) her fluidic double (linga sariram), (c) her life principle (jiva); (d) her fourth principle kama rupa is formed by her creative impulse working from centre to circumference; (e) her fifth principle (animal soul or Manas, physical intelligence) is embodied in the vegetable (in germ) and animal kingdoms; (f) her sixth principle (or spiritual soul, Buddhi) is man (g) and her seventh principle (Atma) is in a film of spiritualized akasa that surrounds her. [The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnott -15, 93:91]

This passage is followed by an illuminating account of the evolution of the kingdoms on the globes, from

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

mineral to man.

The frequent reference to examples of the septenary principle in Nature shows it to be one of the keys to an understanding of the cosmic scheme. In *Esoteric Buddhism*, the first attempt to make a systematic presentation of the occult teaching, Mr Sinnett drew attention to this septenary characteristic of the cosmic order.

By what prophetic instinct Shakespeare pitched upon seven as the number which suited his fantastic classification of the ages of man, is a question with which we need not be much concerned, but certain it is that he could not have made a more felicitous choice. In periods of sevens the evolution of the races of man may be traced, and the actual number of the objective worlds which constitute our system, and of which the earth is one, is seven also. Remember the occult scientists know this as a fact, just as the physical scientists know for a fact that the spectrum consists of seven colours, and the musical scale of seven tones. There are seven kingdoms of Nature, not three as modern science has imperfectly classified them. Man belongs to a kingdom distinctly separate from that of the animals, including beings in a higher state of organization than that which manhood has familiarized us with, as yet; and below the mineral kingdom there are three others which science in the West knows nothing about ... [Esoteric Buddhism -IV, 57]

To these examples of "the regular operation of the septenary law in Nature" there must now be added the seven planes of the Cosmos, the seven globes that constitute a chain or planetary system, the seven rounds or periods of activity of each chain, the seven races of mankind with their seven sub-races. The particular meaning of the terms here introduced must now be briefly explained, for since none of this information had previously been given out in the English - or any other European - language, an appropriate terminology had first to be agreed between Mr Sinnett and his Teachers when they began to introduce into their correspondence with him what were then completely novel ideas. Among the terms employed here are:

CHAIN - a system of a physical globe and six related invisible globes, "a chain of beads, and each bead a world" [The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnett -12, 66:66];

ROUND (or RING) - the passage of a life-impulse round the seven globes of a chain, and therefore the period of activity of a chain;

LIFE-IMPULSE (also called the tide of life, the wave of existence, the spiritual impulse) - the activating principle which carries the evolutionary stream forward from one globe to the next;

RACE - a human group that has reached a certain evolutionary stage, physically, psychically and mentally.

Man lives out his evolutionary progress on seven planes. In each incarnation a personality that emerges

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

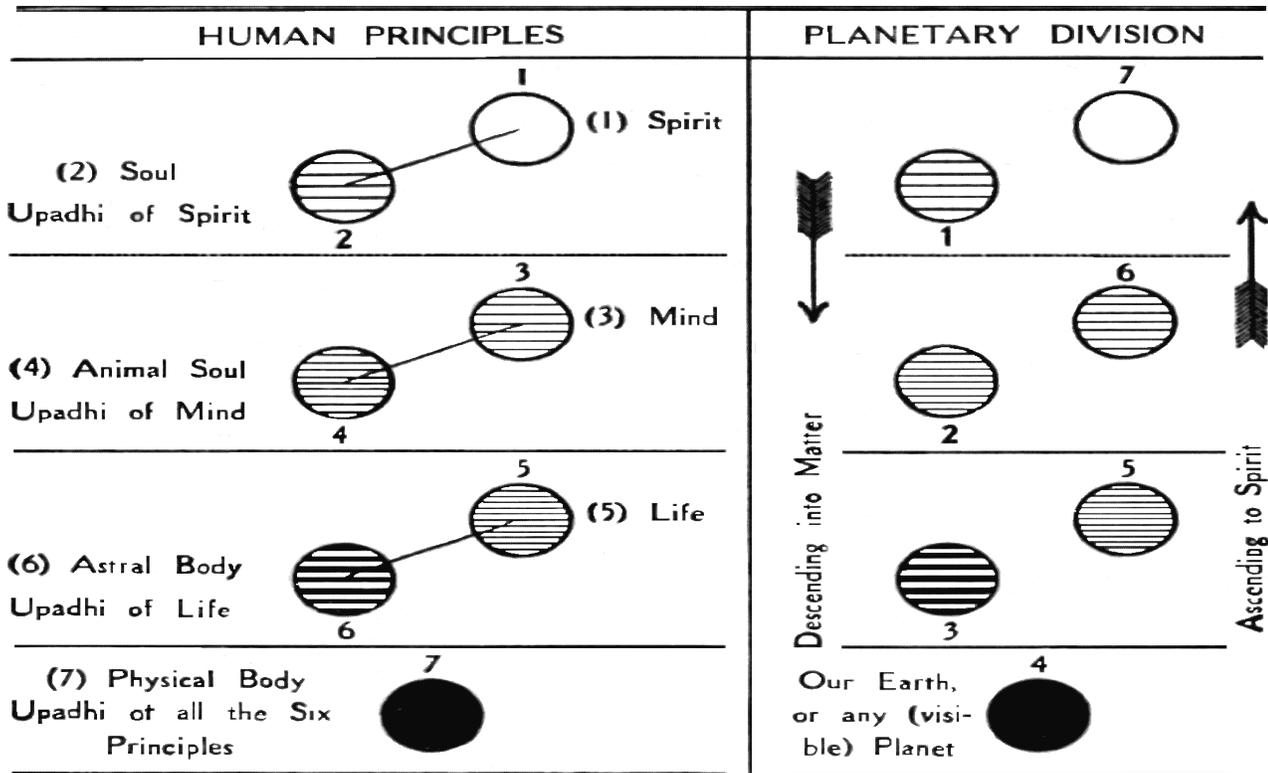
is the result of tendencies and faculties developed through past lives - the skandhas or seed-characteristics of his own making, the inheritance he bequeaths to himself for his future. Similarly the globes of a chain correspond to the seven principles in man. Each globe in turn becomes the stage on which emerge and are developed the seed-characteristics inherited from its predecessor, and similarly too, as a term of activity of a chain draws to a close, the total life of each dying globe is passed on to the next corresponding globe in a new sevenfold chain.

It is said that the planetary chains, having their "Days" and their "Nights" - i.e., periods of activity or life, and of inertia or death - behave in heaven as do men on Earth: they generate their likes, get old, and become personally extinct, their spiritual principles only living in their progeny as a survival of themselves. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 154 /I, 178 /I, 209]

There is a complication here that must be mentioned, although it cannot be explored in detail at this point. The total Kosmos is a septenary, but the student is advised that the three higher planes are "inaccessible to human intellect as developed at present". The drama of human evolution, and the sevenfold stage on which it is enacted, are *within* the four lower planes of the Kosmos. Of these four, three are subjective or super-physical, our earth alone being on the plane of sensory perception. Within this field, six of the seven globes of our chain must be envisaged as existing on the subjective or inner planes, three on the arc of descent - that is, of increasing materiality, and three on the arc of ascent - that is, evolving towards an increasingly ethereal condition. A diagram may serve to clarify the teaching. However, in interpreting the diagram it must be realized that it is symbolic only, the globes - like the principles of man - occupying the same "space" (for want of a better term) and being subjective with respect to our earth.

Pictorial Representation of a Chain of Globes

DIAGRAM I



In the study of the seven principles of man, it is clear that only one of these, the physical body, is perceptible to the physical senses. This body is the vehicle (or *upadhi*) of the other six, three of which, called here the astral body, animal soul and soul, are respectively the vehicles of the other three, life, mind and spirit. Similarly, of the seven globes that form the earth chain, only this earth itself is perceptible to the normal senses, the other six - its "invisible companions" - being on planes beyond their present reach.

A further paragraph summarizes the occult teaching:

... the one eternal LAW unfolds everything in the (to be) manifested Nature on a sevenfold principle; among the rest, the countless circular chains of worlds, composed of seven globes, graduated on the four lower planes of the world of formation ... Out of these seven only *one, the lowest and the most material of those globes*, is within our plane or means of perception, the six others lying outside of it and being therefore invisible to the terrestrial eye. Every such chain of worlds is the progeny and creation of another, *lower and dead chain - its reincarnation*, so to say. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 152 /I, 176 /I, 207]

The potentialities of Spirit that are to be made manifest by the process of e-volution must first become *involved* in matter. This dual process of involution and evolution is described symbolically as the descent of spirit into matter and its ascent out of matter - portrayed in religious mythologies as the incarnation, death and resurrection of the divine Son. When the human stage is reached, the septenary principle is once again shown to operate in the emergence of seven successive major or Root Races during the life of a

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

globe or planet.

In order to appreciate the extensive and detailed information given on the subject of these races and their evolution, the student must first expand enormously his conception of time-periods and recognize the few thousand years of recorded human history as only a very short phase in the story of mankind; he must also abandon altogether the common identification of race with the normal ethnic classification and understand the term to connote seven definite major stages of human evolution. Of the five Root Races that have so far comprised our humanity (two more being destined to emerge in a distant future), the occult teaching states that the first two, having no solid bodies or bone-structures, have left no trace; after the gradual consolidation of the third Race, at about its mid-point, there came about the separation of the sexes from an earlier androgyne phase; the fourth Race is described as "the first *completely human species* [The Secret Doctrine -II, 227 fn /II, 237 fn /III, 230], while the fifth, the present Race, "was evolved in Central Asia more than one million years ago" [The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnott -18, 121:118]. Each of these major Races evolves through seven sub-races, each one of which lasts for many thousands of years, and these in turn produce their "family races" with their further sub-division into tribes or national groups [The Secret Doctrine -II, 434 /II, 454 /III, 433].

A few statements taken from a summary of the total evolutionary process must suffice to indicate the grandeur of the scheme, made public here for the first time:

1. Everything in the metaphysical as in the physical universe is septenary.
2. The evolution of life proceeds on a Chain of seven Globes, round which the life-wave passes seven times, each complete cycle being described as a Round.
3. Our earth is the visible representative of a Chain of seven Globes, the other six being invisible to us at present; it has to live through seven Rounds.
4. The Humanity of our earth develops fully only in the fourth Round, in the course of which emerge seven Root Races, each one evolving through seven sub-races.
5. The Root Races develop originally on different continental land masses, the occult tradition associating the Third and Fourth Races respectively with the now lost continents that have become known by the appropriate names of Lemuria and Atlantis.

A study of the information made available in the literature of Esoteric Science shows how marvellously all the processes involved in the cosmos are coordinated, how everything is superbly ordered to the end that the majority of mankind may, by the close of the Seventh Race of the Seventh Round, have reached such a state of perfection that they may become in their turn the guides and instructors of a new infant humanity.

CHAPTER 11 [BOOK - I -]

EVER-BECOMING - THE PROCESSES OF EVOLUTION

Life, according to *The Secret Doctrine*, has but one attribute, "eternal, ceaseless motion", hence the significance of the term, the Ever-Becoming, applied to the One Universal Life. Monad is the term used to refer to that Life as it activates the cosmic process. In man it becomes, in conjunction with Manas, the immortal, divine Pilgrim that journeys through the cycles of manifestation. The cycles of manifestation exhibit two modes of operation, involution and evolution, but the overall process is progressive. Occultism recognizes this as a universal and invariable law; involution may be briefly formulated as "a descent of Spirit into Matter" and evolution as "a re-ascent from the depths of materiality towards its *status quo ante*" [The Secret Doctrine -I, 620 //I, 680 //II, 345].

Now, that which is perfect - the One Life as an abstract, unconditioned essence of Monad - cannot be said to evolve or develop. The process of manifestation, therefore, according to Esoteric Science, does not imply the emergence of any new thing, but rather is it one by which vehicles or forms are developed to give increasing expression to the properties inherent in the aspects of the One Life that animate them. As these properties, the potentialities of spirit, are inexhaustible, no more appropriate word can describe the cosmic process than the EverBecoming. There is, as it were, a constant pressure from the spirit within to develop instruments through which it can manifest those potentialities. The kingdoms of Nature themselves are such instruments, demonstrating the orderly emergence by stages of responsive adaptations. Throughout Nature the operative principle is always "from *within outwards*". As we saw in Chapter 7,

The whole order of Nature evinces a progressive march towards *a higher life*. There is design in the action of the seemingly blindest forces. The whole process of evolution with its endless adaptations is a proof of this. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 277 //I, 298 //I, 320]

The occult doctrine recognizes the universality of consciousness, but in varying degrees in everything. It expands as Life progresses through the kingdoms. Today, following the lead of Professor J.C. Bose (an early 20th Century Indian scientist), recognition is accorded among some scientists to evidence for some responsiveness indicating an awareness not only in plants but in metals also. Whereas science observes and studies the physical aspects of living things, Occultism teaches the existence of inner subjective aspects, each material form being the outward expression of an invisible entity. This, however, is only observable by those in whom the requisite faculty of inner perception has been developed. Such individuals may be referred to as occult scientists of various degrees of proficiency. They cover all fields in their investigations from the very small to the very large, the Cosmos. Referring to high Adepts in these arts, themselves the natural product of the evolutionary process, as we saw in Chapter 1, Mme Blavatsky wrote in *The Secret Doctrine*:

The flashing gaze of those seers has penetrated into the very kernel of matter, and recorded the soul of things there, where an ordinary profane observer, however learned, would have perceived but the external work of form. But modern science believes not in the "soul of things", and hence will reject the whole system of ancient cosmogony. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 272 //I, 293 //I, 316]

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

It is thus claimed that the statements of Esoteric Science are the records of direct observations, continually corroborated as are the best established pronouncements of physical science, hence the rejection of any notion of "unconscious Nature".

Everything in the Universe, throughout all its kingdoms, is CONSCIOUS; i.e. endowed with a consciousness of its own kind and on its own plane of perception. We men must remember that because we do not perceive any signs - which we can recognize - of consciousness, say, in stones, we have no right to say that *no consciousness exists there*. There is no such thing as either "dead" or "blind" matter, as there is no "Blind" or "Unconscious" Law. These find no place among the conceptions of Occult philosophy. The latter never stops at surface appearances, and for it the *noumenal* essences have more reality than their objective counterparts ... [The Secret Doctrine -I, 274 /I, 295 /I, 317]

The fact of universal consciousness is further underlined in a footnote which has relevance to the whole field of Esoteric Science, very particularly to the processes of evolution:

Nature, taken in its abstract sense, *cannot* be "unconscious", as it is the emanation from, and thus an aspect (on the manifested plane) of the ABSOLUTE consciousness. Where is that daring man who would presume to deny to vegetation and even to minerals *a consciousness of their own*. All he can say is, that this consciousness is beyond his comprehension. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 277 fn /I, 298 /I, 320]

The Life or Monad that animates the forms now inhabiting our planet, in all the kingdoms, has passed through cycles of experience of immense duration in preceding Rounds. For everything has a past, everything has antecedents, and every form is but a present-time and temporary expression of an aspect of the Ever-Becoming. In elaborating the general principle that operates in Nature - from within outwards - Mme Blavatsky refers to a fact of common experience, namely, that each outward act is preceded by an impulse from within, prompted by emotion, thought or volition. The creation of a work of art - whether symphony, painting or edifice of steel and concrete - begins as an idea, its final form being a projection "from within outwards", the inner model transferred from the plane of mind into the plane of sensory perception. The whole cosmic process has proceeded in this manner, ideal patterns that have been developed in one cycle being transferred in due time to our planet, where they gradually become clothed in the matter of the physical plane. The story of man itself illustrates this process: his form as we now know it began as a "shadow" (the Sanskrit word is *chhayas*) developed by the humanity of the Chain preceding ours. This produced the astral prototype of future mankind which projected the densified physical body in the Third Round, and eventually, through various stages, that of the present Fifth Race man.

Evolution, as popularly understood, is largely concerned with physical changes. Occultism speaks of a triple evolutionary scheme, namely, "the Monadic (or spiritual), the intellectual, and the physical evolutions", the three being "inextricably interwoven and interblended at every point" [The Secret Doctrine -I, 181 /I, 203 /I, 233]. All three are represented in the constitution of man, making him "the complex being he now is".

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

The story of Anthropogenesis or the becoming of man shows how physical Nature could not, unaided, evolve intelligence; a hierarchy of Beings referred to in *The Secret Doctrine* as Manasaputras, Agnishwathas or Solar Ancestors of man, made of him a rational being by contributing "the evolutionary power of Intelligence and Mind, the link between 'Spirit' and 'Matter'".

It is little wonder that *The Secret Doctrine* speaks of "the mystery of evolution". The motive power behind the evolutionary process is derived from two sources: it is

(a) the MONAD, or that which acts in it unconsciously through a force inherent in itself; and (b) the lower astral body or the *personal* SELF. The former, whether imprisoned in a vegetable or an animal body, is endowed with, is indeed itself, that force. Owing to its identity with the ALL-FORCE, which, as said, is inherent in the Monad, it is all-potent on the *Arupa*, or formless plane. On our plane, its essence being too pure, it remains all-potential, but individually becomes inactive ... [The Secret Doctrine -II, 109 /II. 115 /III, 117]

To explain the significance of this fact, the illustration is given of the sun that shines regardless of the particular plants on which its rays may fall. The sunbeam does not go in search of the plant hidden in the shade. Similarly, the highest Self in man, his Ego, must maintain its contact with its source, the Monad, failing which it will be held in bondage by the lower personal self.

It is a strange law of Nature that, on this plane, the higher (Spiritual) Nature should be, so to say, in bondage to the lower. Unless the Ego takes refuge in the Atman, the ALL-SPIRIT, and merges entirely into the essence thereof, the personal Ego may goad it to the bitter end. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 109 /II. 115 /III, 117]

The seven stages of the human pilgrimage represented by the seven Root Races are shown to bring about two distinct phases of the evolutionary process, first the preparation of the vehicles, the perfecting of the physical form, and then their subjection to the will of the higher Ego whose goal is the attainment of immortality by conscious reunion with the Monad from which it came forth. The first phase is characterized by the "fierce Selfishness and animal desire to live" of the personal ego intent on the building of the physical tabernacle. After the midpoint is reached, the higher Ego has the task of asserting itself as master over the builder. This explanation is crucial to our understanding both of the stage of our present humanity and of the difficulties experienced by the change of direction of evolutionary progress.

... For the first three and a half Root-Races, up to the middle or turning point, it is the astral shadows of the "progenitors", the lunar Pitris, which are the formative powers in the Races, and which build and gradually force the evolution of the physical form toward perfection - this, at the cost of a proportionate loss of spirituality. Then, from the turning point it is the Higher Ego, or incarnating principle, the *Nous* or *Mind*, which reigns over the animal Ego, and rules it wherever it is not carried down by the latter. In short, Spirituality is on its ascending arc, and the animal or physical impedes it from steadily progressing on the path of its evolution only when the selfishness of the *personality* has so strongly infected the real *inner* man with its lethal *virus*, that the upward attraction has lost all its power on the thinking reasonable man. In sober truth, vice and wickedness are an *abnormal, unnatural* manifestation, at this period of human evolution - at

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

least they ought to be so.[The Secret Doctrine -II, 110 /II, 116 /III, 118]

The processes of evolution are seen to be orderly, sequential and purposive. What is achieved at any one stage becomes incorporated into the next. The mineral which provides the vegetable and animal kingdoms with their necessary elementary material is itself the expression of countless elemental lives. The ideal forms already exist in the inner worlds; they are brought forth into the physical world by the building of dense material around the astral models. This is the work of the elementals who, in their own kingdoms, evolved the abilities necessary for carrying out this function. They are the workmen, obedient - even if not wholly efficient - to the will of the architects and directors, the upper Hierarchies.

A further example of the utilization of past achievements in further advances is found in the methods of reproduction of the early human races. These methods are briefly summarized in *The Secret Doctrine*: the First Race reproduced by fission, a method utilized in the amoeba and in cell-division; the Second Race reproduced by budding, the offspring growing out from the parent until it can lead an independent existence, as in the sea-anemone, hydra and many vegetables; both the Second and early Third Races developed a kind of hermaphroditism, male and female organs inhering in the same individual and producing a single cell which developed into a multi-cellular organism with the features of the parent, as in most plants and in worms and snails; with the later Third Race came the separation of the sexes and true sexual union. Again, the development of the human embryo illustrates the incorporation of earlier achievements into later developments, the foetus recapitulating early evolutionary stages before the offspring emerges as recognizably human.

The study of the past and of the principles underlying evolutionary advance points to the inescapable fact that we all, individually and collectively, *are* the humanity whose evolution is the central theme of Esoteric Science.

The Cycles of Matter will be succeeded by Cycles of Spirituality and a fully developed mind. On the law of parallel history and races, the majority of the future mankind will be composed of glorious Adepts. Humanity is the child of cyclic Destiny, and not one of its Units can escape its unconscious mission, or get rid of the burden of its co-operative work with nature. Thus will mankind, race after race, perform its appointed cycle-pilgrimage. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 446 /II, 456 /III, 444]

CHAPTER 12 [BOOK - I -]

SPIRITUALISM AND PSYCHISM

Spiritualism, as commonly understood, is a view of life that recognizes the survival of a personal "soul" or "spirit" (terms which are too often used without clear definition or distinction) after the death of the body, and the ability of that surviving entity to communicate with the living through the intermediary of a sensitive or medium. Psychism is a general term that embraces a range of paranormal occurrences and faculties, such as materializations, poltergeists, mediumship, pre-cognition, out-of-the-body experiences, psychometry, clairvoyance and clairaudience. In Occult Science the phenomena associated with both spiritualism and psychism are systematically studied and coherently explained. The information given in the literature is extensive, detailed and consistent, and is shown to be part of the total system. Moreover, it is offered not as speculative but as empirically ascertained and capable of corroboration, having been obtained by the use of faculties possessed by all but developed in only a few.

The theosophical system is one integrated whole; consequently relevant information will be found throughout this study. Several of the preceding chapters provide the key data on which the theosophical explanations are based, in particular Chapter 3, The Occult Constitution of Cosmos and Man; Chapter 5, Akasha and the Astral Light; Chapter 6, Elements and Elementals; and Chapter 8, Death and Rebirth.

In relation to spiritualism, it will be clear that the explanations offered by Esoteric Science do not dispute the reality of seance phenomena, for example, (except, of course, where these are fraudulently produced). The evidence of their occurrence is abundantly documented and is not in question. What is disputed is the claim that such phenomena, which include messages received through a medium, apports or physical manifestations, are attributable to the intervention of the "spirits" of deceased persons. This immediately separates the theosophical philosophy from spiritualism. The *Theosophical Glossary* shows clearly the difference between the two views in the definition of *Materializations*:

In Spiritualism the word signifies the objective appearance of the so-called "Spirits" of the dead, who reclothe themselves occasionally in matter; i.e. they form for themselves out of the materials at hand, which are found in the atmosphere and the emanations of those present, a temporary body bearing the human likeness of the defunct as he appeared, when alive. Theosophists accept the phenomenon of "materialization" but they reject the theory that it is produced by "Spirits", i.e. the immortal principles of the disembodied persons. Theosophists hold that when the phenomenon is genuine ... it is produced by the *larvae*, the *eidola* or Kamalokic "ghosts" of the dead personalities.

Mme Blavatsky uses the Greek word *eidolon*, meaning image or phantom, for this remnant of the deceased personality, "the shadowy *form* or the human double" [The key to theosophy - VI, 96]. In normal circumstances this *eidolon* quickly disperses at the death of the Body, its natural environment being the Kama-loka,

the *semi*-material plane to us subjective and invisible, where the disembodied "personalities", the

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

astral forms, called *Kama-rupa* remain, until they fade out from it by the complete exhaustion of the effects of the mental impulses that created these eidolons of human and animal passions and desires. [The Theosophical Glossary -, 171]

Firstly then, Occult Science gives a view of the sevenfold constitution of man, as a unit of consciousness functioning through four vehicles (namely, the physical, the *linga sarira*, the *mayavi rupa* and the auric envelope [see later]). When at death the densest of these, the physical body, ceases to function, the other three remain. Faced with "the objection made by the materialists, who deny the possibility of mind and consciousness acting without physical matter", Mme Blavatsky counters with the pertinent comment:

We do not deny the soundness of their argument; we simply ask our opponents, "Are you acquainted *with all the states of matter*, you who knew hitherto but of three [solid, liquid and gaseous]? [The key to theosophy - I, 100]

Next, the literature of Occult Science employs the word "spirit" with a precision and consistency that are largely lacking among spiritualists. The true Spirit in man is the spiritual entity or Ego (the Higher Triad); for which, after the severing of the silver cord, there can be no return to earth for there is then no connecting link. What remains of the deceased when the Ego has departed to Devachan [The key to theosophy - VIII and IX] is no more than a shell, a residue of the lower vehicles of the personality that was, but with some residual consciousness. Just as a discarded overcoat may retain for a time the shape of its former wearer, so also the discarded vestures of the Ego retain some of the characteristics of the late personality. It is these remains that in materializations may be re clothed with the substance provided by a medium and maybe the sitters, and which may be to an extent enlivened by Elementals. They appear as the astral double or *kama-rupa* of the deceased, a life-like picture or ephemeral likeness of the late personality.

The *mayavi-rupa* is a form created generally unconsciously but maybe consciously (certainly in the case of an Adept) by thought. It can be projected away from the physical body when it becomes a body of projection (astral). Such a form often appears at the instant of death to a loved one or other whom the one dying was thinking at the time.

In order to understand the source of the content of the "messages" received through the medium apparently from the deceased, reference must again be made not only to the residual consciousness and memory of the "shell" but also to what was said about Elementals and the nature of the Astral Light (see Chapters 5 and 6). It was there stated, in a quotation endorsed by Mme Blavatsky, that "the impression of every thought we think and every act we perform is indelibly stamped on the invisible and indestructible tablets of the Astral Light". The remarkable psychometric perceptions described by Professor Denton in *The Soul of Things* support the teaching of Esoteric Science to the effect that such records may be preserved for all time. Just as a clairvoyant's vision is not impeded by material obstacles, so the particular sensitivity of a psychometer is not obstructed by time, for every object preserves the record of its own past, and it is this record in the Astral Light that the sensitive is able read. The Elementals have the ability to enliven these pictures and impress mediums with them, so that 'spirits' may 'come through' speaking in ancient languages, or with a knowledge of past times and so on.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

At the end of Chapter 6 a brief mention was made of Elementaries, defined there as shells or "half-dead human beings". As mentioned above, they are the residual kamic and lower mental principles, with their memories and fading consciousness of the disembodied man that was. In nature they are likely to manifest particularly the evil tendencies of those individuals who had led evil lives, sometimes to such an extent that a separation of the higher principles from the lower even during earth life had taken place. These disintegrating remnants of the personality are capable of being temporarily revived and rendered partially conscious by the thought-currents, or magnetic currents, of living persons, hence the attraction of the seance room, where the peculiar psychic constitution of the medium, aided by Elementals, provides the power for such revivification. The Elementaries are

the disembodied *souls* of the depraved; these souls having at some time prior to death separated from themselves their divine spirits ... Once divorced from their higher triads and their bodies, these souls remain in their *Kama-rupic* envelopes, and are irresistibly drawn to the earth amid elements congenial to their gross natures. Their stay in the Kama Loka varies as to its duration; but ends invariably in disintegration, dissolving like a column of mist, atom by atom, in the surrounding elements. [The Theosophical Glossary -, 112]

Both Elementals and Elementaries are amoral and irresponsible; the former can be used to enliven the latter, as described above. Elementaries are the undesirable remnants of the deceased and can sometimes be not merely mischievous but even dangerous, e.g. poltergeists.

An understanding of the mechanism of materializations and of the nature of the entities that produce the phenomena associated with spiritualism will make clear the reason why students of Occult Science would discourage, or even condemn, practices that seek to bring back the dead to the earth they have left. This attitude is clearly and unequivocally explained in the definition of the Kama-rupa or "desire-body" given in the *Theosophical Glossary*. The passage in question gives an account of the processes of death as they affect the principles of man.

Kamarupa. Metaphysically, and in our esoteric philosophy, it is the subjective form created through the mental and physical desires and thoughts in connection with things of matter, by all sentient beings, a form which survives the death of their bodies. After that death three of the seven "principles" - or let us say planes of senses and consciousness on which the human instincts and ideation act in turn - viz., the body, its astral prototype and physical vitality, - being of no further use, remain on earth; the three higher principles, grouped into one, merge into the state of Devachan, in which state the Higher Ego will remain until the hour for a new reincarnation arrives; and the *eidolon* of the ex-Personality is left alone in its new abode. Here, the pale copy of the man that was, vegetates for a period of time, the duration of which is variable and according to the element of materiality which is left in it, and which is determined by the past life of the defunct. Bereft as it is of its higher mind, spirit and physical senses, if left alone to its own senseless devices, it will gradually fade out and disintegrate. But, if forcibly drawn back into the terrestrial sphere whether by the passionate desires and appeals of the surviving friends or by regular necromantic practices - one of the most pernicious of which is mediumship - the "spook" may prevail for a period greatly exceeding the span of the natural life of its body. Once the Kamarupa has learnt the way back to living human bodies, it becomes a vampire, feeding on the vitality of those who are so anxious for its company. [The Theosophical Glossary -, 172]

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

Some brief reference must be made to other kinds of phenomena included under the broad term of psychism. In mediumship the sensitive has various modes of functioning. He (or more often she) may be clairvoyantly or clairaudiently aware, so that he can see or hear in the Astral Light, or he may be passively sensitive so that he can go easily into trance or he may be able to make available energy or ethereal substance, or both together, in order to allow the materialization to occur. In the passive state of trance, the medium can in no way determine what kind of entity will take advantage of the opportunity he offers to experience again the contact with physical matter. Were it not for the law that "like attracts like", which protects pure, well-intentioned mediums from possession by entities of too undesirable a kind, the danger of such possession would be greater than it is. Mediumistic ability in itself is in no sense undesirable, but because of the necessary passivity of the medium he will be subject to the dangers to which it exposes those who are endowed with it; it has to be brought under control and used at will. Mme Blavatsky is an example of one who, endowed from birth with marked mediumistic tendencies, was trained so to control her natural gifts as to become not a medium but a magician proper, a real occultist.

In materialization, the bodily image of a human "visitor" may be, as seen above, the form of its astral double or kama-rupa, but it may also be an impression from the Astral Light, enlivened and animated by Elementals. The material of the apparition, ectoplasm, is drawn from the body of the medium, who is found to lose weight as the phantom becomes more solid, and to regain it as the phantom fades away.

In recent years out-of-the-body experiences have been carefully recorded and studied. Such experiences often take the form of looking down on one's own body, especially when the body has been made unconscious as the result of a serious accident or under an anaesthetic on the operating table. In such cases the consciousness is transferred to the Linga Sarira, the Astral Body. It is this body to a very limited extent, or more often the Mayavi-rupa, that is used in so-called astral travel.

When a man visits another in his Astral body, it is the Linga Sharira which goes, but this cannot happen at any great distance. When a man *thinks* of another at a distance very intently, he sometimes appears to that person. In this case it is the Mayavi Rupa, which is created by unconscious Kriyashakti, and the man himself is not conscious of appearing. [--- /The Secret Doctrine -III, 588 /V, 561 /The Collected Writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 706 /The Esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 461]

Kriyashakti, one of the six Forces or Powers in Nature through which the seventh, the One Force, is expressed, is defined as:

the mysterious power of thought which enables it to produce external, perceptible, phenomenal results by its own inherent energy. The ancients held that *any idea will manifest itself externally if one's attention is deeply concentrated upon it*. Similarly *an intense volition will be followed by the desired result*. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 293 /I, 312 /I, 333]

Phenomena involving Elementals embrace a wide range of happenings which appear miraculous to those who are ignorant of their cause or of their *modus operandi*, as for example the dematerialization of objects and their rematerialization in some other place. An occultist may have the power to control Elementals and to order them to produce the phenomena he desires. In hypnotism, the subject's lower principles are divorced from the higher Triad and made to act according to the bidding of the hypnotist;

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

the effect is akin to sleep-walking, when the body acts independently of the conscious control of the mind. Psychometry, as mentioned earlier, is the ability to see the timeless images in the Astral Light. Together with clairvoyance and clairaudience, this unusual degree of psychic sensitivity may be compared with other natural gifts such as spontaneous true pitch or the unconscious talent of the artist and musician. None of these gifts, however, is necessarily indicative of spiritual development.

CHAPTER 13 [BOOK - I -]

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

In this chapter an attempt is made to review the vast and marvellous process described in Esoteric Science. Process implies purpose, and it becomes evident that the purpose of the grand scheme is epitomized in the words of the title, Spiritual Development - the unfoldment of the potentialities of Spirit. Humanity is a critical stage in the process, for it is in the human kingdom that the process becomes self-conscious.

The Life that is the very Being of the universe and of the infinite number of lives that compose it is the MONAD: it is the ONE manifesting in countless hosts of lives at every stage of development. The unmanifested ONE, the ALL in potential, is said to breath out from ITSELF, a breath , the ONE manifest, called Monadic Essence: it is the Essence of all Being. From this Monadic Essence issues a multiple Ray, countless rays collectively - these are but words to describe the indescribable and almost infinite variety of forms used by the ONE LIFE, while as the "Pilgrim" it journeys through the planes of Nature, which, with all that comprises them, are themselves emanations of the One. The term Monad is also applied to the "Spark of Eternity" that is seen as the individual Pilgrim, when related to man. It is his two highest principles which form a spiritual Unit, inseparable throughout the pilgrimage. That dual unit is sometimes regarded as a monad when in association with a single form, but it must always remain inseparable from the One Monad.

In the Esoteric Philosophy Buddhi is the upadhi, or "veil of spirit", of Atman, and functions in man as the Discriminating Principle. It is this union of the "two in one", Atma-Buddhi, which constitutes the "Monad". [The Divine Plan -, 10]

When the Monadic Essence is embodied successively within the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms, it is sometimes termed the Mineral Monad, the Vegetable Monad and so on (but it is never a discrete principle), although it would be more correct to speak of "the Monad manifesting in that form of Prakriti [matter] called the Mineral Kingdom" [The Secret Doctrine -I, 178 /I, 201 /I, 230], for such a term as the Mineral Monad means in effect that "the tidal wave of spiritual evolution is passing through that arc of its circuit" [The Secret Doctrine -I, 178 /I, 201 /I, 230].

Through the lower kingdoms of Nature, the Monadic Life has passed in virtual unconsciousness to the point where, in the animal, there begins to emerge a sense of self and otherness. In man the possession of lower and higher mind bestows not only consciousness but also self-consciousness. The latter enables him to be aware of his physical surroundings - through his senses - and also his subjective reactions to them by way of the thoughts and feelings provoked by them. These are also objective to his 'self' as subject. It may seem easy to compress into these few words the facts of the evolutionary process, but the student should not lose from sight the immense periods of time, the incalculable experiences of effort, of striving, of success and failure, that must have preceded the condition of this relative self-consciousness that is the characteristic of present mankind.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

After long ages there comes a time in the life of the individual when he questions the purpose of life, and of his own life in particular. It is here that some understanding of Esoteric Science becomes of practical value, for the man perceives not only the route by which he has travelled to his present position, but also the way that lies ahead. The purpose of human life is nothing less than the unfoldment of the "deific powers" - a tremendous and awe-inspiring phrase! - that reside within each man. The goal is the realization of the unity of all life, not only of the family of man but of all living things. The intellectual appreciation of this fact is itself an emergent faculty, and, assisted by the ethical precepts of religion - precepts that have been transmitted through the ages by wise men fully acquainted with the truths of Occult Science - the individual recognizes the implications of the *fact* of unity, he has the actual experience of UNITY, he KNOWS his identity with the One and he therefore accepts his responsibility and bond of duty towards the whole, and sees the necessity for altruism.

We have seen that the cosmic scheme is a living whole, composed of an incalculable number of beings grouped in series of hierarchies, yet all rooted in the One Life.

From *Gods* to *men*, from *Worlds* to atoms, from a star to a rush-light, from the Sun to the vital heat of the meanest organic being - the world of Form and Existence is an immense chain, whose links are all connected. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 604 /I, 662 /II, 329]

These links are the beings forming the hierarchical Ladder of Life. In *The Secret Doctrine* the Beings of the superior Hierarchies are distinguished by appropriate names that indicate their function in the scheme: such are the Creators, Architects, Builders, Watchers, as also the Recorders who are described as

Entities of the higher worlds in the hierarchy of Being, so immeasurably high that, to us, they must appear as Gods, and collectively - GOD. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 133 /I, 157 /I, 190]

Of the diversity and varied functions of these Beings, *The Secret Doctrine*, extending what was quoted in Chapter 4, teaches:

The whole Kosmos is guided, controlled, and animated by almost endless series of Hierarchies of sentient Beings, each having a mission to perform, and who - whether we give to them one name or another, and call them Dhyan-Chohans or Angels - are 'messengers' in the sense only that they are the agents of Karmic and Cosmic Laws. They vary infinitely in their respective degrees of consciousness and intelligence; and to call them all pure Spirits without any of the earthly alloy "which time is wont to prey upon" is only to indulge in poetical fancy. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 274 /I, 295 /I, 317]

Yet, however varied and numerous, all these lives are linked and of the same kin, for the same life flows through all; this means that what affects one affects all, and the perception of this truth shows both the interdependence of all the forms of life and the duty of every part towards the whole. Now the study of the constitution of man in the light of Occult Science shows how every faculty must have a vehicle through which it can be expressed. The vehicle of the personal mind serves the faculty of objective

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

knowing, but actually to experience the unity of life another faculty is required, and for this another principle must be called into activity. This is Buddhi, always present but beyond the conscious reach of the personal mind until a bridge between the higher and the lower functions of mind has been developed, that is, mind made responsive both to buddhic influences and at the same time to kama. This bridge, which connects "the divine *Ego* and the personal *Soul* of man", is known as the Antahkarana. Its function is described thus in the *Theosophical Glossary*:

It serves as a medium of communication between the two, and conveys from the Lower to the Higher Ego all those personal impressions and thoughts of men which can, by their nature, be assimilated and stored by the undying Entity, and be thus made immortal with it, these being the only elements of the evanescent *Personality* that survives death and time. It thus stands to reason that only that which is noble, spiritual and divine in man can testify in Eternity to his having lived.

It is here that the occult doctrine endorses the ethical teachings of religion by explaining the rationale behind such injunctions as "Love one another". The virtues inculcated by most religions, and more specifically set out for aspirants to the higher life, are the means by which one may break through the limitations of the personal, self-centred mind and experience the unity of all life. Apart from these ethical constraints, the mechanism by which the bridge is built is meditation, a practice which, by stilling the restlessness of the personal mind, makes it possible for the influence of the ever-present spiritual nature to be felt in daily life.

CHAPTER 14 [BOOK - I -]

RELIGION

The source of religious teachings lies, according to the occult tradition, in a past far antedating any recorded history.

The mysteries of Heaven and Earth, revealed to the Third Race by their celestial teachers in the days of their purity, became a great focus of light, the rays from which became necessarily weakened as they were diffused and shed upon an uncongenial, because too material soil. With the masses they degenerated into Sorcery, taking later on the shape of exoteric religions, of idolatry full of superstitions, and man-, or hero-worship. Alone a handful of primitive men - in whom the spark of divine Wisdom burned bright, and only strengthened in its intensity as it got dimmer and dimmer with every age in those who turned it to bad purposes - remained the elect custodians of the Mysteries revealed to mankind by the divine Teachers. There were those among them, who remained in their *Kumaric* condition from the beginning; and tradition whispers, what the secret teachings affirm, namely, that these Elect were the germ of a Hierarchy *which never died since that period*. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 281 /II, 294 /III, 283]

The celestial teachers in the above passage were those who, having reached full manhood in the Moon Chain (i.e. the Chain before ours), came to our earth as Instructors; they had finished their human evolution and did not incarnate into the *chhayas* or forms provided by the Lunar Pitris, who were at a lower stage of development but from whom man got his present bodily form (chhaya). The light of the true teaching has persisted throughout the ages, but in historical times, except for some few illumined men, it has shone only from behind the screen of superstition and ignorance in the forms of exoteric religions. In some of these the light is so obscured as to be hardly perceptible; in some others the veil is thinner, allowing beams of the pure light to penetrate it. That light is indeed the original inspiration behind the classical religious literature of the world, and is least obscured where the old wordings have suffered least from translation and intentional or unwitting modification.

It is sometimes mistakenly thought that the occult doctrine stands in opposition to religion. This is clearly not so. The Preface to *The Secret Doctrine*, for example, states that among the aims of the work are two of particular relevance to our study, namely,

to rescue from degradation the archaic truths which are the basis of all religions; and to uncover, to some extent, the fundamental unity from which they all spring ... [The Secret Doctrine -I, viii /I, xxi /I, 8]

The esoteric philosophy is not an attempt to make a new religion by a synthesis of existing ones, nor is it in itself a new religion, for

The Secret Doctrine was the universally diffused religion of the ancient and prehistoric world.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

Proofs of its diffusion, authentic records of its history, a complete chain of documents, showing its character and presence in every land, together with the teaching of all its great adepts, exist to this day in the secret crypts of libraries belonging to the Occult Fraternity. [The Secret Doctrine -I, xxxiv /I, 18 /I, 56]

The ecclesiastical historian Mosheim describes the teaching of Ammonius Saccas in terms that accord with the understanding of modern Theosophists:

Ammonius taught that the religion of the multitude went hand-in-hand with philosophy, and with her had shared the fate of being by degrees corrupted and obscured with mere human conceits, superstition, and lies; that it ought, therefore, to be brought back to its original purity by purging it of this dross and expounding it upon philosophical principles; and that the whole which Christ had in view was to reinstate and restore to its primitive integrity the Wisdom of the ancients - to reduce within bounds the universally-prevailing dominion of superstition - and in part to correct, and in part to exterminate the various errors that had found their way into the different popular religions. [The key to theosophy - I]

As for the mistaken notion that Theosophy is a new religion, the answer is unequivocal:

Is it a new religion, we are asked? By no means; it is not a *religion*, nor is its philosophy *new*; for, as already stated, it is as old as thinking mankind. [The Secret Doctrine -I, xxxvi /I, 20 /I, 58]

Those who are generally regarded as the founders of the great religions were all, in Mme Blavatsky's view,

transmitters, not original teachers. They were the authors of new forms and interpretations, while the truths upon which the latter were based were as old as mankind. [The Secret Doctrine -I, xxxvi /I, 20 /I, 58]

Moreover, her support for the religious principle, as distinct from exoteric religious beliefs and practices, is made abundantly clear in this same Introductory section of *The Secret Doctrine*:

... the esoteric philosophy is alone calculated to withstand, in this age of crass and illogical materialism, the repeated attacks on all and everything man holds most dear and sacred, in his inner spiritual life ... Moreover, esoteric philosophy reconciles all religions, strips every one of its outward, human garments, and shows the root of each to be identical with that of every other great religion. It proves the necessity of an absolute Divine Principle in nature. It denies Deity no more than it does the sun. Esoteric philosophy has never rejected God in Nature, nor Deity as the absolute and abstract *Ens*. It only refuses to accept any of the gods of the so-called monotheistic religions, gods created by man in his own image and likeness, a blasphemous and sorry caricature of the Ever-Unknowable. [The Secret Doctrine -I, xx /I, 3 /I, 43]"

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

That the Deity of the esoteric philosophy is no personal 'extra-cosmic and anthropomorphic God' is further asserted in the answers given in *The Key to Theosophy* to questions about the theosophical attitude to God and Prayer. Mme Blavatsky dismisses the contention that Theosophy is either atheistic or pantheistic, and then adds:

Our DEITY is neither in a paradise, nor in a particular tree, building or mountain: it is everywhere, in every atom of the visible as of the invisible Cosmos, in, over, and around every indivisible atom and divisible molecule; for IT is the mysterious power of evolution and involution, the omnipresent, omnipotent, and even omniscient creative potentiality. [*The key to theosophy* - V]

Is man then to be deprived of comfort and strength in his hour of trial? No indeed, for Mme Blavatsky reminds her readers more than once of the words of Paul - whom she acknowledged to be an Initiate - in his letter to the Corinthians, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (I Cor iii, 16). If these words be believed, what need can there be for help from an external source? Again in *The Secret Doctrine* there is this significant passage:

The ever-unknowable and incognizable *Karana* alone, the *Causeless Cause* of all cause, should have its shrine and altar on the holy and ever untrodden ground of our heart - invisible, intangible, unmentioned, save through 'the still small voice' of our spiritual consciousness. Those who worship before it ought to do so in the silence and the sanctified solitude of their Souls; making their spirit the sole mediator between them and the *Universal Spirit*, their good actions the only priests, and their sinful intentions the only visible and objective sacrificial victims to the *Presence*. [*The Secret Doctrine* -I, 280 /I, 300 /I, 322]

This passage is one of several in *The Secret Doctrine* which imply the necessity for a rigorous code of ethics to accompany the theoretical study of Esoteric Science. The aim of that science being "the assimilation of the human soul with the Universal Soul" [*Caves and Jungles of Hindostan*, 446], a process of purification must prepare the way for its attainment. The first stage of the human pilgrimage, variously described as "the path of outgoing" or "the path of descent", is one of increasing materiality. In the case of our humanity, the lowest point of the descending arc was reached in the Fourth Root Race. We are now at the beginning of the ascending arc, the emergence out of materiality into one of increasing spirituality. This indeed is the vision of the future of mankind placed before us in the panoramic view of Esoteric Science.

The Cycles of Matter will be succeeded by Cycles of Spirituality and a fully developed mind. On the law of parallel history and races, the majority of the future mankind will be composed of glorious Adepts. Humanity is the child of cyclic Destiny, and not one of its Units can escape its unconscious missions, or get rid of the burden of its cooperative work with nature. [*The Secret Doctrine* -II, 446 /II, 465 /III, 444]

The codes of ethics that accompany the teachings of the great religions, in spite of obvious man-made accretions that disfigure rather than enhance them, are closely paralleled by the *yama* and *niyama* of Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras* and the catalogue of desirable (and undesirable) qualities given in the Sixteenth Discourse of the *Bhagavad Gita*. These are rungs on the ladder that is to lead to Self-realization. They

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

also provide the basis for future exoteric religions which, cleansed of superstition, are necessary for the guidance of mankind in its long journey to human perfection, Adeptship. Popular religion must stimulate and keep alive the spiritual intuitions which are more or less active in all men. They arise by reason of man's inner constitution wherein all are at one with the One Spirit. This is the indispensable principle of Unity which manifests as the One Life shared by all. This Unity also shows forth as the Law, previously discussed, but of which the twin law of Karma and Reincarnation are aspects.

These form the basis in their turn of the restraints and disciplines essential to the welfare and happiness of humanity. Without them a satisfactory and satisfying civilized society is impossible. Our ethical and moral codes are aspects of these disciplines. Some ceremonial, ritual practices and music would lend colour and suggestive significance to religious teaching, but cannot be seen as an end in themselves.

It is to be noted that, although the great Vedantic works insist on the uselessness of ceremonial acts as means of salvation, nowhere is the devotee instructed to abandon their performance, the teaching here being simply that he must not mistake the means for the end. There can be no salvation from outside, no vicarious atonement. Man is his own absolute law-giver and must effect his own salvation himself.

A communication from one of the Adept Teachers to A.P. Sinnett shows the importance those Teachers attached to the highest code of ethics, not only for the spiritual progress of the individual but more especially for the happiness of the human race, and to a truthful theology:

Remember the sum of human misery will never be diminished unto that day when the better portion of humanity destroys in the name of Truth, morality, and universal charity, the altars of their false gods. [The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnett -10, 58:58]

Ethical precepts, given to successive human groups by their Teachers, are based on knowledge of the laws inherent in Nature. It follows that the responsibility of those who have access to the teachings is two-fold: to study further the doctrines of Esoteric Science, then, as far as they can, to live accordingly and to make those teachings more widely available.

Our duty is to keep alive in man his spiritual intuitions. To oppose and counteract - after due investigation and proof of its irrational nature - bigotry in every form, religious, scientific, or social, and *cant* above all, whether as religious sectarianism or as belief in miracles or anything supernatural. What we have to do is to seek to obtain *knowledge* of all the laws of nature, and to diffuse it. To encourage the study of those laws least understood by modern people, the so-called Occult Sciences, *based on the true knowledge of nature*, instead of, as at present, on *superstitious beliefs based on blind faith and authority*. [The key to theosophy - III]

The Scriptures of the world abound in the seemingly miraculous. The student of Esoteric Science does not necessarily dismiss such accounts as fictional: rather does he adopt the standpoint of Mme Blavatsky when, at the end of *Isis Unveiled*, she attempted to summarize the principles there enunciated:

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

There is no miracle. Everything that happens is the result of law - eternal, immutable, ever active.
[Isis Unveiled - II, 587]

A happening that one fails to understand may well be called miraculous, but Occult Science asserts that 'there is really nothing above or beyond NATURE and Nature's laws' [The key to theosophy - XIV]. *Seeming* miracles may indeed occur but, like the wonders of modern technology, they can be produced only by those who are well acquainted with the nature and processes of Nature herself and are thus able to manipulate the forces involved. Hence the injunction to those who would ally themselves to the forces of Nature for the greater good of humanity:

Help Nature and work on with her, and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators, and make obeisance. [The Voice of the Silence -, Frag.1, v 66]

BOOK - II -

INTRODUCTION

In this second book, the chapters have been given the same numbers and titles as their counterparts in Book I. Here, however, the outline has been supplemented and illustrated by further quotations from the original literature. While it is hoped that a reasonably connected narrative will result, a mass of information has had necessarily to be omitted, and in spite of the additional material given here, we still have no more than the barest groundplan of Esoteric Science. The reader who wishes to understand more of its structure must turn to the classical works themselves. Even there the picture is not complete; although much has been made available, yet, as Mme Blavatsky advised her readers, it is relatively little, and that little is part allegorical.

Because of the primary intention of keeping the main thesis clear, little reference has been made to the esoteric element in the world's religious and philosophical systems. Yet the material relating to this aspect of the Science is abundant, and each reader will be able to study his particular interest in the light of Esotericism.

The writer hopes that it is not too much to assume that the reader, having come this far in the exploration of this outline of Occult Science, will have begun to turn to the source material on which this outline is based. This second part will, in addition to elaborating some of the information given in Book I, set up signposts leading to some of the more recondite aspects of the science. Having made himself familiar with the basic concepts and the vocabulary which their study entails, the reader will have no great difficulty in adding to the vocabulary required for this further exploration.

The use of special or technical terms has been kept to a minimum in this outline. In the principal literature, a temporary difficulty that confronts the student is the indiscriminate mixing of nomenclatures: Buddhist, Hindu, Tibetan, Kabalistic and so on. However, the difficulty will be overcome by perseverance and the growing familiarity with the terms encountered.

Esoteric Science is the synthesis of science, religion and philosophy. In Chapter 14, religion is discussed, in broad terms, in the light of Esotericism. Throughout the book, some aspects of philosophy are introduced, whereas little attention is given to the science of today. Yet Esoteric Science has a significant contribution to make both to the natural sciences and to the domain of psychology, as well as to metaphysics in such questions as the nature of matter, time, space and causation. Esoteric Science affirms the existence of invisible and subjective realms of being that are not yet within the purview of today's sciences. These inner, causative worlds are the "within" whence originates the "without", with all its diverse substances, forms, qualities and modes of behaviour.

Beyond and behind these realms is THAT which ever *is*. This is the postulated great unknowable, the ABSOLUTE of Esotericism, the Parabrahm of the Hindus, the Causeless Cause behind the very first stirrings of that which is to be the root of all manifestation, the ONE. Neither the ever-existing THAT, nor the ONE, is 'in' space and time as we understand them. With the first signs of manifestation, at the

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

beginning of a Cosmos, there arise the abstract roots of what will be space, substance and motion, to bring manifestation into being.

Modern science is now examining the idea that matter may originate from space. Esotericism endorses this view and in fact teaches it, adding, however, that there are two aspects of space, a 'visible' and an 'invisible' one. The invisible aspect is inner, subjective space - the space of mental pictures, dreams, ideal images, and so on; it is dimensionless, that is, it cannot be measured. Visible space is the room in which 'stuff' and things exist, and it originates with them. It is the space of physical existence, our physical universe. In the occult view, this space is material, that is, it is itself 'stuff' from which is ultimately derived the substance of all things. It can be regarded as an ethereal plasma; it is affected by magnetic fields and gravity which, together with what manifests to us as electricity, are aspects of it in their essential nature. It is to be noted that, according to the esoteric teaching, gravity is an "attraction" which things physical have for one another, a kind of affinity or sympathetic attraction stemming from within their inner natures. In the physical world such an attraction appears also in chemical affinities. In an attempt to understand how the ordinary notion of dimension does not apply to inner space, we can ask ourselves, for example, how big - by any physical yardstick - is any imagined thing, be it a world or an egg!

The universe, with all that is in it, is subject to cyclic law. All things come and go, all things are born and die. So too does all matter; like everything else, sub-atomic particles have a finite life. Although at sub-atomic levels a degree of uncertainty prevails, yet even here statistical probability applies, and the probability is that our world, and the entire Cosmos, will continue much as they are but subject to slow change. Everything throughout the Cosmos is living and intelligent in its own degree. Occultism regards the Cosmos as a Unity, all its innumerable components sharing its entire nature; the deepest mystery, truly! Everything, therefore, is both in it and of it, and everything must inevitably participate in its processes. (This fact justifies the view that the observer of an experiment necessarily affects what he observes.)

There are many questions confronting science today. Let us state a few of them. Whence the hydrogen that seems to be continuously created? What is life? Whence animation and consciousness? Whence the human form? How do the molecules, the cells and the organs that comprise it come to 'know' their special function? What and where ultimately is memory? Why does evolution appear punctuated? In Esoteric Science may be found explanations which will answer these and many other as yet unresolved problems of science - problems which cannot be resolved so long as scientists are limited to the use of physical instruments and partially developed senses. Yet, it must be repeated, the information so far made available is no more than the lifting of a corner of the veil. Nevertheless, the study of the little we have been given may provide insights and understanding of the world of our experience, and maybe an intimation (not obtainable anywhere else) of what lies beyond.

CHAPTER 1 [BOOK - II -]

ABOUT ESOTERIC SCIENCE

In introducing the subject of Esoteric Science in Book I, several facts were briefly mentioned which it is now necessary to elaborate.

First of all, the antiquity of Theosophy has to be appreciated. Mme Blavatsky, acting as the amanuensis of her Teachers, had the particular task of making public some aspects of the archaic doctrine that had hitherto been reserved for the few to whom "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" had been made known. The knowledge communicated in those mysteries was no new thing, but to the general public - "them that are without" - it was concealed under parable and symbol [Matt. xiii 11; Mark iv 11; Luke viii 10]. This is made clear in the Preface to *The Secret Doctrine*, where the writer states:

These truths are in no sense put forward as a *revelation*; nor does the author claim the position of a revealer of mystic lore, now made public for the first time in the world's history. For what is contained in this work is to be found scattered throughout thousands of volumes embodying the scriptures of the great Asiatic and early European religions, hidden under glyph and symbol, and hitherto left unnoticed because of this veil. What is now attempted is to gather the oldest tenets together and to make them one harmonious and unbroken whole. [The Secret Doctrine -I, vii / I, xix / I, 7]

The introductory section of *The Secret Doctrine* is in fact a presentation of the evidence of the existence of such a tradition in the ancient world. In an article published in the first number of *The Theosophist*, the monthly magazine which she founded in 1879 (and which continues in publication to this day), Mme Blavatsky explains:

There were Theosophists before the Christian era, notwithstanding that the Christian writers ascribe the development of the Eclectic theosophical system to the early part of the third century of their era. Diogenes Laertius traces Theosophy to an epoch antedating the Ptolomies; and names as its founder an Egyptian Hierophant called Pot-Amun, the name being Coptic and signifying a priest consecrated to Amun, the god of Wisdom. But history shows it revived by Ammonius Saccas, the founder of the Neo-Platonic School. He and his disciples called themselves "Philaletheians" - lovers of the truth; while others termed them the "Analogists", on account of their method of interpreting all sacred legends, symbolical myths and mysteries, by a rule of analogy or correspondence, so that events that had occurred in the external world were regarded as expressing operations and experiences of the human soul. It was the aim and purpose of Ammonius to reconcile all sects, peoples and nations under one common faith - a belief in one Supreme, Eternal, Unknown and Unnamed Power, governing the Universe by immutable and eternal laws. His object was to prove a primitive system of Theosophy, which at the beginning was essentially alike in all countries; to induce all men to lay aside their strifes and quarrels, and unite in purpose and thought as the children of one common mother; to purify the ancient religions, by degrees corrupted and obscured, from all dross of human element, by uniting and expounding them upon pure philosophical principles. [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -II, 88]

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

Evidence of the existence of an esoteric tradition in antiquity should not obscure the fact that the detailed information now presented in the writings of Mme Blavatsky and in the instructions given by her Teachers is unique: it is to be found nowhere else. For the first time, there is here offered to the student a comprehensive and consistent system, expressed as nearly as possible in plain terms in a European language. This modern exposition of Esoteric Science includes in its wide embrace the whole field of cosmic and human evolution, and specifically those areas indicated by the chapter headings of this book.

Esoteric Science is recognized under a variety of names, one of them being the Wisdom-Religion. However, as was pointed out earlier, Theosophy is not a religion in any sectarian sense, nor is it to be identified with any of the historical religions. This is stated explicitly in the Preface to *The Secret Doctrine* in the following passage:

It is perhaps desirable to state unequivocally that the teachings, however fragmentary and incomplete, contained in these volumes, belong neither to the Hindu, the Zoroastrian, the Chaldean, nor the Egyptian religion, neither to Buddhism, Islam, Judaism nor Christianity exclusively. The Secret Doctrine is the essence of all these. Sprung from it in their origins, the various religious schemes are now made to merge back into their original element, out of which every mystery and dogma has grown, developed, and become materialized. [The Secret Doctrine -I, viii /I, xx /I, 8]

In an article intended to clarify the use of the word "religion" in a theosophical context, Mme Blavatsky says repeatedly that Theosophy, although not a religion, *is* religion.

Theosophy is not a Religion, we say but RELIGION itself, the one bond of unity, which is so universal and all-embracing that no man, as no speck - from gods and mortals down to animals, the blade of grass and atom - can be outside of its light. Therefore any organization or body of that name must necessarily be a UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD ... It transmutes the apparently base metal of every ritualistic and dogmatic creed (Christianity included) into the gold of fact and truth, and thus truly produces a universal panacea for the ills of mankind ... Its doctrines, if seriously studied, call forth, by stimulating one's reasoning powers and awakening the *inner* in the animal man, every hitherto dormant power for good in us, and also the perception of the true and the real, as opposed to the false and the unreal. Tearing off with no uncertain hand the thick veil of dead-letter with which every old religious scripture was cloaked, scientific Theosophy, learned in the cunning symbolism of the ages, reveals ... the origin of the world's faiths and sciences. It opens new vistas beyond the old horizons of crystallized, motionless and despotic faiths; and turning blind belief into a reasoned knowledge founded on mathematical laws - the only *exact* science - it demonstrates to him under profounder and more philosophical aspects the existence of that which, repelled by the grossness of its dead-letter form, he had long since abandoned as a nursery tale. It gives a clear and well-defined object, and ideal to live for, to every sincere man or woman belonging to whatever station in Society and of whatever culture and degree of intellect. Practical Theosophy is not *one* Science, but embraces every science in life, moral and physical. It may, in short, be justly regarded as the universal "coach", a tutor of world-wide knowledge and experience, and of an erudition which not only assists and guides his pupils toward a successful examination for every scientific or moral service in earthly life, but fits them for *the lives* to come, if those pupils will only study the universe and its mysteries *within themselves* ... [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -X, 163]

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

It has been claimed that Esoteric Science is specific knowledge of universal facts. This knowledge has been acquired, as already pointed out, by methods comparable with those of the physical sciences, with the difference that the instruments used by its investigators were faculties developed within themselves. An important passage from which an extract was quoted in Part I is here given more fully:

The Secret Doctrine is the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages, and its cosmogony alone is the most stupendous and elaborate system But such is the mysterious power of Occult symbolism, that the facts which have actually occupied countless generations of initiated seers and prophets to marshal, to set down and explain, in the bewildering series of evolutionary progress, are all regarded on a few pages of geometrical signs and glyphs. The flashing gaze of those seers has penetrated into the very kernel of matter, and recorded the soul of things there, where an ordinary profane, however, learned, would have perceived but the external work of form.... the system in question is no fancy of one or several isolated individuals.... it is the uninterrupted record covering thousands of generations of Seers whose respective experiences were made to test and to verify the traditions passed orally by one early race to another, of the teachings of higher and exalted beings, who watched over the childhood of Humanity... How did they do so?... by checking, testing, and verifying in every department of nature the traditions of old by the independent visions of great adepts; *i.e.*, men who have developed and perfected their physical, mental, psychic, and spiritual organizations to the utmost possible degree. No vision of one adept was accepted till it was checked and confirmed by the visions - so obtained as to stand as independent evidence - of other adepts, and by centuries of experience. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 272 /I, 293 /I, 316]

“The doctrine is barely sketched in our two volumes”, she wrote in the first issue of *La Revue Théosophique*, in which some parts of *The Secret Doctrine* were to appear in translation, “and yet the mysteries unveiled therein concerning the beliefs of prehistoric peoples, cosmogony and anthropology, have never been divulged until now. [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XI, 126]

CHAPTER 2 [BOOK - II -]

THE SCOPE OF THE SCIENCE

In Chapter 2 of Book I an outline of the principal aspects of Esoteric Science was given, each theme being further developed in the chapters that followed. That outline was intended to give a preliminary view of the scope of the science. Another way to the appreciation of the immense field of the study and the essential framework of Esoteric Science is suggested in a small compilation of extracts from the writings of H.P. Blavatsky. Its title, *Foundations of Esoteric Philosophy*, exactly describes its contents, for the extracts show the basic principles "which underlie and pervade the entire system of thought" designated by the name of Esoteric Science [The Secret Doctrine -I, 13 /I, 42 /I,79]. Until the student is ready to embark on the study of the major works, this small book is an almost indispensable companion to his explorations of that science. What we have here is a collection of summaries made from time to time by Mme Blavatsky herself, so that the essential teachings could be clearly discerned amid the mass of detail and explanatory material which might otherwise conceal them. Furthermore, in the Bowen Notes - teachings given by her only a few weeks before her death - specific advice is offered to the student on the method of approach to the study of *The Secret Doctrine*, the order in which the most important sections of the work should be studied and the attitude that should accompany the reader throughout his study.

Come to the *The Secret Doctrine* - (she says) without any hope of getting the final Truth of existence from it, or with any idea other than seeing how far it may lead TOWARDS the Truth. See in study a means of exercising and developing the mind never touched by other studies. [Madame Blavatsky on how to study theosophy -, 8]

The basic principle of the system, as we have seen, is that of Unity, the One, the everlasting and unchanging Reality from which emerges periodically, according to inherent, ceaseless Law, a manifested universe. Within it are all things, the expressions in time and space of the inexhaustible potencies of the One Spirit, the ever activating Principle of the whole. The teaching of an originating and essential Oneness is expressed in various ways. (Note that, unless otherwise indicated, all the quotations that follow in this chapter are taken from *Foundations of Esoteric Philosophy*, where precise references to the source of each passage are given.) For example:

The radical unity of the ultimate essence of each constituent part of compounds in Nature ... is the one fundamental law in Occult Science. [p.13]

The FUNDAMENTAL UNITY OF ALL EXISTENCE. This unity is a thing altogether different from the common notion of unity ... it is that existence is ONE THING, not any collection of things linked together. Fundamentally there is ONE Being. [p.17]

The essential unity of all manifested things is due to the originating Reality, the One Principle:

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless and Immutable PRINCIPLE, on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception and could only be dwarfed by any human expression or similitude. It is beyond the range and reach of thought ... [p.21]

The fundamental law in that system, the central point from which all emerges, around and towards which all gravitates, and upon which is hung all its philosophy, is the One Homogeneous Divine SUBSTANCE-PRINCIPLE, the One Radical Cause. [p.30]

In the various lists of basic ideas collected here, the principle of unity is - with two exceptions - placed first. These exceptions are a) the summary at the end of *Isis Unveiled*, which was Mme Blavatsky's first attempt to place the teachings of the esoteric philosophy before the public; here she puts first the principle of Universal Law:

There is no miracle. Everything that happens is the result of law - eternal, immutable, ever active. [p.57]

and b) the Recapitulation of the first part of Volume I of *The Secret Doctrine*, where the list of Six Numbered Items begins, not with basic principles, but with a summary of the Introductory section of the work, the evidence of a universal esoteric tradition. With these exceptions, the lists of basic ideas give first place to the principle of unity, for in fact all other principles are but corollaries of this fundamental truth. This will become evident as the statements in each of the summaries are studied. For instance, if there is but ONE OMNIPRESENT LIFE, it must follow that "there is no dead matter, every thing is itself a life, living". [p.17]. If there is but ONE LIFE, "the fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul" must also be true [p.24]. If there is but ONE LIFE, all things must have come from it: "The universe is the periodical manifestation of this unknown Absolute Essence" [p.30]. If there is but ONE LIFE, as the Esoteric Science affirms, then that same Science cannot at the same time deny that ONE originating PRINCIPLE: "The Secret Doctrine teaches no Atheism" [p.39].

Again, an examination of the summaries collected in *Foundations of Esoteric Philosophy* will make clear what, according to Esoteric Science, is the nature of man and his central place in the total scheme. All the grand processes of evolution involve man, for he is their model and the goal, in our System, of the whole process of universal Becoming. Physically, psychically, mentally and spiritually, he is in it and of it. His emergence as a self-conscious being is what the whole process is about. His evolutionary history recapitulates the movement of life through all the forms of the kingdoms of Nature. These forms are the instruments through which consciousness is constantly and increasingly expressed, until from simple responsiveness in the lowest kingdom it becomes self-consciousness in man. Now a new element is introduced into the evolutionary process, the power of self-determination. While nothing can happen outside the Law, man, alone of all the creatures on our planet, can exercise choice in his observation of the Law.

The passages that follow illustrate the teachings of Esoteric Science in relation to man:

Nature is triune: there is visible, objective nature; an invisible, indwelling, energizing nature, the

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

exact model of the other and its vital principle; and, above these two, *spirit*, source of all forces, alone eternal and indestructible. The lower two constantly change; the higher third does not. Man is also triune: he has his objective, physical body; his vitalizing astral body (or soul), the real man; and these two are brooded over and illuminated by the third - the sovereign, the immortal spirit. When the real man succeeds in merging himself with the latter he becomes an immortal entity. [pp.57/58]

In the Third Fundamental Proposition given in the Proem of *The Secret Doctrine*, after the affirmation of "the fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul", there is outlined the age-long pilgrimage of man through the worlds of form, with this significant addition:

The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric Philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations. [p.24]

Man's relationship to the rest of the cosmic process is further shown in paragraph 6 of the Recapitulation; for man is shown to be an inevitable stage in that process. Of the Hierarchies of Beings mentioned earlier, each individual

either *was*, or prepares to become, a man, if not in the present, then in a past or a coming cycle (Manvantara). They are *perfected*, when not *incipient*, men ... [p.32]

In sober truth, as just shown, every so-called "Spirit" is either a *disembodied* or a *future man*. As from the highest Archangel (Dhyan Chohan) down to the last conscious "Builder" (the inferior class of Spiritual Entities), all such are *men*, having lived aeons ago, in other Manvantaras, on this or other spheres, so the inferior, semi-intelligent and non-intelligent Elementals are all *future* men. [p.34]

(Clearly the term "man" must not be understood to be necessarily a being with "two arms, two legs and a head", but rather as a stage in the evolution of consciousness.)

Humanity constitutes one of the "almost endless series of Hierarchies of sentient Beings", and, together with all the others, it has its own mission to perform in its progress towards the next stage in the evolutionary scheme [p.32]. That stage is one in which the consciousness of the individual becomes merged with that of the whole human race: the sense of separateness characteristic of earlier stages gives place to the experience of unity with all mankind. That stage is reached when an individual is able to respond affirmatively to the question, "Hast thou attuned thy heart and mind to the great mind and heart of all mankind? ... Hast thou attuned thy being to humanity's great pain?" [The Voice of the Silence -, Frag.3, v 225, v 228]

To reach that goal - one which can be attained by each individual unit - there is a long and painful route (but which at the same time engenders great joy) to be followed, for much that was useful in adolescence

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

has to be sacrificed on the way to maturity. This is the lesson of the great spiritual teachers, made explicit in the occult injunction, "Give up thy life, if thou would'st live" [The Voice of the Silence -, Frag.1, v 21].

Before leaving the review of *Foundations of Esoteric Philosophy*, it should be pointed out that the Conclusion given there does not appear to be the one intended by Mme Blavatsky when she recommended to her London group the study of the "Conclusion (Vol.II)". She had used the word Conclusion as the heading to the final portion of *Part I* of Volume II of *The Secret Doctrine*. It is here, rather than in the concluding pages of the whole work, that she writes of "the times of coming of the Races and Sub-Races". Both Conclusions are highly instructive and give the reader a sense of the immensity of the scheme in which he, like the whole human race, is involved.

CHAPTER 3 [BOOK - II -]

THE OCCULT CONSTITUTION OF COSMOS AND MAN

In a system that functions as a single unit - a true unity - everything is related to everything else. Divisions are made for purposes of presentation and study must inevitably be arbitrary, and in treating the parts as though they were separate, some repetition will also be inevitable. The understanding of the Hermetic axiom - "as above, so below" - is of paramount importance in this instance. The universe is sevenfold, and man likewise is sevenfold, each of his principles or aspects having its correspondence with the planes of the Cosmos; hence the insistence on the law of analogy, as is shown in the following paragraphs.

There is an eternal concatenation of causes and effects, and a perfect analogy which runs through, and links together, all the lines of evolution. One begets the other - globes as personalities .. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 171 /I, 194 /I, 224]

Everything in the Universe follows analogy. "As above, so below"; Man is the Microcosm of the Universe. That which takes place on the spiritual plane repeats itself on the Cosmic plane. Concretion follows the lines of abstraction; corresponding to the highest must be the lowest; the material to the spiritual. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 177 /I, 200 /I, 230]

It thus becomes apparent how perfect is the analogy between the processes of Nature in the Kosmos and in the individual man. The latter lives through his life-cycle, and dies. His "higher principles", corresponding in the development of a planetary chain to the cycling Monads, pass into Devachan, which corresponds to the "Nirvana" and states of rest intervening between two chains. The Man's lower "principles" are disintegrated in time and are used by Nature again for the formation of new human principles, and the same process takes place in the disintegration and formation of Worlds. Analogy is thus the surest guide to the comprehension of the occult teachings. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 173 /I, 196 /I, 226]

This chapter elaborates the information given in Book I and introduces further aspects of the subject. However, because of the vastness and the intricacies of the scheme, it is possible to give only pointers towards these further aspects - a syllabus for study rather than a complete exposition. One of the principal sources of this information requires a word of explanation. At the end of the second volume of *The Secret Doctrine* Mme Blavatsky refers to "a third and even a fourth volume", yet no material seeming to constitute such volumes was discovered after her death. There was indeed a good deal of unpublished manuscript, which was collected and edited by Annie Besant and published in 1897 under the title *The Secret Doctrine Vol.III*. (In the 6-volume Adyar edition of 1938, this became Vol.V.) Included here are a number of Papers of Instruction circulated privately by Mme Blavatsky among her pupils constituting an inner group in the Esoteric Section which she had established in 1888. The same material has since been published separately under the title *The Esoteric Writings of H.P.Blavatsky*, while the papers of instruction also appear in Volume XII of the *Collected Writings*. The page references given here are to the 1897 Vol.III and the Adyar edition Vol.V.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

The principles of man are variously classified according to different systems (see the table given in The Secret Doctrine -I, 157 and Key Ch.VI, 91/2). The esoteric Instructions offer further classifications, with one demonstrating the correspondence in the Cosmos. Here the seventh principle is given as the Auric Egg or Auric Envelope, that which demarks him as an individual from the whole, as a drop of water from the ocean. It is thus called because

the substratum of the Aura around man is the universally diffused primordial and pure Akasha, the first film on the boundless and shoreless expanse of Jiva, the immutable Root of all. [--- The Secret Doctrine -III, 493 /V, 471 /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 607 /The esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 392]

Although it is now referred to as "the chief 'principle' of all", the Auric Egg was not mentioned in the earlier published literature. Such mention "was not permitted .. on account of its being so sacred" [--- The Secret Doctrine -III, 446 /V, 427 /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 526 /The esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 356]. The "Luminous Egg" is described as "the invisible magnetic sphere in which every man is enveloped" - to which statement a footnote adds, "so are the animals, the plants, and even the minerals" [--- The Secret Doctrine -III, 445 /V, 427 fn /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 526 /The esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 356]. In this way all units of life, simple or complex, are entities.

If we bear in mind what has already been learned of the Astral Light, the lowest regions of the Akasha, the function of the Auric Egg will be more readily understood. We learn that it reflects all the thoughts, words and deeds of the individual; it preserves every karmic record; it is "the storehouse of all the good and evil powers of man, receiving and giving out at his will - nay, at his very thought - every potentiality, which becomes, then and there, an acting potency"; furthermore, "it furnishes man with his Astral Form, around which the physical entity models itself, first as a foetus, then as a child and man." [--- The Secret Doctrine -III, 495 /V, 472 /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 608 /The esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 394]

An aspect of the correspondence between man and his world is summarized in the statement, "The Auric Egg is to the Man as the Astral Light is to the Earth" [--- The Secret Doctrine -III, 539 /V, 512 /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky - omitted]. There is a similar correspondence with the total manifested Kosmos, represented diagrammatically as the six kosmic planes within the seventh, the Auric Egg. As with the Auric Egg of the individual, so "in the Kosmic Auric Envelope is all the Karma of the manifesting Universe" [--- The Secret Doctrine -III, 555 /V, 528 /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 657 /The esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 436].

To help us to understand the way in which each human principle reflects the cosmic principles, and similarly the way in which each plane reflects the sevenfold Kosmos, we may think of the label that used to appear on bottles of coffee essence. It showed a man holding a bottle with a label showing a man holding a bottle with a label ... and so on, theoretically ad infinitum. This is indeed the Hermetic axiom: as the Kosmos exists on seven planes, of which the lowest is called (in the Instructions) the terrestrial or Prakritic, this Kosmic Prakritic is similarly divided into seven, of which the lowest only is the objective terrestrial plane sensed by the five physical senses. Likewise this, "the lowest plane of Prakriti, or the true terrestrial", is "divisible into seven planes, and these again into seven, making the forty-nine" [--- The Secret Doctrine -III, 551 /V, 524 /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky - omitted].

There is a warning, repeated here and there in different words, against interpreting the teachings concerning the superphysical, suprasensuous worlds in terms of our sensory experience of a three-

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

dimensional time-bound world.

It has often been explained that neither the cosmic planes of substance nor even the human principles - with the exception of the lowest material plane or world and the physical body, which as has been said, are no 'principles' - can be located or thought of as being in Space and Time. As the former are seven in ONE, so are we seven in ONE - that same absolute Soul of the World, which is both Matter and non-Matter, Spirit and non-Spirit, Being and non-Being. Impress yourselves well with this idea, all those of you who would study the mysteries of SELF. [--- The Secret Doctrine -III, 447 /V, 428 /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 528 /The esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 357]

A similar warning against the misuse of diagrams is given in Instruction III:

The Diagrams and Plates are intended to familiarize students with the leading ideas of occult correspondences only, the very genius of metaphysical, or macrocosmic and spiritual Occultism, forbidding the use of figures or even symbols further than as temporary aids. Once define an idea in words, and it loses its reality; once figure a metaphysical idea, and you materialize its spirit. Figures must be used only as ladders to scale the battlements, ladders to be disregarded once the foot is put upon the rampart.

Let the Esotericists, therefore, be very careful to spiritualize the Instructions and avoid materializing them; let them always try to find the highest meaning possible, confident that in proportion as they approach the material and visible in their speculations on the Instructions, so far are they from the right understanding of them. This is especially the case with these first Instructions and Diagrams, for as in all true arts, so in Occultism, we must first learn the theory before we are taught the practice. [--- The Secret Doctrine -III, 486 /V, 464 /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 600 /The esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 387]

The sevenfold pattern is found again in the human organism and in the Auric Envelope. Potentially, man has seven senses, two of which are latent and therefore remain unrecognized.

seven senses of ours correspond with every other septenate in nature and in ourselves. Physically, though invisibly, the human Auric Envelope (the amnion of the physical man in every age of life) has seven layers, just as Cosmic Space and our physical epidermis have. It is this Aura which, according to our mental and physical state of purity or impurity, either opens for us vistas into other worlds, or shuts us out altogether from anything but this three-dimensional world of Matter.

Each of our seven physical senses (two of which are still unknown to profane Science), and also of our seven states of consciousness - viz.: (1) waking; (2) waking-dreaming; (3) natural sleeping; (4) induced or trance-sleep; (5) psychic; (6) super-psychic; (7) and purely spiritual - corresponds with one of the seven Cosmic Planes, develops and uses one of the seven super-senses, and is connected directly, in its use on the terrestro-spiritual plane, with the cosmic and divine centre of

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

force that gave it birth, and which is its direct creator. Each is also connected with, and under the direct influence of, one of the seven sacred Planets. [--- The Secret Doctrine -III, 448 /V, 429 /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 528 /The esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 357]

This passage is preceded by a warning against misplaced reliance on either the physical or the psychic senses in what concerns the higher planes.

Remember that with our physical senses alone at our command, none of us can hope to reach beyond gross Matter. We can do so only through one or another of our seven *spiritual* senses, either by training, or if one is a born Seer. Yet even a clairvoyant possessed of such faculties, if not an Adept, no matter how honest and sincere he may be, will, through his ignorance of the truths of Occult Science, be led by the visions he sees in the Astral Light, only to mistake for God or Angels the denizens of those spheres of which he may occasionally catch a glimpse, as witness Swedenborg and others. [--- The Secret Doctrine -III, 448 /V, 429 /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 528 /The esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 357]

The inter-relatedness of the evolution of the senses, the Elements and the Root-Races, is shown in the story of Anthropogenesis, where it is stated that

... with the Ancients, the evolution of man, and the growth and development of his spiritual and physical senses, were subordinate to the evolution of the Elements on the Cosmic plane of this earth. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 107 /II, 113 /III, 116]

As each Element evolves, it "adds to its own characteristics those of its predecessor", and similarly, as each Root-Race evolves, it "adds the characterizing sense of the preceding Race". Thus man is seen to evolve "gradually in seven stages, and on the same principles". The relevant information is outlined in a brief table:

The following table on parallel lines may be found in the evolution of the Elements and the Senses; or in Cosmic Terrestrial "*Man*" or "*Spirit*", and mortal physical man:

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

1	Ether	..Hearing	.. Sound	
2	Air	.. Touch	... Sound and Touch	
3	Fire, or Light	.. Sight	.. Sound, Touch and Colour	
4	Water	.. Taste	... Sound, Touch, Colour and Taste	
5	Earth	.. Smell	... Sound, Touch, Colour, Taste and Smell	[The Secret Doctrine -II, 107 /II, 113 /III, 116]

In the simple analysis of the constitution of man as a Triad (the three higher principles) and a Quaternary (the four lower ones), mention was made of Antahkarana, sometimes described as a bridge between Upper and Lower Manas. Antahkarana is defined more fully in the Instructions as "that path or bridge of communication which serves as a link between the personal being whose physical brain is under the sway of the lower animal mind, and the reincarnating Individuality, the spiritual Ego, Manas, Manu, the "Divine Man"." [--- The Secret Doctrine -III, 511 /V, 487 /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 623 /The esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 406] A further elaboration of the teaching emphasizes the fact that in incarnation there are effectively two Egos, the Divine and the human, which rebecome one in Devachan or Nirvana. Here Mme Blavatsky makes use of a practical illustration: using a lamp to represent the Divine Ego, the light it throws out to be the lower Manas, and the wall on which the light falls to be the man in his physical body, the Antahkarana is then seen as "that portion of the atmosphere which transmits the ray from the lamp to the wall" [--- The Secret Doctrine -III, 519 /V, 495 /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 631 /The esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 412]. The illustration is carefully developed to show not only the importance of the "imaginary bridge" between the human and the Divine Ego but also the power of the human Ego to ensure the maintenance of the connection. In the *Key*, discussion of the question of immortality makes it clear that "man and soul have to conquer their immortality", a teaching that is found again here in the statement that the human Soul becomes immortal by being "grafted on" the Monad - and in no other way. *The Voice of the Silence*, which was published in the same year as the *Key*, speaks of the merging of "the two into the One" and the consequent destruction of Antahkarana. In the Instructions, Mme Blavatsky refers to the Glossary of the *Voice*, in which this definition is given:

Antahkarana is the lower *Manas*, the Path of communication or communion between the personality and the higher *Manas* or human Soul. At death it is destroyed as a Path or medium of communication, and its remains survive in a form as the *Kamarupa* - the "shell". [The Voice of the Silence -, Frag.3, v 222, note 9]

Ultimately, then, the bridge is to be transcended with the merging of the individual with the Universal Soul; nevertheless it is a mistake to attempt to achieve that end by ignoring the Higher Mind.

No single rung of the ladder leading to knowledge can be skipped. No personality can ever reach or bring itself into communication with Atma, except through Buddhi-Manas; to try to become a

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

Jivanmukta or a Mahatma before one has become an Adept or even a Narjol (a sinless man) is like trying to reach Ceylon from India without crossing the sea. Therefore we are told that if we destroy Antahkarana before the personal is absolutely under the control of the impersonal Ego, we risk to lose the latter and be severed for ever from it, unless indeed we hasten to re-establish the communication by a supreme and final effort. It is only when we are indissolubly linked with the essence of the Divine Mind, that we have to destroy Antahkarana. [--- The Secret Doctrine -III, 522 /V, 497 /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 634 /The esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 414]

CHAPTER 4 [BOOK - II -]

THE HIERARCHIES OF BEINGS

All existence is ONE THING: the universe is a living Entity composed of hosts of living beings. These hosts, which provide the structure, qualities and governance of the universe according to everlasting law, are divisible into seven main types according to their characteristic qualities, these in turn having their correspondences at every level of being. Although distinctively named and described in the literature, these various groups of living beings constitute a Unity in which every component is intimately related to every other. Each Hierarchy is composed of those below it, while in its turn it is a component of the one above it. There are therefore Hierarchies of Beings superior to man, from among whom came the guides and teachers of the early races, and from whom also man has derived the very qualities of his being. There are also Hierarchies of the kingdoms below man, those of the Elementals.

The great religious traditions recognize these Hosts under a variety of names - Spirits, Angels and Archangels, the Elohim and Sephiroth, Amshaspends, Cosmocratores and Prajapatis of the different systems. In *The Secret Doctrine* also many names are used to refer to these lofty powers, the designation of each often signifying the function of the particular Order or Hierarchy or its place in the total scheme. Thus we find Lipika, Ah-hi, Dhyani-Chohans, Mind-born Sons, Sons of Light, Builders, Planetary Spirits, and so on. Their origination in the One Life is first indicated in the Summary of the Seven Stanzas given at the end of the Proem, where each Stanza is shown to refer to one of the seven stages in the process of cosmic becoming. Stanza IV, describing the stage known in Hindu mythology as "the 'Creation of the Gods'", shows

the differentiation of the "Germ" of the Universe into the septenary hierarchy of conscious Divine Powers, who are the active manifestations of the One Supreme Energy. They are the framers, shapers, and ultimately the creators of all the manifested Universe, in the only sense in which the name "Creator" is intelligible; they inform and guide it; they are the intelligent Beings who adjust and control evolution, embodying in themselves those manifestations of the ONE LAW, which we know as the "Laws of Nature".

Generically they are known as the Dhyani-Chohans, though each of the various groups has its own designation in the Secret Doctrine. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 21 /I, 49 /I, 86]

This summary is developed in passages descriptive of particular groups and their several functions. Information about some of these - the Ah-hi, the Lipika, the Builders and the Planetary Spirits - is given here and there throughout the Commentaries, the following extracts being a representative selection.

1. *The Ah-hi*. The Ah-hi (Dhyani-Chohans) are the collective hosts of spiritual beings - the Angelic Hosts of Christianity, the Elohim and "Messengers" of the Jews - who are the vehicle for the manifestation of the divine or universal thought and will. They are the Intelligent Forces that give to and enact in Nature her "laws", while themselves acting according to laws imposed upon them in a similar manner by still higher Powers; but they are not "the personifications" of the powers of

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

Nature, as erroneously thought. This hierarchy of spiritual Beings, through which the Universal Mind comes into action, is like an army - a "Host", truly - by means of which the fighting power of a nation manifests itself, and which is composed of army corps, divisions, brigades, regiments, and so forth, each with its separate individuality or life, and its limited freedom of action and limited responsibilities; each contained in a larger individuality, to which its own interests are subservient, and each containing lesser individualities in itself. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 38 /I, 70 /I, 112]

2. *The Lipika*. The Lipika, from the word *lipi*, "writing", means literally the "Scribes". Mystically, these Divine Beings are connected with Karma, the Law of Retribution, for they are the Recorders or Annalists who impress on the (to us) invisible tablets of the Astral Light - "the great picture-gallery of eternity" - a faithful record of every act, and even thought, of man, of all that was, is, or ever will be, in the phenomenal Universe. As said in *Isis Unveiled* [p 343], this divine and unseen canvas is the BOOK OF LIFE. As it is the Lipika who project into objectivity from the passive Universal Mind the ideal plan of the universe, upon which the "Builders" reconstruct the Kosmos after every Pralaya, it is they who stand parallel to the Seven Angels of the Presence, whom the Christians recognize in the Seven "Planetary Spirits" or the "Spirits of the Stars"; for thus it is they who are the direct amanuenses of the Eternal Ideation - or, as called by Plato, the "Divine Thought". The Eternal Record is no fantastic dream, for we meet with the same records in the world of gross matter. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 103 /I, 130 /I, 165]

More information about the function of the Lipikas is given in the Commentaries on Stanza V. We pass now to the Builders.

3. *The Builders*. There are three chief groups of Builders and as many of the Planetary Spirits and the Lipikas, each group being again divided into seven sub-groups. It is impossible, even in such a large work as this, to enter into a minute examination of even the three principle groups, as it would demand an extra volume. The "Builders" are the representatives of the first "Mind-Born" entities, therefore of the primeval Rishi-Prajapatis; also of the Seven great Gods of Egypt, of which Osiris is the chief; of the Seven Amshaspendis of the Zoroastrians, with Ormazd as their head; or the "Seven Spirits of the Face"; the Seven Sephiroth separated from the first Triad, etc., etc.

They build, or rather rebuild every "system" after the "Night". The Second group of the Builders is the Architect of our planetary chain exclusively; and the third, the progenitor of our humanity - the Macrocosmic prototype of the microcosm.

The Planetary Spirits are the informing spirits of the Stars in general and of the Planets especially. They rule the destinies of men who are all born under one or another of their constellations; the second and third groups pertaining to other systems have the same functions, and all rule various departments in Nature ...

The Lipikas ... are the Spirits of the Universe, whereas the Builders are only our own planetary deities. The former belong to the most occult portion of Cosmogony, which cannot be given here ... [The Secret Doctrine -I, 127 /I, 152 /I, 185]

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

The hierarchy of Creative Powers is divided into seven (or 4 and 3) esoteric, within the twelve great Orders, recorded in the twelve signs of the Zodiac; the seven of the manifesting scale being connected, moreover, with the Seven Planets. All this is subdivided into numberless groups of divine Spiritual, semi-Spiritual and ethereal Beings. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 213 /I, 233 /I, 260]

Each of these orders of Celestial Beings is described in some detail, for the further study of which the reader is referred to the Commentary on Stanza VII, entitled "The Parents of Man on Earth".

The wealth and complexity of the information given in the Stanzas must understandably have proved perplexing, if not fanciful, to some of Mme Blavatsky's readers. Anticipating their reaction to Stanza V, for example, "perhaps the most difficult of all the Stanzas to explain" - she commented:

Its language is comprehensible only to him who is thoroughly versed in Eastern allegory and its purposely obscure phraseology. The question will surely be asked, "Do the Occultists believe in all these 'Builders', 'Lipikas', and 'Sons of Light' as Entities, or are they merely imageries?" To this the answer is given as plainly: "After due allowance for the imagery of personified Powers, we must admit the existence of these Entities, if we would not reject the existence of spiritual humanity within physical mankind. For the hosts of these Sons of Light and 'Mind-born Sons' of the first manifested Ray of the UNKNOWN ALL are the very root of spiritual man". Unless we want to believe the unphilosophical dogma of a specially created soul for every human birth - a fresh supply of these pouring in daily, since "Adam" - we have to admit the occult teachings. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 106 /I, 131 /I, 166]

Reference was made earlier to the Preface of *The Secret Doctrine*, in which Mme Blavatsky mentioned that part of her aim was "to assign man his rightful place in the scheme of the Universe". According to the esoteric teaching, humanity is an inescapable stage in the progressive unfoldment of consciousness:

The Doctrine teaches that, in order to become a divine, fully conscious god - aye, even the highest - the Spiritual primeval INTELLIGENCE must pass through the human stage. and when we say human, this does not apply merely to our terrestrial humanity, but to the mortals that inhabit any world, i.e. to those Intelligences that have reached the appropriate equilibrium between matter and spirit, as we have now, since the middle part of the Fourth Root-Race of the Fourth Round was passed. Each Entity must have won for itself the right of becoming divine, through self-experience. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 106 /I, 131 /I, 166]

CHAPTER 5 [BOOK - II -]

AKASHA AND THE ASTRAL LIGHT

Akasha, "the subtle, supersensuous spiritual essence which pervades all space" [The Theosophical Glossary -], enters into every feature of the manifold universe. In the literature, it appears under many guises, and the terms used to define it will differ according to the particular aspect under consideration. Thus we find a variety of descriptive statements, each one referring to one of its many aspects or functions. For example:

[Akasha is] the primordial substance erroneously identified with Ether. [The Theosophical Glossary -]

... it is to Ether what Spirit is to Matter, or *Atma* to *Kama-rupa*. [The Theosophical Glossary -]

It is ... the Universal Space in which lies inherent the eternal Ideation of the Universe in its ever-changing aspects on the planes of matter and objectivity. [The Theosophical Glossary -]

[It is] the power which lies latent at the bottom of every magical performance [i.e. in religious ceremonial operations]. [The Theosophical Glossary -]

... in another aspect it is *Kundalini* - occult electricity; the alkahest of the alchemists in one sense, or the universal solvent. [The Theosophical Glossary -]

It is the] *anima mundi* on the higher plane as the *astral light* is on the lower. [The Theosophical Glossary -]

[It is] the ONE Element in its second stage, "Father-Mother" ... divine Astral Light, or the "Soul of the World". [The Secret Doctrine -I, 140 /I, 163 /I, 196]

There is one great difference between the Astral Light and the Akasha which must be remembered. The latter is eternal, the former is periodic. [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -X, 361 Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge -, 75]

The Akasha is the eternal, divine consciousness which cannot differentiate, have qualities or act. [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -X, 361 Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge -, 75]

Some of the other terms that occur in the above statements must now be studied, especially as Esoteric Science employs them in a way quite different from common usage. Take for example *Space*, which is ordinarily regarded as a three-dimensional void, whereas in Occultism Space is entirely non-dimensional. If the reader will use the selected statements given here as pointers to lead him into the text, he will find

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

himself breathing a totally different atmosphere from that of modern science, and will increasingly appreciate the grandeur of the concepts of the occult doctrine.

Time and Space are forms of the One incognizable Deity. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 382 fn /II, 399 fn /III, 380]

A Deity that manifests in *Space* and *Time* - these two being simply the forms of THAT which is the Absolute ALL - can be but a fractional part of the whole. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 158 /II, 168 /III, 166]

In a footnote in the Proem, Mme Blavatsky quotes, and comments on, a passage from a then recent work in which the author refers to Space as "the Unknown First Cause":

This unknown something, thus recognized as, and identified with, the primary embodiment of Simple Unity, is invisible and impalpable - (*abstract* space, granted); and because invisible and impalpable, therefore incognizable. And this incognizability has led to the error of supposing it to be a simple void, a mere receptive capacity. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 9 fn /I, 38 /I, 75]

In a page significantly headed "The Pith and Marrow of Occultism", the fundamental Law of the esoteric system is given as "the One homogeneous SUBSTANCE-PRINCIPLE, the one radical cause", a phrase which is further explained:

It is called "Substance-Principle", for it becomes "substance" on the plane of the manifested Universe, an illusion, while it remains a "principle" in the beginningless and endless abstract, visible and invisible SPACE. It is the omnipresent Reality: impersonal, because it contains all and everything. *Its impersonality is the fundamental conception* of the System. It is latent in every atom in the Universe, and is the Universe itself. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 273 /I, 294 /I, 316]

A later footnote comments on an aspect of early Greek thought which, in its conception of Chaos, echoes that of the archaic doctrine. In Hesiod, for example:

Chaos is infinite, boundless, endless and beginningless in duration, an abstraction at the same time as a visible present. SPACE filled with darkness, which is primordial matter, in its *pre-cosmic* state. For in its etymological sense, Chaos is Space, according to Aristotle, and Space is *the ever Unseen and Unknowable Deity* in our philosophy. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 336 fn /I, 359 fn /II, 50]

Another term that occurs frequently in the literature of the esoteric tradition is Anima Mundi, the Soul of the World, or Alaya. Although the particular meaning of any term may vary according to its context, the following statements will show clearly the fundamental concepts which each of the three alternative expressions seeks to convey in regard to the same reality. For example, terms such as "*Maha-Atma*, Brahman, the Spirit of Life", are used as "identical with the Universal Soul, or *Anima-Mundi*, the Astral Light of the Theurgists and Kabalists being its last and lowest division" [The Secret Doctrine -I, 461 /I, 499 /II,

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

182]. Elsewhere, in a quotation taken from *Isis Unveiled*, both Light and Life are described as

... electricity - the life-principle, the *anima mundi*, pervading the universe, the electric vivifier of all things. Light is the great Protean magician, and under the Divine Will of the architect, or rather the *architects*, the "Builders" (called *One* collectively), its multifarious, omnipotent waves gave birth to every form as well as to every living being. From its swelling, electric bosom, spring *matter* and *spirit*. Within its beams lie the beginnings of all physical and chemical action, and of all cosmic and spiritual phenomena; it vitalizes and disorganizes; it gives life and produces death, and from its primordial point gradually emerged into existence the myriads of worlds, visible and invisible celestial bodies. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 579 /I, 633 /II, 303]

A further commentary on the meaning of *anima mundi* occurs in Volume II of *The Secret Doctrine*, in a chapter on "The Fall of the Cross into Matter" where it is stated:

With the Esotericists, from the remotest times, the Universal Soul or *anima mundi*, the material reflection of the Immaterial Ideal, was the Source of Life of all beings and of the life-principle of the three kingdoms; and it was *Septenary* with the Hermetic philosophers, as with all ancients. For it is represented as a sevenfold cross, whose branches are respectively *light, heat, electricity, terrestrial magnetism, astral radiation, motion, and Intelligence*, or what some call self-consciousness. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 562 /II, 593 /IV, 132]

A note in the Glossary to Part II of *The Voice of the Silence* concerning a verse (221) relating to the innermost nature of man as one with the Universal Soul, Alaya, and in explanation of the statement, "the MASTER-SOUL is one, Alaya, the Universal Soul", says:

The "MASTER-SOUL" is *Alaya*, the Universal Soul or Atman, each man having a ray of it in him and being supposed to be able to identify himself with and to merge himself into it. [The Voice of the Silence -, Frag.3, V 221, note 8]

Like everything in the Cosmos, the Anima Mundi is seven-fold. "it is in a sense", says the Theosophical Glossary, "the 'seven-skinned mother' of the stanzas in *The Secret Doctrine*, the essence of seven planes of sentience, consciousness and differentiation, moral and physical. In its highest aspect it is *Nirvana*, in its lowest Astral Light". This astral light is further described in a footnote:

The astral light stands in the same relation to Akasha and *Anima Mundi* as Satan stands to the Deity. They are one and the same thing *seen from two aspects*: the spiritual and the psychic - the super-ethereal or connecting link between matter and pure spirit, and the physical. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 197 fn /I, 219 /I, 247]

In the Commentary on Stanza III, Mme Blavatsky had referred to the prototype of the lotus, as of everything else, being present in the Astral Light:

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

... the Lotus plant exists not only as a miniature embryo in its seed (a physical characteristic), but its prototype is present in an ideal form in the Astral Light from "Dawn" to "Night" during the Manvantaric period, like everything else, as a matter of fact, in this objective Universe; from man down to mite, from giant trees down to the tiniest blades of grass. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 63 /I, 92 /I, 131]

Questioned by her students about the meaning of this statement, she explained further the meaning of the terms, adding:

The Astral Light is that which mirrors the three higher planes of consciousness, and is above the lower, or terrestrial plane; therefore it does not extend beyond the fourth plane, where, one may say, the Akasha begins. [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -X, 360 Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge -, 74]

Elaborating the theme still further, she suggested a comparison between the Akasha and the Astral Light with the help of a simple illustration:

We may compare the Akasha and the Astral Light, with regard to these prototypes, to the germ in the acorn. The latter, besides containing in itself the astral form of the future oak, conceals the germ from which grows a tree containing millions of forms. These forms are contained in the acorn potentially, yet the development of each particular acorn depends upon extraneous circumstances, physical forces, etc. [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -X, 362; Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge -, 76]

CHAPTER 6 [BOOK - II -]

ELEMENTS AND ELEMENTALS

The Elements come into being as a result of the process of differentiation that accompanies manifestation. From the One, the Many: from homogeneity, diversity:

Primordial matter, then, before it emerges from the plane of the never-manifesting, and awakens to the thrill of action under the impulse of Fohat [see Chapter 1 and Glossary], is but "a cool Radiance, colourless, formless, tasteless, and devoid of every quality and aspect".

From this originating matter are produced

the seven primal "Centres of Forces", or atoms, that develop later into the great Cosmic "Elements", now divided into the seventy or so sub-elements known to science. [The Secret Doctrine - I, 82 //, 110 //, 147]

(This was written, of course, before 1888. Science today recognizes many more such sub-elements.)

We now have to consider another aspect of differentiation relating closely to the Elements - the Tattvas. A useful explanation of the term is given by Geoffrey Barboroka in *The Divine Plan*:

Tattva is a Sanskrit word which is generally rendered "reality", although the literal meaning of the word is "that-ness", since it is derived from the pronominal particle *tat* with the suffix *tva*. It may also be rendered "element", in the sense of the underlying reality behind the outward appearance or physical manifestation. [The Divine Plan - 174]

Further help is given to the reader in a description of the idea associated with the word Tattva:

Tattva conveys the idea that there is a "force-side" or "spirit-side" to the elements ... It is the force, or "spirit-side" of an element that enables it to "change", that is, develop or unfold, as the cyclic periods progress, since each era requires a different aspect - because of the various planes - in which the Element-Principle must manifest in order to accomplish its evolutionary advancement or unfoldment. [The Divine Plan - 173]

Like everything else in Nature, the Tattvas are seven in number, although some Indian systems give only five (for reasons which are explained in the relevant passage). In instructions to her circle of students in London, Mme Blavatsky pointed out that in Nature

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

... we find seven Forces, or Seven Centres of Force, and everything seems to respond to that number, as for instance, the septenary scale in music, or Sounds, and the septenary spectrum in Colours. [The Secret Doctrine -III, 497 /V, 474 /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 610 /The esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky - 395]

There follows here a list of the seven Tattvas, each with its distinguishing name according to its characteristic nature or function; Adi (the primordial universal Force), Anupadaka (the first differentiation on the plane of being), Akasha (the Creative Force of the Third Logos), Vayu (the aerial plane where substance is gaseous), Taijasa (the plane of our atmosphere, from *tejas*, luminous), Apas (watery or liquid substance or force) and Prithivi (the terrestrial spirit or force).

All these correspond to our principles, and to the seven senses and forces in man. According to the Tattva or Force generated or induced in us, so will our bodies act. [The Secret Doctrine -III, 498 /V, 475 /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 612 /The esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 396]

The correspondences between the Esoteric Principles, Tattvas or Forces, and the Human Body, States of Matter and Colour are set out in the comprehensive table below which should be studied at this point in conjunction with the text.

We are familiar with the idea of evolution in the visible kingdoms of Nature around us. Occultism recognizes the universality of the evolutionary principle which brings into existence and develops the Elements one after the other in the sequence of the Rounds (a Round being defined by one of the Mahatmas as "the passage of a monad from globe A to globe Z ... through the encasement in all and each of the four kingdoms" [The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnett -14, 79:80]). The teaching is elaborated in the Commentary on the much-quoted Stanza VII, which is in effect a summary of the total process:

... every new Round develops one of the compound Elements ... If Nature is the "Ever-becoming" on the manifested plane, then those Elements are to be regarded in the same light: they have to evolve, progress, and increase to the Manvantaric end. [The Secret Doctrine -I,250 /I, 271 /I, 295]

There follows an account of what is accomplished in material evolution through the successive Rounds.

"Thus the First Round, we are taught, developed but one Element, and a nature and humanity in what may be called one aspect of Nature - called by some, very unscientifically, though it may be so *de facto*, "One-dimensional Space". The Second Round brought forth and developed two Elements - Fire and Air, and *its* humanity, adapted to this condition of Nature, if we can give the name Humanity to beings living under conditions unknown to men, was - to use again a familiar phrase in a strictly figurative sense (the only way in which it can be used correctly) - "a two-dimensional species". [The Secret Doctrine -I, 250 /I, 271 /I, 295]

There follows a commentary on the idea of "dimensional Space", and in particular on the use of the expression "the fourth dimension of Space". Furthermore, it is noted that, as the characteristics of matter are closely related to the human senses,

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

by the time that it [matter] fully develops the next characteristic - let us call it for the moment PERMEABILITY - this will correspond to the next sense of man - let us call it "NORMAL CLAIRVOYANCE". [The Secret Doctrine -I, 251 //, 272 //, 296]

The story of the evolution of Matter through the Rounds is now taken up again:

The centres of consciousness (destined to develop into humanity as we know it) of the third Round arrived at a perception of the third Element Water. Those of the fourth Round have added *earth* as a state of matter to their stock as well as the three other elements in their present transformation. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 252 //, 273 //, 297]

The significance of the last few words in the above extract must not be overlooked. They refer to the fact that, as evolution is universal and continuous, and Nature "ever-becoming", "none of the so-called elements were, in the three preceding Rounds, as they are now" [The Secret Doctrine -I, 253 //, 273 //, 297].

This important aspect of the teaching is further developed in the pages that follow, where we find this paragraph:

The elements, whether simple or compound, could not have remained the same since the commencement of the evolution of our chain. Everything in the Universe progresses steadily in the Great Cycle, while incessantly going up and down in the smaller cycles. Nature is never stationary during manvantara, as it is ever *becoming*, not simply *being*; and mineral, vegetable, and human life are always adapting their organisms to the then reigning Elements, and therefore *those* Elements were then fitted for them as they are now for the life of present humanity. It will only be in the next or fifth Round that the fifth Element, *Ether* - the gross body of Akasha, if it can be called even that - will, by becoming a familiar fact of Nature to all men, as air is familiar to us now, cease to be as at present hypothetical, and also an "agent" for so many things. And only during that Round will those higher senses, the growth and development of which Akasha subserves, be susceptible of a complete expansion. As already indicated, a *partial* familiarity with the characteristic of matter - permeability - which should be developed concurrently with the sixth sense, may be expected to develop at the proper period in this Round. But with the next element added to our resources in the next Round, *permeability* will become so manifest a characteristic of matter, that the densest forms of this will seem to man's perceptions as obstructive to him as thick fog, and no more. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 257 //, 277 //, 301]

It may require some considerable effort on the part of the reader to abandon the usual picture evoked by a particular word and to recognize that the reality which that word is used to represent in the occult doctrine must be totally different from his conception of it. Let us take the Element Fire as an example.

Fire, in the ancient philosophy of all times and countries, including our own, has been regarded as a triple principle. As water comprises a visible fluid with invisible gases lurking within, and, behind all the spiritual principle of nature, which gives them their dynamic energy, so, in fire, they recognized: 1st. Visible flame; 2nd. Invisible, or astral fire - invisible when inert, but when active producing heat, light, chemical force, and electricity, the molecular powers; 3rd. Spirit. They

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

applied the same rule to each of the elements; and everything evolved from their combinations and correlations, man included, was held by them to be triune. Fire, in the opinion of the Rosicrucians, who were but the successors of the theurgists, was the source, not only of the material atoms, but also of the forces which energize them. When a visible flame is extinguished it has disappeared, not only from the sight but also from the conception of the materialist, forever. But the Hermetic philosopher follows it through the "partition-world of the knowable, across and out on the other side into the unknowable", as he traces the disembodied human spirit, "vital spark of heavenly flame", into the Aethereum, beyond the grave. [Isis Unveiled -I, 423]

Mme Blavatsky returns time and again to the distinction that must be drawn between the everyday concepts associated with familiar terms and their connotation in Occultism. Both volumes of *The Secret Doctrine* include a section in which the views enunciated by contemporary scientists - characterized by an anxiety "to drive spirit out of their conceptions" - are contrasted with the occult doctrine. Thus, in a chapter "On the Elements and Atoms from the standpoint of Science and that of Occultism", we read:

When the Occultist speaks of "Elements", and of human Beings who lived during those geological ages, the duration of which it is found as impossible to determine, according to the opinion of one of the best English geologists, as the nature of matter, it is because he knows what he is talking about. When he says "Man" and Elements, he neither means "man" in his present physiological and anthropological form, nor the elemental atoms, those hypothetical conceptions, the entitative abstractions of matter in its highly attenuated state, as existing at present in scientific minds; nor, again, the compound Elements of antiquity. In Occultism the word *Element* means "rudiment" in every case. When we say "Elementary Man", we mean either the proemial, incipient sketch of man, in its unfinished and undeveloped condition, hence in that form which now lies latent in physical man during his lifetime, and takes shape only occasionally and under certain conditions; or that form which for a time survives the material body, and which is better known as an "Elementary". With regard to "Element", when the term is used metaphysically, it means, in distinction to the mortal, the incipient *divine* man; and, in its physical usage, inchoate matter in its first undifferentiated condition, or in the *laya* state, which is the eternal and the *normal* condition of substance, differentiating only periodically, and being during that differentiation in an *abnormal* state - in other words, a transitory illusion of the senses. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 566 /I, 619 /I, 290]

(For the meaning of *laya*, see Glossary.)

The reader is constantly reminded of the fundamental teaching of Occultism, namely, the fact of the ONE LIFE, with its inescapable corollary, that all things are but differentiations of the One, by whatever name that One is recognized. This is the science underlying the affirmation that runs through the sacred literature of India, "THAT art thou", the recognition that man in his essential nature is identical with the One Life.

As to the "elemental atoms", so called, the Occultists refer to them by that name with a meaning analogous to that which is given by the Hindu to Brahma when he calls him ANU, the "Atom". Every elemental *atom*, in search of which more than one chemist has followed the path indicated by the Alchemists, is, in their firm belief (when not *knowledge*), a SOUL; not necessarily a disembodied soul, but a *jiva*, as the Hindus call it, a centre of POTENTIAL VITALITY, with latent

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

intelligence in it, and in the case of compound Souls, an intelligent active EXISTENCE, from the highest to the lowest order, a form composed of more or less differentiations. It requires a metaphysician - and an Eastern metaphysician - to understand our meaning. All those atom-Souls are differentiations from the ONE, and in the same relation to it as the *divine Soul* - the Buddhi -to its informing and inseparable Spirit, or *Atman*. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 566 /I, 619 /I, 290]

Returning now to the Elementals, we must remind ourselves that the Cosmos in its totality is intelligent, but that, in order to bring about specific effects at each level of being, it requires qualified agents. These are the Elementals: they are concerned in every phenomenon of the manifested Cosmos, for they *are* the operative powers. Without Elementals in their numerous kinds, everything in Nature would be dead - or rather, would not exist. Matter would be unresponsive, insentient, inactive. Some of them, for example, are involved in the motions of the winds, earthquakes and floods, in the incidence of droughts and in the responses of flora and fauna to seasonal changes, as in those changes themselves. Others are concerned in the dynamics of our thinking and feeling and in the regulation of our bodily functions. Nothing that is could exist without them. Yet, though they are the operative agents of the Law, they are not in themselves the Law. Moreover, they are subject to higher intelligences, the Dhyani-Chohanics hosts in their ascending grades, culminating in the Lords of Karma who are recognized in occult literature under such terms as Rectors, Regents, Archangels and the Four Maharajahs.

CHAPTER 7 [BOOK - II -]

LAW IN COSMOS AND HUMAN LIFE

The aspects of universal Law to be considered in this chapter are periodicity and cyclic progression. These are exemplified in the rhythmic motions of heavenly bodies, including our earth and the moon, down to the lesser scale of our daily lives and our very bodies - the pulse of the heart, the alternation of inhalation and exhalation, sleeping and waking, and indeed in our living and dying. By studying the operation of the Law as it affects the individual man, we may come to understand how the events and circumstances of one incarnation result from his actions in previous lives. The retributive aspects of the Law have not been explained in technical detail, but some partial understanding may be reached by an appreciation of the factors involved, in particular of the hierarchies of entities by whom the universe in all its parts is "guided, controlled and animated" [The Secret Doctrine -I, 274 /I, 295 /I, 317]. Some preliminary information on this subject is given in the synopsis of the seven Stanzas at the end of the Proem, referring to "the septenary hierarchy of conscious Divine Powers", mentioned in Chapter 4,

who adjust and control evolution, embodying in themselves those manifestations of the ONE LAW, which we know as the Laws of Nature. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 21 /I, 49 /I, 86]

Again in that Chapter reference was made to

The AH-HI (Dhyani-Chohans), ... the collective hosts of spiritual beings ... [who] are the Intelligent Forces that give to and enact in Nature her "laws", while themselves acting according to laws imposed upon them in a similar manner by still higher Powers ... [The Secret Doctrine -I, 38 /I, 70 /I, 112]

The "Regents or Angels" mentioned in the previous chapter not only "rule over the Cosmical Forces of North, South, East and West" (relative to wherever one maybe on earth and its direction of spin) but are also "connected with Karma, as the latter needs physical and material agents to carry out her decrees" [The Secret Doctrine -I, 122 /I, 147 /I, 180]. It is not to be supposed, however, that it is these Beings who bring down upon man the unhappy consequences of his evil deeds. This is unequivocally stated:

It is not the "Rector" or "Maharaja" who punishes or rewards, with or without "God's" permission or order, but man himself - his deeds or Karma, attracting individually and collectively (as in the case of whole nations sometimes) every kind of evil and calamity. We produce CAUSES, and these awaken the corresponding powers in the sidereal world; which powers are magnetically and irresistibly attracted to - and react upon - those who produced these causes; whether such persons are practically the evil-doers, or simply thinkers who brood mischief. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 124 /I, 148 /I, 181]

The grand processes of Nature operate on their appropriate scale throughout the Cosmos. There is, however, an insistence that, in the study of Nature, we must have particular regard to Man, but never view him in isolation or as separate from the Universal Whole.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

Let us study man, therefore, but if we separate him for one moment from the Universal Whole or view him in isolation, from a single aspect, apart from the "Heavenly Man' ... we shall either land in black magic or fail most ingloriously in our attempt. [The Secret Doctrine -III, 437 /V, 419 /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 517 /The esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 350]

The "Heavenly Man' - in Kabalistic terms Adam Kadmon - is a symbol for the whole cosmic process. The "Heavenly Man" is the model or object of "ever-becoming". All is tending to become 'man' - in our planetary manvantara at least - and the Beings in the post-human kingdoms proceed from having been human. Man is not only the model for, but the critical point in, the evolutionary scheme [see The Secret Doctrine -I,133 /I,157 /I,190]

Fohat holds a key place in the cosmic process. It is the energy of Fohat that quickens all the planes and subplanes which in turn are reflected in the constitution of man.

The spark hangs from the flame by the finest thread of Fohat. It journeys through the Seven Worlds of Maya ... [The Secret Doctrine -I, 238 /I, 258 /I, 283]

In the Commentary that follows, Mme Blavatsky explains that the last phrase

refers here to the seven globes of the planetary chain and the seven Rounds, or the 49 stations of active existence that are before the "Spark" or Monad at the beginning of every "Great Life-Cycle" or Manvantara. The "thread of Fohat" is the thread of life before referred to.

This relates to the greatest problem of philosophy - the physical and substantial nature of life, the independent nature of which is denied by modern science because that science is unable to comprehend it. The reincarnationists and believers in Karma alone dimly perceive that the whole secret of life is in the unbroken series of its manifestations, whether in, or apart from, the physical body. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 238 /I, 258 /I, 283]

The Forty-Nine Fires, here mentioned in relation to the Cosmos as "the stations of active existence", relate also to the principles and sub-principles of man's constitution; the Monad or Spark is

JIVA, the MONAD in conjunction with MANAS, or rather its aroma - that which remains from each personality, when worthy, and hangs from Atma-Buddhi, the Flame, by the thread of life. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 238 /I, 258 /I, 283]

Here we have a description of the process of reincarnation: it is the Monad in conjunction with the aroma of Manas, the Ego, that periodically animates the vehicles of perception and action necessary for gaining experience in the psychic and physical worlds. In accordance with the law of analogy and cyclic law, the process applies to Globes as well as to Egos.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

An interesting question, incidental to our theme but often asked, is whether there is a finite, and definite, number of human Monads associated with our Earth, incarnating over and over again, only a proportion of the number being in incarnation at any one time.

There must be a limited number of Monads evolving and growing more and more perfect through their assimilation of many successive personalities, in every new Manvantara. This is absolutely necessary in view of the doctrines of Rebirth, Karma, and the gradual return of the human Monad to its source - *absolute* Deity. Thus, although the hosts of more or less progressed Monads are almost incalculable, they are still finite, as is everything in this Universe of differentiation and finiteness ... there is an eternal concatenation of causes and effects, and a perfect analogy which runs through, and links together, all the lines of evolution. One begets the other - globes as personalities. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 171 //, 194 //, 224]

This gaining of experience in the inner, spiritual realms of being leads to a consideration of how we, as individual persons, come to be as we are. Two factors are involved: the Elementals, as the operative agents of the Law, and the Akasha and the Astral Light as the reservoirs, at their respective levels, of all experience and thus the seat of memory. It is through these two, the Elementals and the Universal Memory, that the fruit of what was becomes the seed of what will be. The pattern of what-is-to-be has been determined by all the conditioning factors in the past to which we, individually and collectively, have contributed. These are impressed into Nature's unfading memory, a memory that is inherent in the Maharajas or Regents. The dynamism that brings forth the new order in due season and in accordance with the patterns so established is Fohat and the elemental life. This, in general terms, is the nature of the reincarnation process.

The origins of the personal make-up of an individual when he returns to a new life on earth is explained in *The Secret Doctrine* in the following passage. Occultism, says Mme Blavatsky, teaches that

(a) the life atoms of our life-principle (*Prana*) are never entirely lost when a man dies. That the atoms best impregnated with the life-principle (an independent, eternal, conscious factor) are partially transmitted from father to son by heredity, and partially are drawn once more together and become the animating principle of the new body in every new incarnation of the Monads. Because (b) as the *individual* Soul is ever the same, so are the atoms of the lower principles (body, its astral, or *life-double*, etc.) drawn as they are by affinity and karmic law always to the same individuality in a series of various bodies, etc., etc. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 671 //II, 709 //IV, 241]

A footnote to this passage adds:

The collective aggregation of these atoms forms thus the *Anima-Mundi* of our Solar System, the *soul* of our little universe, each atom of which is of course a *soul*, a monad, a little universe endowed with consciousness, hence with *memory*. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 672 fn //II, 709 fn //IV, 241]

To understand more fully the processes of reincarnation as they affect the personal characteristics with which we are born, one has to keep in mind the nature of the Auric Envelope and its function as the

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

accumulator of Karma, and as that in which the new Astral Body is formed. In lay parlance, the process may be described as the re-animation, at the dawn of a new earth life, of the dormant, residual properties and qualities formed as a result of all the actions and experiences of the previous personality. Here too the law of analogy applies, and the process is seen to be universal as well as individual.

In the Kosmic Auric envelope is all the karma of the manifesting Universe ... Jiva is everywhere, and so with the other principles. [The Secret Doctrine -III, 555 /V, 528 /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky - XII, 657 /The esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 436]

When a new universe is to come into being, its processes are started in the same way as for a man, the smaller reflecting the greater. Further, the teaching says that the Karma of a planet, for example, is the collective Karma of the beings it has nurtured. In the aggregate, the thoughts and actions of men determine not only their own Karma but that of their environment and their world. It is in this sense that an individual man plays his part in the evolutionary development of his planet and likewise even in that of the solar system.

The law has its inner as well as its outer manifestations. Although in one respect its cycles can be regarded as mechanistically objective, like tidal ebb and flow, they have corresponding inner aspects which affect periodically the quality and conditions of life. There are times like the seasons, for instance, when qualitative aspects of communal life can and do manifest changes, as in periods of peace or of strife.

Using the axial revolution of our planet as a simile, Mme Blavatsky states that

The revolution of the physical world, according to the ancient doctrine, is attended by a like revolution in the world of intellect - the spiritual evolution of the world proceeding in cycles, like the physical one. Thus we see in history a regular alternation of ebb and flow in the tide of human progress. The great kingdoms and empires of the world, after reaching the culmination of their greatness, descend again, in accordance with the same law by which they ascended; till, having reached the lowest point, humanity reasserts itself and mounts up once more, the height of its attainment being, by this law of ascending progression by cycles, somewhat higher than the point from which it had before descended. [Isis Unveiled -I, 34]

An important comment on this doctrine of cycles points out that "these cycles - wheels within wheels ... *do not affect all mankind at one and the same time*" [The Secret Doctrine -I, 641 /I, 703 /II, 366].

This raises the question of predestination and free will. The general principle is clear:

There is a purpose in every important act of Nature, whose acts are all cyclic and periodical ... There *is* a predestination in the geological life of our globe, as in the history, past and future, of races and nations. This is closely connected with what we call Karma ... [The Secret Doctrine -I, 640 /I, 702 /II, 365]

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

It must not be supposed that the responsibility of the individual is in any way diminished, whether that individual be a person or a nation.

KARMA-NEMESIS is the creator of nations and mortals, but once created, it is they who make of her either a fury or a rewarding Angel ... There is no return from the paths she cycles over; yet those paths are our own making, for it is we, collectively or individually, who prepare them. Karma-Nemesis is the synonym of PROVIDENCE, minus *design*, goodness, and every other *finite* attribute and qualification ... [The Secret Doctrine -I, 642 /I, 704 /II, 367]

CHAPTER 8 [BOOK - II -]

DEATH AND REBIRTH

In Part I, the principal sources of information mentioned were *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett* and *The Key to Theosophy*, in which Mme Blavatsky outlines the instructions she had received from her Adept Teachers. Additional material may be found in *The Secret Doctrine* and the *Collected Writings*. Mme Blavatsky refers several times to the source of her knowledge. For instance, in the *Key*, when the Enquirer asks whether anyone - "even an adept or seer" - can follow out in detail the processes of karmic adjustment, she replies:

Certainly; "those who know" can do so by the exercise of powers which are latent even in all men. [The key to Theosophy - XI, 215]

Again, in answer to the question whether such adepts "really know more than we do of reincarnation and after states", she affirms:

They do indeed. By the training of faculties we all possess, but which they alone have developed to perfection, they have entered in spirit these various planes and states ... For long ages, one generation of adepts after another has studied the mysteries of being, of life, death, and re-birth, and all have taught in their turn some of the facts so learned. [The key to Theosophy - XI, 217]

In the study of the processes of death, we have to remind ourselves of the three parts into which the seven aspects or principles of man may be grouped: an upper Triad, a middle Duad, and a lower Triad.

When man dies, his second and third principles die with him; the lower triad disappears, and the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh principles form the surviving Quaternary. [The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnett -16(5), 101:103]

At this point the now four-fold entity becomes unconscious:

Every just disembodied *four-fold* entity ... loses at the instant of death all recollection, it is mentally - *annihilated*; it sleeps its akashic sleep in the Kama-loka. This state lasts from a few hours (rarely less), days, weeks, months - sometimes to several years. All this according to the entity, to its mental status at the moment of death, to the character of its death, etc. [The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnett -24(5), 184:186]

Kama-loca is the subjective, invisible (to physical sight) region where the kama-rupa remains, after death, until it disintegrates upon the exhaustion of the passional and mental causes that created it. A similar statement regarding the kama-manasic remains of the deceased and the period of unconsciousness is made by Mme Blavatsky.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

The processes and states of consciousness in the Kama-loca present some difficulties. Some further explanatory material is helpful.

According to the Eastern teaching the state of the deceased in Kama-loka is not what we, living men, would recognize as "conscious". It is rather that of a person stunned and dazed by a violent blow, who has momentarily "lost his senses". Hence in Kama-loka there is as a rule (apart from vicarious life and consciousness awakened through contact with mediums) no recognition of friends or relatives, and therefore such a case as stated here [from a correspondent's question that meeting between entities in Kama-loca must be very disappointing if one of them has progressed through that state as only to leave a "shell" behind] is impossible. [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -IX, 164]

The passage quoted goes on to state that those we loved will be with us in Devachan, and then it adds by way of further emphasis:

But the process of stripping off the lower, the fourth and part of the fifth, principles is an unconscious one in all normal human beings. It is only in very exceptional cases that there is a slight return to consciousness in Kama-loka; and this is the case of very materialistic, unspiritual personalities ... [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -IX, 164]

What next occurs is described as

a "death" struggle between the Upper and Lower dualities. If the upper wins, the sixth, having attracted to itself the quintessence of *Good* from the fifth - its nobler affections, its saintly (though *earthly*) aspirations and the most Spiritualized portions of its mind - follows its divine *elder* (the 7th) into the "Gestation" State; and the fifth and fourth remain in association as an empty *shell* - (the expression is quite correct) - to roam in this earth's atmosphere, with half the personal memory gone, and the more brutal instinct fully alive for a certain period - an "Elementary" in short. This is the "angel guide" of the average medium. [The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnett -16(5), 101:103]

It is the Elementary that is often referred to as a "shell" or "spook". The Mahatma refers here to an explanation given by Mme Blavatsky to Mr Hume, to the effect that, after the loss of the lower principles,

... man's sixth principle [Monad], as something purely spiritual, could not exist, or have *conscious* being in the Devachan, unless it assimilated some of the more abstract and pure of the mental attributes of the fifth principle or animal Soul, its *manas* (mind) and memory. [The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnett -16(5), 101:103]

It is only after the struggle in Kama-loca and the subsequent gestation period that consciousness begins to return "at the door of Devachan" [The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnett -25, 197:199]. There then occurs the second review of the life just ended, remembrance of it returning

slowly and gradually towards the end of the gestation (to the entity or Ego), still more slowly but far

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

more imperfectly and *incompletely* to the *shell*, and *fully* to the Ego at the moment of its entrance into the Devachan. And now, the latter being a state determined and brought by its past life, the Ego does not fall headlong but sinks into it gradually and by easy stages. With the first dawn of that state appears that life (or rather *is once more lived over* by the Ego) from its first day of consciousness to its last. From the most important down to the most trifling event, all are marshalled before the spiritual eye of the Ego; only, unlike the events of real life, those of them remain only that are chosen by the new *liver* (pardon the word) clinging to certain scenes and actors, these remain *permanently* - while the others fade away to disappear for ever, or to return to their creator - *the shell*. Now try to understand this highly important, because so highly just and retributive law, in its effects. Out of the resurrected Past *nothing* remains but what the Ego has felt *spiritually* - that was evolved by and through, and lived over by his spiritual faculties - be they *love* or *hatred*. [The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnett -24(5), 184:187]

Letter 16 consists of answers to a series of questions posed by Mr Sinnett on the condition of Devachan. He asks whether it is "only attained by the few who are very good, or by the many who are not very bad". The Mahatma replies:

Who goes to Deva Chan?" The personal Ego of course, but beatified, purified, holy. Every Ego - the combination of the sixth and seventh principles - which, after the period of unconscious gestation is reborn into the Deva-Chan, is of necessity as innocent and pure as a new-born babe. The fact of his being reborn at all, shows the preponderance of good over evil in his old personality. And while the Karma (of evil) steps aside for the time being to follow him in his future earth-reincarnations, he brings along with him but the Karma of his good deeds, words, and thoughts, into this Deva-Chan. "Bad" is a relative term for us - as you were told more than once before, - and the Law of Retribution is the only law that never errs. Hence all those who have not slipped down into the mire of unredeemable sin and bestiality - go to the Devachan. They will have to pay for their sins, voluntary and involuntary, later on. Meanwhile they are rewarded; receive the *effects* of the *causes* produced by them. [The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnett -16(3),98:100]

In Chapter IX of the *Key*, Mme Blavatsky explains how the kind of communications alleged by Spiritualists between the deceased and those they have left behind cannot be reconciled with the idea of a blissful hereafter. The state of Devachan is one, she insists, of "*unalloyed* happiness". Letter 16 from the Mahatma develops the description of Devachan at some length, pointing out that

... it is a *state*, one, so to say, of *intense selfishness*, during which an Ego reaps the reward of his *unselfishness* on earth. He is completely engrossed in the bliss of all his personal earthly affections, preferences and thoughts, and gathers in the fruit of his meritorious actions. No pain, no grief nor even the shadow of a sorrow comes to darken the bright horizon of his unalloyed happiness: for, *it is a state of perpetual "Maya"* ... [The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnett -16(3), 98:101]

In answer to a question on the duration of the period of gestation between Death and Devachan, the Mahatma refers to some confusion that had occurred in the use of the term "Bardo". Correctly, he explains,

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

"Bardo" is the period between death and rebirth - and may last from a few years to a kalpa. It is divided into three sub-periods (1) when the Ego delivered of its mortal coil enters into *Kama-Loka* (the abode of Elementaries); (2) when it enters into its "Gestation State": (3) when it is reborn in the *Rupa-Loka* of Devachan. [The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnett -16(9), 103:105]

The duration of each of these sub-periods is then explained, with the reasons for variations, the general principle throughout being the operation of Karma.

sub-period (1) may last from a few minutes to a *number* of years ... sub-period (2) is very long ... proportionate to the Ego's spiritual stamina; sub-period(3) last in proportion to the good Karma ... [10]

Later it was explained that sub-period (3) in Devachan lasts "for years, decades, centuries and millenniums oftentimes multiplied by something more":

Every effect must be proportionate to the cause. And, as man's terms of incarnate existence bear but a small proportion to his periods of internatal existence in the manvantaric cycle, so the good thoughts, words, and deeds of any one of these "lives" on a globe are causative of effects, the working out of which requires far more time than the evolution of the causes occupied. [The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnett -16(9), 104:106]

Chapter IX of the *Key* introduces a number of questions relating to rewards and punishments. It might appear that if, after death, a condition of unconsciousness supervenes, there can be no sense of punishment. "Karmic punishment", explains Mme Blavatsky, "reaches the Ego only in its next incarnation". It might then seem that, deprived of consciousness of his past misdeeds, the man will continue to suffer blindly.

Not quite so. At the moment of death every man, even when death is sudden, sees the whole of his past life marshalled before him, in its minutest details. For one short instant the *personal* becomes one with the *individual* and all-knowing Ego. But this instant is enough to show him the whole chain of causes which have been at work during his life. He sees and now understands himself as he is, unadorned by flattery or self-deception. He reads his life, remaining as a spectator looking down into the arena he is quitting; he feels and knows the justice of all the suffering that has overtaken him. [The key to Theosophy - IX, 162]

Similarly, at the moment of rebirth, the Ego has "a prospective vision of the life which awaits him and realizes all the causes that have led to it". Here is our introduction to the process of coming back into incarnation - in effect, the dying process in reverse, with the re-formation of the soul principles (the fifth and fourth) preceding that of the vital principles (the second and third), which precedes the formation of the new physical body.

The process of return is reviewed in a passage in the *Collected Writings*, where Karma, Tanha (the thirst

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

for experience) and the Skandhas are described as "the almighty trinity in one, and the cause of our rebirth". After an account of the man's experience at the moment of death, Mme Blavatsky refers to the future incarnation:

... the vices, defects and especially the passions of the preceding life become, through certain laws of affinity and transference, the germs of the future potentialities in the *animal* soul (*Kamarupa*), hence of its dependent, the astral double (*linga-sharira*) - at a subsequent birth. It is the *personality* alone which changes; the real reincarnating principle, the EGO, remains always the same; and it is its KARMA that guides the idiosyncracies and prominent moral traits of the *old* "personality" that was (and that the EGO knew not how to control), to re-appear in the *new* man that will be. These traits and passions pursue and fasten on the yet plastic third and fourth principles of the child, and - unless the EGO struggles and conquers - they will develop with tenfold intensity and lead the adult man to his destruction. For it is they who are the tools and weapons of the Karmic LAW of RETRIBUTION. Thus ... our good and bad actions "are the only tools with which we paint our likenesses at death", for the *new* man is invariably the son and progeny of the old man that was. [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -X, 176]

Further information about the processes involved in returning to earth life was given by Mme Blavatsky in her Instructions to the members of her Esoteric Section in London. These are included in the later editions of *The Secret Doctrine* (3rd edition Vol.III, 495/6; Adyar edition Vol.V, 472/4) and in Vol.XII of the *Collected Writings*, 515/713.

An interesting passage in *The Secret Doctrine* tells us that, until the beginnings of the Fourth Race,

... there had been no regular death, but only a transformation, for *men had no personality* as yet. They had monads - breaths of the ONE Breath, and as impersonal as the source from which they proceeded. They had bodies, or rather shadows of bodies, which were sinless, hence *Karmaless*. Therefore, as there was no Kamaloka - least of all Nirvana or even Devachan - for the "souls" of men who had no personal *Egos*, there could be no intermediate periods between the incarnation. Like the Phoenix, primordial man resurrected out of his old into a new body. Each time, and with each new generation, he became more solid, more physically perfect, agreeably with the evolutionary law, which is the *Law of Nature*. Death came with the complete physical organism, and with it - moral decay. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 610 /II, 645 /IV, 181]

The account of the death process as given by the Mahatmas shows us how it fits into the grand universal scheme of *ever-becoming*, in accordance with cyclic and evolutionary law. The only real tragedy of death is for those left behind; when in their personal bereavement they see death as an isolated incident instead of one long series. One day maybe we shall all be able to see it in the vast panorama of causes and effects throughout our many lives; we may then see how the events we have experienced have led to the enduring bonds of love and duty. Then too we may see the vast journey of Egoic LIFE as it passes through the many personal lives, until its final perfection and liberation, when the otherwise endless cycle of births and deaths will cease, for ever.

CHAPTER 9 [BOOK - II -]

ORIGINS

The universe comes into being "from within outwards". It exists on different levels in the inner worlds. From the worlds of Ideation it proceeds as archetypes, becoming more and more defined and substantial as it passes down, now as prototypes, through the formative planes; finally it is projected into objectivity on the physical level in the forms we know. The process is cyclical: all things come and go in due season, governed by those laws that are aspects of the one Universal Law.

Man's origins reflect the cosmic process: his higher spiritual principles arise in the formless planes of being; his lower ones reflect the lower quaternary of manifested existence, taking physical form during his life on earth.

It is hardly possible to proceed further without referring in some detail to the Three Fundamental Propositions - the essence of the Secret Doctrine - which Mme Blavatsky lays before us in the Proem of *The Secret Doctrine*. Here we give only a few extracts from pages that should be studied in their entirety.

The Secret Doctrine establishes three fundamental propositions:

(a) An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable PRINCIPLE on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception and could only be dwarfed by human expression or similitude ...

To render these ideas clearer to the general reader, let him set out with the postulate that there is one absolute Reality which antecedes all manifested, conditioned, being. This Infinite and Eternal Cause ... is the rootless root of "all that was, is, or ever shall be". It is of course devoid of all attributes and is essentially without any relation to manifested, finite Being. It is "Be-ness" rather than Being (in Sanskrit, *Sat*), and is beyond all thought and speculation.

This "Be-ness" is symbolized in the Secret Doctrine under two aspects. On the one hand, absolute abstract Space, representing bare subjectivity, the one thing which no human mind can either exclude from any conception, or conceive of by itself. On the other, absolute abstract Motion representing Unconditioned Consciousness ...

Further, the Secret Doctrine affirms:

(b) The Eternity of the Universe *in toto* as a boundless plane; periodically "the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing", called "the manifesting stars", and the "sparks of Eternity". "The Eternity of the Pilgrim" is like a wink in the Eye of Self-Existence ... "The appearance and disappearance of Worlds is like a regular tidal ebb, flux and reflux".

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

This second assertion of the Secret Doctrine is the absolute universality of that law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow, which physical science has observed and recorded in all departments of nature. An alternation such as that of Day and Night, Life and Death, Sleeping and Waking, is a fact so common, so perfectly universal and without exception, that it is easy to comprehend that in it we see one of the absolutely fundamental laws of the universe.

Moreover, the Secret Doctrine teaches:

(c) The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul - a spark of the former - through the Cycle of Incarnation (or "Necessity") in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term. In other words, no purely spiritual Buddhi (divine Soul) can have an independent (conscious) existence before the spark which issued from the pure Essence of the Universal Sixth principle - or the OVER-SOUL - has (a) passed through every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that Manvantara, and (b) acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts (checked by its Karma), thus ascending through all the degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest Manas, from mineral and plant, up to the holiest archangel (Dhyani-Buddha). The pivotal doctrine of the esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations ...

(*The Divine Plan*, by Geoffrey Barborka, offers a detailed commentary on these three Propositions).

It will be seen at once that the content of these Propositions is inexhaustible, as they embrace the totality of the cosmic process. Let us consider briefly a few of the terms here placed before us.

Space, in Esotericism, is not the room occupied by things or stuff, as in common usage, nor is duration an extended period of time. If we survey the heavens on a clear night, we may wonder how far in any direction space extends. Even if we push thought or imagination to its very limits, we find no answer. But in this instance we are thinking of space as an extension of something measurable, a plenum which accommodates the heavenly bodies; we are granting it size, dimension. Esoteric space is dimensionless. To help ourselves to discover what this might mean, let us look within at the objects of our thoughts and ask: what is the size of an imagined planet or an imagined orange? and where are they? We discover that the images have no dimension in terms of physical measurement, and no location, other than wherever we happen to be. The experience of these truths can be enlightening and liberating. A footnote in the Proem explains the meaning of the word "Pilgrim" as used in these Propositions:

"Pilgrim" is the appellation given to our *Monad* (the two in one) during its cycle of incarnations. It is the only immortal and eternal principle in us, being an indivisible part of the integral whole - the Universal Spirit, from which it emanates, and into which it is absorbed at the end of the cycle. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 16 fn /I, 45 fn /I, 82]

Motion is explained by Mme Blavatsky as the equivalent, in the material plane, of "the 'Breath' of the One Existence", which is applied "only to the spiritual aspect of Cosmogony".

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

The One Eternal Element, or element-containing Vehicle, is *Space*, dimensionless in every sense; coexistent with which are - endless *duration*, primordial (hence indestructible) *matter*, and *motion* - absolute "perpetual motion" which is the "breath" of the "One" Element. This breath, as seen, can never cease, not even during the Pralaya eternities. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 55 /I, 85 /I, 125]

Metempsychosis adds an important element to the idea of reincarnation. Repeated life-experiences do not, of themselves, imply soul-growth, and indeed reincarnation is sometimes seen, although mistakenly, to be merely the return of a personality. The addition of the term metempsychosis shows that the significance of reincarnation lies not in the fact of the re-assumption of a human personality by the Ego but in the soul-growth, the development of faculty, that is effected by each such return. Repetition without progress has little value; each new opportunity of earth-life offers the conditions for a further flowering of the potentialities of the Ego.

One of the universal symbols used to represent the becoming of the universe is that of the egg.

Therefore, it is found in every world-theogony, where it is largely associated with the serpent symbol; the latter being everywhere, in philosophy as in religious symbolism, an emblem of eternity, infinitude, regeneration, and rejuvenation, as well as of wisdom. The mystery of apparent self-generation and evolution through its own creative power repeating in miniature the process of Cosmic evolution in the egg, both being due to heat and moisture under the efflux of the unseen creative spirit, justified fully the selection of this graphic symbol. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 65 /I, 95 /I, 134]

Sloka 3 of the third Stanza introduces the egg-symbol to convey the sense of becoming from that which always is.

"DARKNESS" RADIATES LIGHT, AND LIGHT DROPS ONE SOLITARY RAY INTO THE WATERS, INTO THE MOTHER-DEEP. THE RAY SHOOTS THROUGH THE VIRGIN EGG; THE RAY CAUSES THE ETERNAL EGG TO THRILL, AND DROP THE NON-ETERNAL (periodical) GERM, WHICH CONDENSES INTO THE WORLD-EGG. (a)

(a) The solitary ray dropping into the mother deep may be taken as meaning Divine Thought or Intelligence, impregnating chaos. This, however, occurs on the plane of metaphysical abstraction, or rather the plane whereon that which we call a metaphysical abstraction is a reality. The Virgin egg being in one sense abstract Egg-ness, or the power of becoming developed through fecundation, is eternal and forever the same. And just as the fecundation of an egg takes place before it is dropped, so the non-eternal periodical germ which becomes later in symbolism the mundane egg, contains in itself, when it emerges from the said symbol, "the promise and potency" of all the Universe. Though the idea *per se* is, of course, an abstraction, a symbolical mode of expression it is a symbol truly, as it suggests the idea of infinity as an endless circle. It brings before the mind's eye the picture of Kosmos emerging from and in boundless space, a Universe as shoreless in magnitude if not as endless in its objective manifestations. The simile of an egg also expresses the fact taught in Occultism that the primordial form of everything manifested, from atom to globe, from man to angel, is spheroidal, the sphere having been with all nations the emblem of eternity and infinity - a serpent swallowing its tail. To realize the meaning, however, the

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

sphere must be thought of as seen from its centre. The field of vision or of thought is like a sphere whose radii proceed from one's self in every direction, and extend out into space, opening up boundless vistas all around. It is the symbolical circle of Pascal and the Kabalists, "whose centre is everywhere and circumference nowhere", a conception which enters into the compound idea of this emblem. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 64 /I, 94 /I, 133]

This symbolic account of cosmic beginnings is consistent with what we know as the natural creative and procreative process at the physical level. The Hermetic axiom says, "As above, so below". The converse must equally be true, "As below, so above", and in the study of principles this can provide a useful key.

The story of the genesis of man as we now see him is understandable in terms of his occult constitution. He is a sevenfold entity, his seven principles represented in the three aspects of Spirit, Soul and Body, these three being directly related to the three evolutionary streams - the Monadic, the intellectual and psychic, and the physical. Monads in themselves are highest spirit, but they require appropriate vehicles through which to express their developing powers. These vehicles can of necessity give expression only to such aspects of spirit as it is in their nature to do. On world-chain after world-chain, wave after wave of Monads reach, and then pass through, all phases of the human stage, proceeding onwards into superhuman stages.

Always we must keep in mind that central element of evolutionary law, "from within outwards". As it operates in the cosmos, so it operates in man. In introducing the subject matter of the second volume of *The Secret Doctrine*, the becoming of man, Mme Blavatsky informs the reader that "the Secret Doctrine postulates three new propositions", the second of these being "the birth of the *astral*, before the *physical* body, the former being a model of the latter". This applies equally to the individual as to the race of mankind.

The first race of men were, then, simply the images, the astral doubles, of their Fathers, who were the pioneers, the most progressed Entities from a preceding though *lower* sphere, the shell of which is now our Moon. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 115 /II, 121 /III, 122]

During the first three Rounds on our Globe, these Fathers or Ancestors, the Lunar Pitris, were recapitulating the developmental stages through which they had passed on the Lunar Chain.

Evolutionary law compelled the lunar "Father" to pass, in their monadic condition, through all the forms of life and being on this globe; but at the end of the Third Round, they were already human in their divine nature, and were thus called upon to become the creators of the forms destined to fashion the tabernacles of the less progressed Monads, whose turn it was to incarnate. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 115 /II, 121 /III, 122]

As we are here concerned with origins rather than later development - a long story indeed! - we may simply summarize this portion of our study with words which, if heeded, will provoke a desire to make further acquaintance with the text:

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

The mystery attached to the highly spiritual ancestors of the *divine* man within the earthly man is very great. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 81 /II, 85 /III, 90]

but it is from the spiritual ancestors that man as we now know him obtained all his principles.

CHAPTER 10 [BOOK - II -]

GLOBES, ROUNDS AND RACES

A whole panorama of new ideas, some perhaps very strange, is being presented in this book. In the first part of this chapter the idea of planets like our own having principles comprising an occult constitution like that of man, was introduced. It was shown how the Hermetic Axiom, "As above, so below", really is an aid to our understanding of the esoteric view of the Cosmos and its workings. We saw that the rule of seven applied not only to the inner nature of the planet but also to its evolutionary stages, to those of the Races of mankind and to the time periods marked out by those stages. The cyclic law applies throughout the whole process and all phases and aspects of the process are marvellously coordinated, designed to reach a programmed end, whereafter what had been becomes the seeds for a further harvest in the next great cycle of activity.

In this part of the Chapter more details of the several aspects of the global processes are given. These enrich our overall view and help to illustrate the fact that even in the intricacies of some of the relatively smaller processes, the same laws of analogy apply, the minor always reflecting the major.

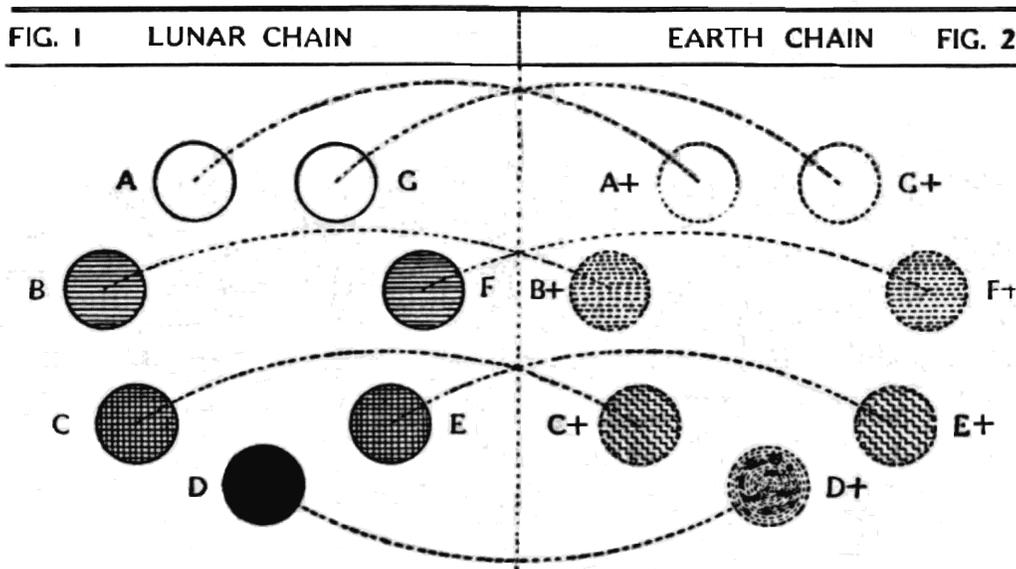
In this chapter the further information will be given under the following headings:

1. Origins and formation of Globes
2. The classes and nature of the entities that formed and peopled the Globes
3. Ancestry of Man. The journey of development of those entities who provided him with his principles.
4. Man's evolutionary development. The Races.
5. The areas of the physical planet, earth, where the Races developed.
6. Time scales.

The planetary parent of our Globe was a planet whose lingering physical remains are now our satellite moon. The Chain of Globes that preceded our chain is therefore referred to as the Lunar Chain.

At the end of the last Round of the Lunar Chain its Globes die in turn and transfer their principles, Globe by Globe, to the new Chain, to form its corresponding Globes. The Globes in order round the Chain are, as described in Book I, usually represented by letters, A to G (or Z). These new Globes will start their evolution where their parent old ones finished theirs. The new ones thereby, as their development proceeds, represent a higher state of being; they are more advanced than their predecessors. The process of transfer of principles Globe to Globe is illustrated in Figure II, The Secret Doctrine -I, 172 /I, 195 /I, 225.

DIAGRAM II



The universe is a living whole, and everything in it expresses Life as a life, a living entity. In their multiplicity of kind and quality these lives comprise manifest existence in its countless multitudes of living beings, ranging from the infinitely small to the infinitely large. They constitute the Hierarchies.

The ultimate units of Life have been defined as Monads, with the reservation that there is really only one homogeneous MONAD. It is thought of as atomic or unitary when in association with a single unit of Life, an entity, whether small or large, e.g. the Monad of a physical atom or the Monad of a man. (Monad in its totality is sometimes referred to as Monadic Essence.) In connection with the genesis of a Globe, its life principles received from the previous Chain are seen as classes of Monads at various stages of development. There are classes of Monads associated with the elemental kingdoms, the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, as well as the human.

There is a passage which, after describing the Globe to Globe transfer of principles from the Lunar to the Earth Chain, explains further:

Our Moon was the fourth Globe of the series, and was on the same plane of perception as our Earth. But Globe A of the lunar chain is not fully "dead" till the first Monads of the first class have passed from Globe G or Z, the last of the "Lunar chain", into Nirvana which awaits them between the two chains: and similarly for all the other Globes as stated, each giving birth to the corresponding Globe of the "earth-chain".

Further, when Globe A of the new chain is ready, the first class or Hierarchy of Monads from the Lunar chain incarnate upon it in the lowest kingdom, and so on successively. The result of this is, that it is only the first class of Monads which attains the human state of development during the first Round, since the second class, on each planet, arriving later, has not time to reach that stage. Thus the Monads of Class 2 reach the incipient human stage only in the Second Round, and so

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

on up to the middle of the Fourth Round. But at this point - and on the Fourth Round in which the human stage will be *fully* developed - the "Door" into the human kingdom closes; and henceforward the number of "human" Monads, i.e., Monads in the human stage of development is complete. For the Monads which had not reached the human stage by this point will, owing to the evolution of humanity itself, find themselves so far behind that they will reach the human stage only at the close of the seventh and last Round. They will, therefore, not be men on this chain, but will form the humanity of a future Manvantara and be rewarded by becoming "Men" on a higher chain altogether, thus receiving their Karmic compensation. To this there is *but one solitary exception*, for very good reasons, of which we shall speak further on. But this accounts for the difference in the races. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 172 /I, 196 /I, 226]

This "one solitary exception" refers to the primary apes. This story will be told later (in Chapter 11). The irreversible process of ever-progressing growth and development, taking place continually within the Cosmos is exemplified in the grand procession of global development with all that takes place on each Globe. Furthermore the process is entirely ordered. The great Beings who themselves have been through it and attained to a lofty level are the directors.

Now every "Round" (on the descending scale) is but a repetition in a more concrete form of the Round which preceded it, as every globe - down to our fourth sphere (the actual earth) - is a grosser and more material copy of the more shadowy sphere which precedes it in their successive order, on the three planes [see diagram in Book I]. On its way upwards in the ascending arc, Evolution spiritualizes and etherealizes, so to speak, the general nature of all, bringing it on to a level with the plane on which the twin globe on the opposite side is placed; the result being, that when the seventh globe is reached (in whatever Round) the nature of everything that is evolving returns to the condition it was in at its starting point - plus, every time, a new and superior degree in the states of consciousness. Thus it becomes clear that the "origin of man", so-called, on this our present Round, or life cycle on this planet, must occupy the same place in the same order - save details based on local conditions and time - as in the preceding Round. Again it must be explained and remembered that, as the work of each Round is said to be apportioned to a different group of so-called "Creators" or "Architects", so is that of every globe, i.e. it is under the supervision and guidance of special "Builders" and "Watchers" - the various Dhyana-Chohans. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 232 /I, 253 /I, 278]

This passage illustrates how each phase of development is successive, each being superior to its predecessor but inferior to its successor; put differently the Monads are moving up the scale of existence in their classes.

We began this part of the Chapter by stating that analogy applied between the orders of magnitude of the total process of universal ever-becoming, the lesser reflecting the greater. This, as seen in Chapter 3, is the case with man's principles; analogy applies.

It is explained that there are several kinds of Pralaya or rest between periods of activity. There is one between Rounds, a global or planetary one, one for a Chain, another for a Solar System, and so on.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

Mme Blavatsky also explains that the Monads who came to Earth from the Lunar Chain "may be roughly divided into three great Classes:

1. The most developed Monads (the Lunar Gods or "Spirits", called, in India, the Pitris, whose function it is to pass in the first Round through the whole triple cycle of the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms in their most ethereal, filmy and rudimentary forms, in order to clothe themselves in, and assimilate, the nature of the newly formed chain. They are those who first reach the human form (if there can be any form in the realm of the almost subjective) on Globe A in the first Round. It is they, therefore, who lead and represent the human element during the second and third Rounds, and finally evolve their shadows at the beginning of the Fourth Round for the second class, or those who come behind them.
2. Those Monads that are the first to reach the human stage during the three and a half Rounds, and to become men.
3. The laggards; the Monads which are retarded, and which will not reach, by reason of Karmic impediments, the human stage at all during this cycle or Round, save one exception ... [The Secret Doctrine -I, 174 //, 197 //, 227]

It is therefore Monads of the 2nd Class who comprise the majority of human beings on Earth now. These were the first to arrive on Globe D (Earth) in this the Fourth Round.

We learn that the physical bodies of men take the form (i.e. anthropoid) from a pattern projected from Chhayas, the form of the astral bodies of the First Class of Pitris, the most advanced to arrive on Earth, which was then ethereal, not of dense physical matter as now. It is explained in *The Secret Doctrine* that, as we have seen in Chapter Four, there are seven creative Hierarchies associated with our Globe and our humanity. "These last act on the man-bearing globes of a chain". Of these one is called the Barhishad Pitris or ancestors. These projected the astral model of their form to be assumed by man. A second hierarchy is known as the Agnishvatta Pitris (and many other names such as Solar Angels, Manasas, Manasaputras, Kumaras) who were to endow man with mind, in the middle of the third Race of this our Fourth Round. Up to this time man was mindless.

During the early Rounds, and the early Races of our Round, the Globe D was ethereal, becoming denser with each successive Round and Race. Man, or what was to become man, reflected these conditions of being. It was only in our Fourth Round that the Globe and man became more or less as we know them now. The literature gives us a description, very much in outline, of both the conditions on earth and the state of humanity during Rounds.

The significant event at the middle of the Third Race was the coming of mind to man. Thereafter man became the responsible creature he now is, knowing "good and evil", but coincident with the coming of mind came the division of the sexes. Up to this time there had been the various methods of reproduction mentioned in the previous chapter that are found in the life forms as they move up the evolutionary scale, in the plant and animal kingdoms.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

There are seven Root Races, each a developmental stage of humanity, in a Round. There is a short description of the nature of man in each Race, as follows:

... the First Root-Race, the "Shadows" of the Progenitors, could not be injured or destroyed by death. Being so ethereal and so little human in constitution, they could not be affected by any element - flood or fire. But their "Sons" the Second Root-Race, could be and were so destroyed. As the "progenitors" merged wholly in their own astral bodies, which were their progeny; so that progeny was absorbed in its descendants, the "Sweat-born". These were the second Humanity - composed of the most heterogeneous gigantic semi-human monsters - the first attempts of material nature at building human bodies. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 138 /II, 146 /III, 146]

Later there is another description of man's arrival on this Earth, at the dawn of every rebirth of the worlds (in this case the beginning of the Fourth Round),

First come the SELF-EXISTENT ... These lives "are the divine 'Sishta', (the seed-Manus ... the Pitris)

From these proceed -

1) The First Race, the "Self-born" which are the (astral) shadow of their Progenitors. The body was devoid of all understanding (mind, intelligence, and will). The inner being (the higher self or Monad), though within the earthly frame, was unconnected with it. The link, the Manas, was not there as yet.

2) From the First (race) emanated the second called the "Sweat-born" and the "Boneless". This is the Second Root-Race, endowed ... with the first primitive and weak spark (the germ of intelligence) ... And from these in turn proceeds:-

3) The Third Root Race, the "Two-Fold" (Androgynes). The first Races thereof are shells, till the last is "inhabited" (i.e. informed) by the Dhyanis." [The Secret Doctrine -II, 164 /II, 173 /III, 172]

This Third Race became oviparous, producing, at seasons of procreation "... a small spheroidal nucleus which developed into a large, soft, egglike vehicle ... from which issued unaided the young human animal, as the fowls do in our race" [The Secret Doctrine -II, 166 /II, 175 /III, 173 (paraphrased)]. With each race the method of reproduction changed. Later the race became bi-sexual, males distinct from females. This separation coincided with the advent of mind.

The Fourth Race was the first really recognizably human race. As a continuation from the Third Race it was gigantic to start with, but the size slowly diminished to about our proportions.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

There is some interesting information about the development of speech:

The First Race - ethereal or astral ... called "Self-born" - was, in our sense, speechless, as it was devoid of mind on our plane. The Second Race had a "Sound-language", to wit, chant-like sounds composed of vowels alone. The Third Race developed in the beginning a kind of language which was only a slight improvement on the various sounds in Nature, on the cry of gigantic insects and of the first animals ... [The Secret Doctrine -II, 198 /II, 208 /III, 203]

A speech was developed in the later Third Race, but it was only in the Fourth Race that speech was perfected, evolving into the inflectional, highly developed language of the Fifth Race (see interesting information The Secret Doctrine -II, 198 /II, 208 /III, 203 and Footnotes).

There is much reference in the literature to the lands on which the great Root Races developed. The story of where the First and Second Races started and the areas they occupied is obscure because the earth was then ethereal. A land at the North Pole is postulated, always under the eye of the Pole Star, but no such land is now known; later Greenland, which then enjoyed an equable climate, is specifically mentioned. In several places, however, it is said that the axis of the earth has shifted a number of times. Periodically the land masses have sunk beneath and risen up from the oceans.

The name used for the home of the second Race was Hyperborea, ethereal; of the Third Race, Lemuria, mostly dense physical; of the Fourth Race, Atlantis, earth as we now know it. The Fifth Race with its origins in Europe now peoples North America, Australia and parts of South Africa, as well as its old home lands in the east, Northern India, etc.

CHAPTER 11 [BOOK - II -]

EVER-BECOMING, THE PROCESS OF EVOLUTION

Behind the processes of Cosmos and all the operations of Nature there is design. The ultimate purpose behind all the cosmic activity cannot be perceived by our finite faculties but Occult Science teaches that the whole process tends toward a progressive unfoldment of Self-Consciousness. There are deep inner areas of subjectivity which at present cannot normally be reached, but something of the design behind the evolutionary process as it applies to our more immediate realms of being and what is in them can be discerned from, for example, the increase in the sentiency of things as they ascend through the kingdoms. Occultism extends this view, perhaps surprisingly. The following introduces some novel, even strange, ideas:

"Every form on earth, and every speck (atom) in Space strives in its efforts towards self-formation to follow the model placed for it in the 'HEAVENLY MAN' ... Its (the atom's) involution and evolution, its external and internal growth and development, have all one and the same object - man; man, as the highest physical and ultimate form on this earth; the MONAD, in its absolute totality and awakened condition - as the culmination of the divine incarnations on Earth." [The Secret Doctrine -I, 183 /I, 205 /I, 234]

There are two aspects to the evolutionary process:- one is the gradual progress of the Monad through the Kingdoms, from the Elemental to the Superhuman; the other is the cyclic nature of its progression. There are cycles within cycles, each itself composed of smaller ones. Each cycle, however, proceeds along the axis of the next larger one, like the coiled coil filament of an electric lamp.

The small coils in Nature are the life cycles of its small lives, of which the life forms of larger creatures, with longer life cycles, are composed, and so on up the scales of being. As forms develop complexity and refinement they become the vehicles for progressively expanding consciousness, where expanding means an ever-widening and deepening field of consciousness. This process extends not only up to the human stage, but beyond it. The significance of this serial development is that matter, the physical as well as the non-physical substances of the inner (to us subjective) realms, becomes educated by their experience in the living beings whose principles are composed of them. All substances are thereby developed to be suitable to play their part in the constitutions of beings and are continually refined as creatures ascend the ladder of life. The more developed beings impress their inner substances with, or project into them, the ideal patterns of their forms. While these forms may originally have been those which Nature had evolved for her purposes in the various situations of earthly existence, they become modified. Modifications in the inner worlds reflect into modifications in the outer, physical world. This process in terms of earth time is exceedingly slow but it is the inner mechanism of evolution. All things coming into being from the within to the without are modified according to changes in the inner subjective worlds. Very occasionally there are relatively sudden changes not in accordance with slow modification, like the sudden departure of dinosaurs. Gradual development is sometimes supplemented by a stepped programme at Dhyana Chohanian levels.

In these processes of ever-becoming, man on Earth is a critical stage. In him it is said the spiritual

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

aspects and the material aspects of Being are equal. Up to the man-state matter was in the ascendent but after it the spiritual aspect begins to predominate. The highest or most developed Beings in the post-human kingdoms represent the forefront of progressive change; as such they become not only the Architects of the forms in the kingdoms below them but also, according to their rank, they become directors, the governors and regulators of the processes. All this is the LAW in operation. There are many passages in the literature describing the numerous aspects of this ordered ever-becoming process; one, attributed to Hegel, summarizes its whole scope:

... the Unconscious evolved the Universe only "in the hope of attaining clear self-consciousness", of becoming, in other words, MAN; for this is also the secret meaning of the usual Puranic phrase about Brahma being constantly "moved by the desire to create". This explains also the hidden Kabalistic meaning of the saying: "The *Breath* becomes a stone; the stone, a plant; the plant, an animal; the animal, a man; the man, a spirit; and the spirit, a god". The Mind-born Sons, the Rishis, the Builders, etc., were all men - of whatever forms and shapes - in other worlds and the preceding Manvantaras. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 106 /I, 132 /I, 167] It is important to notice here that it is the "Breath", the Monad, or rather its vehicles, which go through the evolutionary stages; for example, no animal, as such, ever becomes a man, neither has any individual man ever been a plant or animal, nor according to this doctrine can he ever revert and be one in, say, a future life.

The passage goes on to explain

This subject, being so very mystical, is therefore the most difficult to explain in all its details and bearings; since the whole mystery of evolutionary creation is contained in it ... [The Secret Doctrine -I, 107 /I, 132 /I, 167]

Another aspect of the mystery is that in Unity there are really no discrete parts. Everything is not only in and of the whole but is itself that whole. When considering the inner worlds altogether, we must somehow transcend our ideas of magnitudes if we are to comprehend this. In the (to us) subjective worlds there are no dimensions; they have no magnitude in relation to anything at physical level that we know of. If we bear this in mind, a further quotation may have meaning:

Yet this cosmic dust is something more; for every atom in the Universe has the potentiality of self-consciousness in it, and is, like the Monads of Leibnitz, a Universe in itself, and *for* itself. *It is an atom and an angel.* [The Secret Doctrine -I, 107 /I, 132 /I, 167]

The evolutionary process is the actualization of this inherent potentiality. From within outwards is the rule, but between the extreme of spirit on the one hand and physical matter on the other, there are states corresponding to the middle planes of Nature, all subjective to us at our physical level. The inner worlds are, however, those of archetypal, spiritual ideation at the higher levels and of prototypes at the mental and psychic levels in the Astral Light.

Now the evolution of the *external* form, or body, round the *astral* is produced by the terrestrial forces, just as in the case of the lower kingdoms; but the evolution of the internal or real MAN is

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

purely spiritual. It is now no more a passage of the impersonal Monad through many and various forms of matter - endowed at best with instinct and consciousness on a quite different plane - as in the case of external evolution, but a journey of the "pilgrim-Soul" through various *states* of *not only matter* but Self-consciousness and self-perception, or of *perception* from apperception.

The MONAD emerges from its state of spiritual and intellectual unconsciousness; and, skipping the first two planes - too near the ABSOLUTE to permit of any correlation with anything on a lower plane - it gets direct into the plane of Mentality. But there is no plane in the whole universe with a wider margin, or a wider field of action in its almost endless gradations of perceptive and apperceptive qualities, than this plane, which has in its turn an appropriate smaller plane for every "Form", from the "mineral" monad up to the time when that monad blossoms forth by evolution into the DIVINE MONAD. But all the time it is still one and the same Monad, differing only in its incarnation, throughout its ever succeeding cycles of partial or total obscuration of spirit, or the partial or total obscuration of matter - two polar antitheses - as it ascends in the realms of mental spirituality, or descends into the depths of materiality. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 175 /I, 198 /I, 228]

All the above is describing something of the process of man's becoming and telling of the uniquely important place he holds in the evolutionary process.

The principles of evolution as generally accepted by science, in so far as the survival of the fittest, and the development of life forms from the primitively simple to the most complex are concerned, are in line with the esoteric view. The latter, however, differing from science, includes the inner, invisible worlds and their influence on the outer. It also includes the further idea of a planned progression, a systematic programme. The total economy of Nature is involved in this and all phases, e.g. at the physical level, all the necessary links in the food chain are coordinated. Another example of this programming is the timed arrival of the Root Races on the planet to coincide with the shifts in the continental land masses, i.e. their emergences from and submergences into the oceans.

Yet a further aspect of this evolutionary process, according to the esoteric view, is the transmission of not only physical but mental and psychic characteristics from units of life to their successors along any given chain of lives, e.g. from one personality to the next personality in man. In this process the Auric Envelope, or Egg, plays a significant part. It is the causative link between lives: for example, in it are stored the karmic effects of a man's successive lives. There is an Auric Egg or its equivalent for every living thing. In man it contains the Skandhas, the aggregate of those elementals which are conditioned by all his activities, both subjective and objective, during life.

Regarding the mechanism of physical heredity, orthodox science recognizes the role played by germ cells (genes, chromosomes, DNA) but in this connection Mme Blavatsky quotes a hypothesis propounded by a Professor Weissmann which negates the process of Darwinian transformation and substitutes the more occult view. The Professor shows

- one infinitesimal cell out of millions of others at work in the formation of an organism, determining alone and unaided by means of constant segmentation and multiplication, the correct image of the future man (or animal) in its physical, mental and psychic characteristics. It is that cell which

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

impresses on the face and form of the new individual the features of the parents or of some distant ancestor; it is that cell again which transmits to him the intellectual and mental idiosyncrasies of his sires, and so on. This Plasm is the immortal portion of our bodies - simply through the process of successive assimilation ... *those germinal cells do not have their genesis at all in the body of the individual, but proceed directly from the ancestral germinal cell passed from father to son through long generations.* [The Secret Doctrine -I, 223 fn /I, 243 /I, 269]

It was this hypothesis which was accepted by the Professor and a note says it is to this cell that he traces the immortal portion of man. But whence that embryological cell? *The Secret Doctrine* says,

Complete the physical plasm ... the "Germinal Cell" of man with all its material potentialities, with the "spiritual plasm", so to say, or the fluid that contains the five lower principles of the six-principled Dhyān - and you have the secret ...

When the seed of the animal man is cast into the soil of the animal woman, that seed cannot germinate unless it has been fructified by the five virtues (the fluid of, or the emanation from the principles) of the six-fold Heavenly man. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 224 /I, 245 /I, 271]

The passage goes on to explain that in the lower kingdoms the "germinal cell" does not have all five principles but in man it must or "he will be born no higher than an animal", and even then he must be overshadowed by the upper spiritual principles.

As far as the animal kingdom is concerned, Esoteric Science does not agree with the Darwinian theory that man's original ancestor was the ape. It reverses that idea. It agrees there was a common ancestor but states that it was human not animal. This statement is elaborated and justified. It begins with a reference to the animal forms of the Third Round having been carried forward into the Fourth Round:

And finally the forms and *genera* of neither man, animal, nor plant were [at the start of the Fourth Round] what they became later. Thus the astral prototypes of the lower beings of the animal Kingdom of the Fourth Round, which *preceded* (the Chhayas of) *Men*, were consolidated, though still very ethereal *sheaths* of the still more ethereal forms or models produced at the close of the Third Round on Globe D. "Produced from the residue of the substance matter; from the dead bodies of men and (other *extinct*) animals of" ... the previous Third Round ...

... while the nondescript "animals" that preceded the astral man at the beginning of this life-cycle [Fourth Round] on our Earth were still, so to speak, the progeny of the men of the Third Round, the mammalians of this Round owe their existence, in great measure, to man again ... [The Secret Doctrine -II, 186 /II, 196 /III, 192]

To an extent then the animal forms at the beginning of the Fourth Round were the progeny of men of the Third Round.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

The text tells us that the man forms were the first to arrive on Earth (Globe D) in the Fourth Round. The mammalia were derived from these forms and to begin with, like man, they were hermaphrodite.

The animals, however, became bi-sexual. "The animals separated first (into male and female)" and began to breed. Man followed suit. "He (*man*) said "Let us as they: let us unite and make creatures". They did ..." [The Secret Doctrine -II, 184 /II, 194 /III, 190].

The process of the separation of the sexes in the Third Race is told in The Secret Doctrine -II, Stanza X. Then follows a description of how the then mindless men of the time "took huge she-animals unto them".

Third Race man at this time was virtually speechless but acquired speech later. The progeny of his 'sin' with the animals, however, remained dumb, "to keep the shame untold". We are not told what the huge she-animals were. Man at this time being "mindless" was irresponsible, but mind was bestowed on him by the Manasaputras half way through the Third Race, at the time of the division of the sexes. In the Fourth Round, therefore, man had mind and was a responsible being. Nevertheless, we are told, some of the more primitive members of the Fourth Race ... "took wives fair to look at. Wives from the "mindless", the narrow headed. They bred monsters, wicked demons, male and female ..." [The Secret Doctrine -II, 271 /II, 284 /III, 273].

It was from these unions that the present anthropoid apes are descended. The great apes, however, have been the subject of evolutionary changes since those remote times. Since those matings, Nature has prevented offspring resulting from unions of individuals of too widely differing species.

The present primary apes are the 'one solitary exception' (referred to in Chapter 10, Book II) from the animal kingdom able to become man in this Fifth Round. It is said they will do so because by way of their ancestry - more than half human - they are possessed of human Egos. These Egos are entities who had already reached the human stage before this Round [The Secret Doctrine -II, 262 /II, 274 /III, 264].

The reason for the physical resemblance of the apes to that of man is obvious from their ancestry but the following is interesting a propos the barrier between differing species:

Let us remember in this connection the esoteric teaching which tells of Man having had in the Third Round a GIGANTIC APE-LIKE FORM on the astral plane. And similarly at the close of the Third Race in this Round. Thus it accounts for the *human* features of the apes, especially of the later anthropoids - apart from the fact that these latter preserve by *heredity* a resemblance to their Atlanto-Lemurian sires. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 688 fn /II, 727 fn /IV, 258 fn]

Evolution of the human race on a planet proceeds through the seven stages of the Root Races. These stages leave their representatives behind long after a new Race has taken the stage. Similarly each Root Race has seven sub-Races and each of these progressively smaller divisions. These divisions small or large are not those used by students of academic Ethnology.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

Each of the esoteric divisions, in their day, had its physical characteristics, colour and so on. They inhabited various regions of the earth. Catastrophes caused mass migrations at intervals over vast periods of time. *The Secret Doctrine* contains a mass of information concerning the Races and their subdivisions. The following is an important example:

They "of the yellow hue" are the forefathers of those whom Ethnology now classes as the Turanians, the Mongols, Chinese and other ancient nations; and the land they fled to was no other than Central Asia. There entire new races were born; there they lived and died until the separation of the nations ... Nearly two-thirds of one million years have elapsed since that period. The yellow-faced giants of the post-Atlantean day, had ample time, throughout this forced confinement to one part of the world, and with the same racial blood and without any fresh infusion or admixture in it, to branch off during a period of nearly 700,000 years into the most heterogeneous and diversified types. The same is shown in Africa; nowhere does a more extraordinary variability of types exist from black to almost white, from gigantic men to dwarfish races; and this only because of their forced isolation. The Africans have never left their continent for several hundred thousands of years. If tomorrow the continent of Europe were to disappear and other lands to re-emerge instead; and if the African tribes were to separate and scatter on the face of the earth, it is they who, in about one hundred thousand years hence, would form the bulk of the civilized nations. And it is the descendants of those of our highly cultured nations, who might have survived on some island without means of crossing new seas, that would fall back into a state of relative savagery. Thus the reason for dividing humanity into *superior* and *inferior* races falls to the ground and becomes a fallacy. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 425 /II, 443 /III, 424]

So the complex story of evolution unfolds. We have seen that the whole process is keyed to the archetypal form, at the highest level of ideation, of the Heavenly Man. Everything in the vast process is being developed to play its part in the constitution of perfected man, and man, we must remember, is a complex of principles for all of which the physical body is the instrument of expression during physical life. The evolutionary process takes place on all levels, right through to the super-human ones. It is in these lofty levels that man's development will culminate. He then will become a 'Builder' and then an 'Architect' in his turn. We are all embarked on a stupendous journey, whereon the pace of our going is entirely up to us, individually. By the principle of Unity, however, each man's progress furthers that of the whole of humanity.

CHAPTER 12 [BOOK - II -]

SPIRITUALISM AND PSYCHISM

The teachings of Esoteric Science form one consistent whole. It is only within the context of esoteric cosmogony with its accounts of the planes of nature, and of esoteric psychology with its description of the constitution of man and of the after-death states, that the phenomena associated with spiritualism and psychism can be understood. These phenomena are many and varied, and according to the type of manifestation being considered, so must its appropriate explanation be sought.

Referring to the phenomena commonly associated with the spiritualistic seance, Mme Blavatsky writes:

The cause of such manifestations are by no means so simple as the Spiritualists would like to believe. Foremost of all, the *deus ex machina* of the so-called "materializations" is usually the astral body or "double" of the medium or of someone present. [The key to Theosophy - II, 28]

It is the astral body, she explains further, that is the responsible force in a variety of manifestations. At the Eddy farmstead at Chittenden where Mme Blavatsky and Col. Olcott first met in 1874, many materializations occurred. They are described in great detail in Col. Olcott's book, *People from the Other World*. Among the many apparitional forms observed by him were those of a number of people whom Mme Blavatsky had known earlier in her life, one of them being her uncle.

Even the materialized form of my uncle at the Eddy's was the picture; it was I who sent it out from my own mind, as I had come to make experiments without telling it to anyone. It was like an empty outer envelope of my uncle that I seemed to throw on the medium's astral body. I saw and followed the process. I knew Will Eddy was a genuine medium, and the phenomenon was as real *as it could be*, and therefore, when days of trouble came for him, I defended him in the papers. [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -I, 35]

Repeatedly in her writings Mme Blavatsky insists that there can be no communication between the living and the dead, if by communication one understands the return of the real Spirit (Ego) of the deceased person to the world he has left.

We Theosophists, and especially occultists, must never lose sight of the profound axiom of the Esoteric Doctrine which teaches us that it is we, the living, that are drawn toward the spirits - but that the latter can never, even though they would, descend to us, or rather, into our sphere. [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -I, 36] There can, however, be communication under certain circumstances, particularly premature death of the personality, via a medium, as was explained in Book I.

The word 'spirit' in the above quotation, as distinct from soul or psyche, is used in its proper theosophical

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

sense. It will be noted that there is no question of denying the validity of the phenomena as such: it is only the spiritualistic explanation that is called into question.

I was sent from Paris on purpose to America to *prove* the phenomena and their reality and - show the fallacy of the Spiritualistic theories of "Spirits". But how could I do it best? I did not want people at large to know that I could *produce the same thing at will*. [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -I, 73]

The power of producing apparently inexplicable phenomena at will is commonly referred to as "magic". But magic to the occultist is a science, "a profound knowledge of the Occult forces in Nature, and of the laws governing the visible or the invisible world". The passage continues

Spiritualism in the hands of an adept becomes Magic, for he is learned in the art of blending together the laws of the Universe, without breaking any of them and thereby violating Nature. In the hands of an experienced medium, Spiritualism becomes UNCONSCIOUS SORCERY; for, by allowing himself to become the helpless tool of a variety of spirits, of whom he knows nothing save what the latter permit him to know, he opens, unknown to himself, a door of communication between the two worlds, through which emerge the blind forces of Nature lurking in the astral light, as well as good and bad spirits. [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -I, 137]

One of Mme Blavatsky's earliest attempts to place the essential teachings of esoteric philosophy before the public is to be found in the summary which introduces the last chapter of *Isis Unveiled*. The list of ten important points begins with the unequivocal statement:

There is no miracle.

This is elaborated to affirm that apparent miracles are not a violation of the laws of Nature but the application of laws not known to contemporary science.

Everything that happens is the result of law - eternal, immutable, ever active. [Isis Unveiled -II, 587]

The question may be asked: if there is no communication between the living and the dead, how is it that the entities who seem to communicate through the medium at a seance show not only intelligence but even particular skills, for example, a knowledge of foreign languages (not possessed by any medium or other person present). The explanation is that in the middle principles (Kama-Manas) of the defunct which remain in Kama-Loka for a longer or shorter time, there adhere the psychic idiosyncracies and memories and the personality traits, even to the manner of speech. It is these that impress the entranced medium who assumes them in appearance of visage, tone of voice, etc. Further, the messages received contain knowledge which possibly only the deceased person possessed, even from previous lives. These latter will probably be from the Astral Light. Sometimes knowledge of a high order, even unknown in life to the deceased may come through, but not often, in a seance. Such knowledge is that of the Individuality (Ego). The fact is, says Mme Blavatsky, that the essence of man being one with the Universal Spirit, it

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

is practically omniscient, but that it cannot manifest its knowledge owing to the impediments of matter. Now the more these impediments are removed, in other words, the more the physical body is paralysed, as to its own independent activity and consciousness, as in deep sleep or deep trance, or, again, in illness, the more fully can the *inner* Self manifest on this plane. [The key to Theosophy - II, 29]

It is evident, therefore, that before one can enter seriously into profitable discussion, one must understand the distinction between the personality, the temporary embodiment of the Ego, and the Individuality, to which alone the term "spirit" should properly be applied. The same clarification is necessary if one is to understand the nature of the reincarnation process, the personality being - as the word clearly shows - the mask assumed for one incarnation by the Actor, the enduring Ego.

There is another factor not generally taken into account in popular explanations of spiritualistic and psychic phenomena, and that is the difference between spiritual and psychic senses. The psychic is too readily assumed to be the spiritual, so that one whose perceptive faculty is able to pass through gross physical matter is thought to have developed spiritual vision. Ordinary clairvoyants and untrained seers fail to recognize the gradations of matter beyond the physical.

They can see through gross matter, such as a wall, the human body and so forth, as if it were glass, but they cannot see through astral substance, and hence they believe its forms and all the pictures and shapes in the astral light to be real. Only the adept sees through these illusions, which are far more powerful because composed of a subtile order of matter: subtile energies, fine forces, have a highly increased rate of power over grosser ones. The adept has at his command the rate of vibration which dispels them or drives them asunder. [Letters that have helped me -, 27]

Because of the complexity, and at the same time the inter-relatedness of the many facets of the cosmic process, there is no one place in the literature of Esoteric Science in which the student can find a complete exposition of the subject of psychic phenomena and their production. In addition to what has been explained above, one must again refer to the role of the elementals and the ubiquity of the Astral Light.

There is not a single thing going on about us, no matter what, that elementals are not concerned in, because they constitute a necessary part of nature, just as important as the nerve currents in your body. [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -X, 271]

An incident narrated by W.Q. Judge may serve to illustrate their role in the production of phenomena in consequence of their power to acquaint themselves with the thoughts and unuttered wishes of human beings. He was in London at the time, with Mme Blavatsky, and found himself in need of a certain sheet of paper on which he had written a few lines, but he had left it behind in America. Without expressing the thought in words, he wondered to himself whether, by some means, she could obtain the paper for him.

She smiled at me, rose, went into her room, came out at once, and in a moment handed me a piece of paper ... To my amazement it was a duplicate of my paper, a *facsimile*. I then asked her

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

how she got it, and she replied: "I saw it in your head and the rest was easy. You thought it very clearly. You know it can be done; and it was needed". This was all done in about the time it takes to read these descriptive sentences. [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -X, 273]

Seeking out and putting together the considerable body of detailed information about the planes of Nature (in particular, the Akasha and the Astral Light), the constitution of man in life and death, the elements, elementals and elementaries, the student will find answers to most of his questions concerning psychic faculties (clairvoyance, clairaudience, psychometry, psycho-kinesis and so on), fortune-telling and divination, hypnotism, materializations, healing and apparent magical performances. Because of the essential unity underlying the whole of existence, occult philosophy recognizes no supernatural agency, and all that appears to the ignorant as magical or miraculous must in fact take place in accordance with natural law.

We would that all who have a voice in the education of the masses should first know and then *teach* that the safest guides to human happiness and enlightenment are those writings which have descended to us from the remotest antiquity; and that nobler spiritual aspirations and a higher average morality prevail in the countries where the people take their precepts as the rule of their lives. We would have all to realize that magical, i.e., spiritual powers exist in every man, and those few to practise them who feel called to teach, and are ready to pay the price of discipline and self conquest which their development exacts ... [Isis Unveiled -II, 635]

We must now say a few words to correct the popular misconception that identifies Occultism with black magic and such black arts as witchcraft and necromancy.

It has been explained earlier that the invisible worlds around us are peopled by Elementals and Elementaries, and that these entities are responsible for the great variety of psychic and spiritualistic phenomena. To this we must add the further fact that human thought-forms are animated by such Elementals and maybe by Elementaries. This is true whether the thought-form is produced by one individual or by a group. Where the thought is strongly defined, and especially when it is reinforced by emotion, the mental image thus created may become vivified by an Elemental and thus acquire a measure of independent life. The collective thought of a group of people, as for example a congregation of worshippers or the audience at a political meeting, may create a powerful entity, ensouled by either an Elemental or an Elementary, which will be fed and strengthened by the intensity of the emotion with which it has been charged. It may then be sensed by other members of the group who thus find themselves swept along on a strong current of irresistible and maybe violent emotion which can cause them to behave in ways which, individually, they would repudiate. Similarly, a mediumistic member of the group may be moved to make utterances or deliver messages which appear to come from a power beyond him - as indeed they do, that power being the entity called into existence by the collective thoughts of worshippers or other people present.

Power in itself, of whatever kind, is neither good nor evil: it becomes either good or evil according to its use. The difference between white and black magic is that in the former the power is exercised only for beneficent purposes, whereas in the latter it is turned to selfish or even maleficent ends. The karmic consequences to the magician will be in accordance with those purposes and with the benefit or harm to others resulting from the exercise of his powers. In both cases, the effective agents are the Elementals,

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

the magician being one who has learnt how to evoke and control them. It is a mistake to think of magic as in any way supernatural, if by that we mean an action brought about in contravention of natural law: in the occult philosophy it is axiomatic that there is nothing outside Nature. In what appear to be miraculous or magical performances, both the white and the black magicians are using - for good or evil - knowledge of their own powers and of the processes of Nature. As stated earlier in this chapter, there is no miracle:

Magic, as a science, is the knowledge of the principles [of man and Cosmos], and of the way by which the omniscience and omnipotence of the spirit and its control over nature's forces may be acquired by the individual while still in the body. Magic, as an art, is the application of this knowledge in practice. [Isis Unveiled -II, 588]

It is hardly necessary to add that the Occultism with which we are concerned is entirely beneficent. Nothing further therefore needs to be added about the black arts, save the recognition that they are no fiction. No occultist of the "right-hand path", no "white Adept", will ever exercise his powers for his own advantage or to escape the disagreeable consequences of past mistakes, nor will he make any attempt to interfere with the karma of others. He may, however, by his wisdom and strength, so inspire and strengthen those who seek his help that they are enabled to face their difficulties with greater understanding and courage.

CHAPTER 13 [BOOK - II -]

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

In instructing the students who gathered round her in London in the late 1880's, Mme Blavatsky emphasized the absolute necessity of understanding that "EXISTENCE IS ONE THING". That One Thing, the source and essence of all, is called by the Hindus Parabrahman or Paramatman. Equally important for the student is the recognition of the inevitable corollary of this truth: if there is but One Reality, we must have come from It - for there is no other source of being, and we must one day return to It - for there is nowhere where It is not. She then uses a passage from Aryasanga, an immediate disciple of the Buddha, to add the third aspect of the corollary - that we must in fact *be* It, for *there is nothing else*: THAT ART THOU.

The passage from Aryasanga is an exquisite summary of the Secret Doctrine, setting out in a few lines the whole story of existence from the periodical emergence of the Cosmos through the incalculable aeons of the evolutionary process to the consummation of human life in the individual's realization of identity with the One.

THAT which is neither Spirit nor Matter, neither Light nor Darkness, but is verily the container and root of these, *that* thou art. The Root projects at every Dawn its shadow in Itself, and that shadow thou callest Light and life, O poor dead Form. [This] Life-Light streameth downward through the stairway of the seven worlds, the stairs of which each step becomes denser and darker. It is of this seven-times-seven scale that thou art the faithful climber and mirror, O little man! Thou art this, but thou knowest it not. [--- The Secret Doctrine -III, 513 /V, 488 /The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -XII, 625 /The esoteric writings of H.P.Blavatsky -, 407]

In those last words - "but thou knowest it not" - is there not an implied imperative, an injunction to the individual pilgrim to *know*, to abandon his ignorance by obeying the precepts laid down by generations of Teachers, and so to enter the way of enlightenment?

It may be argued that there is some contradiction in the term "spiritual development", for Spirit is the One Life, present in all things, perfect from the beginning. It cannot therefore be said to develop if by development we mean the emergence of new qualities. Only the vestures, the vehicles through which it manifests, can properly be said to develop in this sense, that is, to become increasingly responsive to the potentialities of Spirit. With the expansion of consciousness comes an ever-widening field of perception which will result ultimately - insofar as one can speak of an end in Nature - in Self-realization, that is, the realization of the Self, the direct knowledge of the identity of one's own life with the One Life. Until now, until this great awakening, the pilgrim soul (the Individual) has been struggling on in darkness, painfully aware of separateness and of the gradualness of the process in which he, and all humanity with him, is engaged.

Below the human kingdom, Self-realization is unattainable, for in the animal the mental principle is dormant. In man, by virtue of the dual mind principle - the outward-turned consciousness functioning

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

through the senses, and the as yet unconscious higher mind - the nature of future progress is seen to be through the increasing responsiveness of the merely human element to the pressure from within, as the higher or spiritual consciousness seeks to manifest through the vehicles with which Karma has endowed him.

Spiritual development then is the development of the faculties or powers in each being that are necessary to give expression to the qualities and powers of Spirit. How those faculties are to be developed is the subject of many works of spiritual counsel and instruction written by advanced individuals for the helping of those would-be disciples in whom has been awakened a sense of direction but as yet little knowledge as to how to proceed. "Lead the life necessary for the acquisition of such knowledge and powers," wrote one of the Mahatmas to a lay chela, "and Wisdom will come to you naturally." [The Secret Doctrine -I, 167 //, 190 //, 221]

In an article in *The Theosophist* for May 1885, introduced by lines from Christina Rossetti which she repeated later in *The Secret Doctrine* - an indication of her endorsement of the verse "as an epitome of the life those who are truly treading the path which leads to higher things" - Mme Blavatsky points out that, whatever difference there may be in the various presentations of the Esoteric Doctrine, they all agree in regard to "the road to spiritual development".

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?

Yes, to the very end.

Does the journey take the whole long day?

From morn till night, my friend.

That road is one, and the conditions for its treading are everywhere the same:

One only inflexible rule has been ever binding upon the neophyte, as it is binding now - the *complete* subjugation of the lower nature by the higher. From the *Vedas* and *Upanishads* to the recently published *Light on the Path*, search as we may through the bibles of every race and cult, we find but one only way, - hard, painful, troublesome, by which man can gain the true spiritual insight. And how can it be otherwise since all religions and philosophies are but the variants of the first teachings of the One Wisdom, imparted to men at the beginning of the cycle by the Planetary Spirit? [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -VI, 331]

That is why, she adds, the methods of spiritual growth, advocated within the Theosophical Society

are those of the ancient Rishis, its tenets those of the oldest Esotericism; it is no dispenser of patent nostrums composed of violent remedies which no honest healer would dare to use. [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -VI, 334]

The pain that inevitably accompanies the process of growth through evolution is largely due to the

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

mistake of

perpetually seeking the permanent in the impermanent, and not only seeking, but acting as if we had already found the unchangeable, in a world of which the one certain quality we can predicate is constant change, and always, just as we fancy we have taken a firm hold upon the permanent, it changes within our very grasp, and pain results. [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -VI, 331]

Warnings there are in abundance in the literature of the spiritual life: warnings against mere intellectual development, the accumulation of knowledge, to the neglect of the intuitive faculty; warnings against reliance on either external practices such as religious observance or the cultivation of psychic powers; warnings against seeking by any means the advantage or enhancement of the personality, or placing the goal of attainment in some future time. It is because of the dangers that await the pilgrim in the later stages of the journey that in the earlier stages there is great emphasis on the necessity for purity in life and the observance of the higher ethics.

Theosophy has to inculcate ethics; it has to purify the soul if it would relieve the physical body, whose ailments, save cases of accidents, are all hereditary. It is not by studying Occultism for selfish ends, for the gratification of one's personal ambition, pride, or vanity, that one can ever reach the true goal of helping suffering mankind. [The key to Theosophy - II, 24]

The effort in these earlier stages is described as a purification, a process by which the personal nature must be disciplined to loosen its hold on the real man. The disciple must get rid - at first gradually but later more drastically - of all the attitudes and desires that are the result of identification with the personal man, uprooting the giant and prolific weed of selfishness. The warning of *The Voice of the Silence* is severe:

Woe, then, to thee, Disciple, if there is one single vice thou hast not left behind. For then the ladder will give way and overthrow thee ... Beware lest thou should'st set a foot still soiled upon the ladder's lowest rung. [The Voice of the Silence -, Frag.1, v 69]

Popular religion - that is, exoteric religion with its anthropomorphic theology, its rituals and disciplinary practices - is said to be the nursery of future occultists. Hence the necessity for an ethical code that will initiate the process of purification. The eight-fold system of yoga likewise begins with yama and niyama (see Glossary). But the teaching of Esoteric Science introduces a feature that distinguishes it entirely from exoteric religion, that of "self-induced and self-devised efforts" by which the pilgrim may ascend to the heights of spirituality. As we saw in Part One,

The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations. [The Secret Doctrine -I, 17 /I, 45 /I, 82]

In this philosophy there is no room for reliance on an external saviour, for as it teaches the fundamental

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

identity of all souls with the source of being, the saving Divinity is within, "awaiting its inevitable hour". Spiritual development is the slow unveiling of that Divinity, present in every man, until the individual consciousness is merged into It and becomes that of the ONE ALL.

One of the world's greatest treatises on spiritual development is *The Bhagavad Gita*. It is the story of the Divine Teacher, the Lord Sri Krishna, instructing his pupil Arjuna. There are eighteen Chapters of inspiring discourse. These engender devotion in the listener towards the Lord ... "who is thine own Self". Another work of inestimable value to the serious aspirant is *The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali*.

A major element in spiritual instruction is that designed to free consciousness from the imprisoning effects of personal selfish life. Real teaching aids the aspirant to transcend these limitations by the elevation of consciousness to Egoic or divine levels. As far as we are concerned our Ego is the Divinity within ourselves. In *The Bhagavad Gita* it speaks to us in the first person:

Those who worship me with constant zeal, with the highest faith and minds placed on me, are held in high esteem by me. But those who, with minds equal toward everything, with senses and organs restrained, and rejoicing in the good of all creatures, meditate on the inexhaustible, immovable, highest, incorruptible, difficult to contemplate, invisible, omnipresent, unthinkable, the witness, undemonstrable, shall also come unto me. [Letters that have helped me - XII, 3 and 4]

There is much else about concentration and meditation. In spiritual development meditation figures largely. It is not the purpose of this book to give detailed instruction, merely to whet curiosity and interest. In this connection, for those wishing a more practical guidance, Mme Blavatsky's "Diagram of Meditation" is recommended.

CHAPTER 14 [BOOK - II -]

RELIGION

The purpose of the Introductory section of *The Secret Doctrine* is to place before the public the available evidence which establishes beyond reasonable doubt the existence of an original source behind and beyond the various religions.

Is [the Secret Doctrine] a new religion, we are asked? By no means; it is not a *religion* nor is its philosophy *new*; for, as already stated, it is as old as thinking man. Its tenets are not now published for the first time, but have been cautiously given out to, and taught by, more than one European Initiate ... [The Secret Doctrine -I, xxxvi /I, 20 /I, 59]

It is to such initiates and their disciples that we must look for the origins of the exoteric forms of religion known to history.

More than one great scholar has stated that there never was a religious founder, whether Aryan, Semitic or Turanian, who had *invented* a new religion, or revealed a new truth. These founders were all *transmitters*, not original teachers. They were the authors of new forms and interpretations, while the truths upon which the latter were based were as old as mankind. Selecting one or more of those grand verities - actualities visible only to the eye of the real Sage and Seer ... they revealed these truths to the masses. Thus every nation received in its turn some of the said truths, under the veil of its own local and special symbolism; which as time went on, developed into a more or less philosophical cultus, a Pantheon in mythical disguise. [The Secret Doctrine -I, xxxvi /I, 20 /I, 59]

Both *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* are characterized by an enormous number of quotations from respected philosophical, religious and historical sources that support this contention. Their purpose is made explicit:

The public must be made acquainted with the efforts of many World-adepts, of initiated poets, writers, and classics of every age, to preserve in the records of Humanity the Knowledge of the existence at least, of such a philosophy, if not actually of its tenets. [The Secret Doctrine -I, xlv /I, 28 /I, 67]

In an important article published in *Lucifer* in February 1888 under the title "What is Truth?", Mme Blavatsky confronts the question of absolute and relative truth, the former being incommunicable to the limited consciousness of ordinary mortals, the latter being such rays of the Sun of Truth which that consciousness can assimilate. One of the quotations with which the article is introduced makes just this point, that

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

the greatest adept living can reveal of the Universal Truth only so much as the mind he is impressing it upon can assimilate, and no more. [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -IX, 31]

The quoted fragment says:

... Fair Truth's immortal sun
Is sometimes hid in clouds; not that her light
Is in itself defective, but obscured
By my weak prejudice, imperfect Faith
And all the thousand causes which obstruct
The growth of goodness. [The collected writings of H.P.Blavatsky -IX, 30]

Passages such as these emphasize the distinction that must always be made between ultimate or absolute Truth and the dogmas and scriptural presentations of relative truth that characterize the world's religions. Historical evidence shows that every human grouping has had as part of its culture a form of religion with an identifiable belief-system and its related practices. Occult tradition, however, goes further back, taking us to the very early races of our humanity. Although formalized religion is not present among the Atlanteans, they had religion - from the Race before them - defined as

the binding together of the masses in one form of reverence paid to those we feel higher than ourselves, of piety - as a feeling expressed by a child toward a loved parent - then even the earliest Lemurians had a religion - and a most beautiful one - from the very beginning of their intellectual life. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 272 /II, 284 /III, 273]

The occult tradition teaches that our humanity owes its origins to the sacrificial incarnation of "bright Spirits" who gave of

their own respective super-ethereal essences to animate the man of clay, by endowing each of his inner principles with a portion, or rather a reflection of that essence. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 273 /II, 285 /III, 275]

It was the presence of the divine principles in man that gave him his innate religious sense:

No sooner had the mental eye of man been opened to understanding, than the Third Race felt itself one with the ever-present as the ever to be unknown and invisible ALL, the One Universal Deity. Endowed with divine powers, and feeling in himself his *inner* God, each felt he was a Man-God in his nature, though an animal in his physical Self. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 272 /II, 284 /III, 273]

This "inner God" is still man's inner essential nature but the realization of it is all but totally obscured by

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

materialism and purely personal concerns.

The degeneration of the pure religious impulse began with the Atlanteans,

the first progeny of *semi-divine* man after his separation into sexes - hence the first-begotten and humanly-born mortals - who became the first "Sacrificers" to the *god of matter*. They stand in the far-away dim past, in ages more than prehistoric, as the prototype on which the great symbol of Cain was built, as the first anthropomorphists who worshipped form and matter. [The Secret Doctrine -II, 273 /II, 285 /III, 275]

Coming down now to historical times, we cannot help but recognize the materialization of even the God-idea. The One, the Absolute Existence, unknown and unknowable to the conditioned human mind, becomes in the course of time an anthropomorphized Deity with personal attributes. The rejection of these "gods created by man in his own image and likeness - a blasphemous and sorry caricature of the Every-Unknowable", may lead the superficial reader to the erroneous conclusion that the occult philosophy is atheistic, or at best agnostic. At the very beginning of her great work, Mme Blavatsky states unequivocally the standpoint of the Wisdom-Religion and, incidentally, its relevance for the age in which we live. As we saw in Book I:

... the Esoteric philosophy is alone calculated to withstand, in this age of crass and illogical materialism, the repeated attacks on all and everything man holds most dear and sacred, in his inner spiritual life ... Moreover, esoteric philosophy reconciles all religions, strips every one of its outward, human garments, and shows the root of each to be identical with that of every other great religion. It proves the necessity of an absolute Divine Principle in nature. It denies Deity no more than it does the sun. Esoteric philosophy has never rejected God in Nature, nor Deity as the absolute and abstract *Ens*. [The Secret Doctrine -I, xx /I, 3 /I. 43]

The Adept Teachers who entered into correspondence with Messrs Sinnett and Hume, recognizing the religious conditioning of their correspondents, were no less explicit in their rejection of any compromise with regard to the existence of a Being corresponding to even the most philosophical concept of God. They accepted neither the designation of atheists nor that of agnostics:

Our doctrine knows no compromise. It either affirms or denies, for it never teaches but that which it knows to be the truth. [The Mahatma Letters to A.P.Sinnett -, 52:52]

In the second summary with which Mme Blavatsky concludes the first part of *The Secret Doctrine*, she introduces the five proven facts by the statement that "The SECRET DOCTRINE teaches no Atheism". There are, as has been shown through this work, Hierarchies of beings - "Dhyān-Chohans and the other Forces" - the active agents of Karma in their respective functions in the cosmic process. No more than any hypothetical Supreme Being are these to be regarded as

proper subjects for divine honours or worship. All are entitled to the grateful reverence of Humanity, however, and man ought to be ever striving to help the divine evolution of *ideas*, by becoming to the best of his ability a *co-worker with nature* in the cyclic task. [The Secret Doctrine -I,

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

280 /I, 300 /I, 322]

After telling us that

Many men have arisen who had glimpses of the truth, and fancied they had it all. Such have failed to achieve the good they might have done and sought to do, because vanity has made them thrust their personality into such undue prominence as to interpose it between their believers and the *whole* truth that lay behind ...

Mme Blavatsky went on to say,

The world needs no sectarian church whether of Buddha, Jesus, Mahomet, Swedenborg, Calvin or any other. There being but ONE Truth, man requires but one church - the temple of God within us, walled in by matter but penetrable by anyone who can find the way; *the pure in heart see God*.
[Isis Unveiled -II, 635]

-oOo-

The trinity of nature is the lock of magic, the trinity of man the key that fits it.

EPILOGUE

We have now concluded this outline sketch of the vast subject of Esoteric Science. We have learned that Theosophy, the Ancient Ageless Wisdom, exists; that it is the Wisdom Religion, embracing all that is good and true in the great religions of mankind, yet transcending them all. As far as can be expressed in words, we find it reflects Truth, insisting on the Unity of the cosmic process in which each individual is as a spark to the flame; that we are of like nature with Cosmos, and, being of one Essence, are members of one family, a family that includes all things and all beings.

The aim of this work has been to make known something of the scope of the subject and to offer a framework for future study; to provide a base of data relating to the very nature of Nature, and therefore the nature of Man, for philosophers, religionists, and scientists to consider and ponder thoughtfully. That base, importantly, is common to them all. Acceptance of these data inevitably affects our thinking, and therefore our attitudes, pointing a direction away from materialism, selfishness, greed, ruthless competition and superstition, which all stem from fundamental ignorance of the true nature of existence and its processes.

The awful waste in our so-called developed society is beginning to be regarded as totally unacceptable. A spirit of kindness to our Mother Earth is abroad - realization that the Earth needs a recovery time, both in terms of land yield, timber, sea products, etc., as well as the massive energy sources of coal, gas and oil - none of the latter being inexhaustible. Already there are massive aid projects for victims of natural catastrophes, civil war, etc. The public heart has been touched: food for the starving, water supplies, medical aid, land resettlement - all these are now being generously funded.

But beyond all that, and basically, how can human follies be prevented that cause and aggravate so much human suffering? How stem the tide of strife by so-called religious bigotry and fundamentalism on which unscrupulous politicians thrive for their own interest? There is only one effective palliative - a knowledge of *the essential spiritual origin and nature of all things, creatures and men*. Today the idea of earth as a living entity is receiving growing acceptance. This is a positive start. But who has heard of *Alaya*, the Soul of the World, indeed of the Cosmos, the common spiritual Soul shared by all?

Here in this book we have heard of that Universal Law which in no way can be thwarted or turned aside: inexorable in its action but ever wisely just. We learn of the ramifications of the Law of Cycles, periodicity, coming and going, with reincarnation as one of its aspects? And we see that the doctrine of reincarnation, bringing with it the idea of long-term evolution and the ultimate perfectibility of man, makes sense of our life here on earth. The great question then, "What are we here for?" is now answered. Every individual's life has a long-term purpose - self-development leading to a realization of the nature of one's real divine Self, and inseparable relationship, through identity, with the Universal SELF.

Who then, accepting these things, can deny Universal Brotherhood, not only in mankind, but also in all sentient life, everywhere, everything?

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

*Compassion is not attribute
It is the law of LAWS –
eternal Harmony, Alaya's SELF;
a shoreless universal essence,
the light of everlasting Right,
and fitness of all things,
the law of love eternal.*

[The Voice of the Silence -, Frag.III, v 300]

What about attitudes then? Are harmony and peace and benevolence too much even to contemplate?
We can at least try.

GLOSSARY

This glossary deals only with those words used in the text which may require some explanation. For some, literal meanings are given; for others some further explanation to indicate the meaning in which they are used in the book is added. These meanings may not be those of common use nor those of classical scholars. The books used as references in compiling this glossary are: *The Key to Theosophy*, *The Theosophical Glossary*, *The Secret Doctrine*, *Glossary of Sanskrit Terms* (G.A. Barborka) and *Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary*. Grateful acknowledgements are made to all these.

-oOo-

GLOSSARY	
Absolute	More properly just absoluteness. The One Everlasting Reality, never itself manifesting but underlying all manifestation. Parabrahman (lit. beyond Brahman). From THE SECRET DOCTRINE (Proem), "An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless and Immutable Principle on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception ... (it) is the rootless root of "all that was, is or ever shall be."
Adi	Original, the first, supreme; 7th (highest) Tattva.
Aditi	Space.
Aether	In THE SECRET DOCTRINE the equivalent of Akasha, the primeval manifested 'substance', undifferentiated - (see Akasha and Ether; divine luminiferous substance which pervades the whole universe.
Ah-Hi	"..the collective hosts of Spiritual Beings .. intelligent Forces that give to, and enact in, Nature her "laws" .. (The Secret Doctrine - Stanza I, sloka 3)
Ahamkara	The egotistical, I-making principle in man.
Akasha	(alternative Akasa) Primordial spacial substance (Aether).
Antahkarana	lit. Intermediate instrument; regarded as the bridge between Lower and Higher Manas in H.P.B.'s works.
Anthropogenesis	From anthropos(Greek), man, and genesis, origins or beginnings.
Anupadaka	Usually taken to mean "parentless" in theosophical writings; 6th Tattva.
Astral Body	(or Astral Double). Astral is from the Latin word for star: shining body surrounding and interpenetrating the physical. The model in the inner world around which the physical body is formed. The vehicle of prana, the life-principle.
Astral Light	The lower levels of Akasha; lasts for a Manvantara while Akasha is everlasting. The realm of powers, energies and qualities that show forth in manifest existence. The inner seat of all memory, a record of all that has

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

	happened.
Atman	The Supreme Universal Self: the seventh Principle of Cosmos and correspondingly the divine aspect in Man's constitution, (as the latter it is usually spelt Atma).
Brahma(n)	In neuter form "is the impersonal supreme, uncognizable but all-pervading son of the universe", from "the essence of which all emanates and into which all returns".
Brahma	With an accent over the second 'a' is male and regarded as the Creator aspect of the trinity of which Vishnu is the preserver and Siva the destroyer aspects.
Bodhi	Illumination, spiritual wisdom, receptive intelligence.
Buddhi	The vehicle of Atma; the potentiality of intelligence, 6th principle in Cosmos, and in man's constitution; often signifies intuition (direct perception).
Causal Body	Name given to Manas (higher) in conjunction with Buddhi. Sometimes the incarnating Entity or Ego.
Chain (Planetary)	In Occultism a series of seven globes, usually six subjective, and one objective (physical), as is our Earth with its six companion globes, three preceding and three succeeding it in evolutionary development. The Chain preceding the Earth Chain is said to have been the Lunar (or Moon) Chain.
Chhaya	(lit."a shadow") The rudiment of form, projected by the Lunar ancestors, of terrestrial man to become that of his astral model body.
Co-adunition	United or combined with (dictionary spelling, coadunation)
Cosmogogenesis	The beginnings or origins of Cosmos
Cosmos	(Greek Kosmos) The world or universe as an orderly or systematic whole. The word is sometimes used in Esoteric Science to connote the immediate visible universe or even the solar system.
Cycles	(Greek Kyklos, a circle) A period of time in which events happen in a certain order, and which constantly repeats itself; a necessary series of changes. In Occultism the whole process of universal becoming is regarded as cyclical and is itself seen as composed of an infinite series of cycles within cycles
Demiurge	The supernatural power that built the universe and man.
Deva	A celestial being with many popular meanings from god to angel (from div, to shine)
Devachan	(lit. the dwelling of the gods) The subjective, blissful state enjoyed by the Ego after death, where there is no sorrow.
Dhyan Chohan	(lit. Lord of Light) The entities comprising the post-human kingdoms. The divine intelligences that conduct the processes of Cosmos, ruling the lesser intelligences, the elementals.
Ego	In Occultism usually spelt with a capital E, the higher trinity of aspects in the human constitution; the divinity within man; the persisting individuality as opposed to mortal, temporary personality, the ordinary ego (small e).

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

Elements	States or conditions of substance at all levels of being, reflecting into physical objective existence as the fiery; vaporous, airy, gaseous; watery, fluidic; and earthy, solid, states. To each of these states the medieval philosophers ascribed temperaments, viz sanguine, phlegmatic, melancholy and choleric (or bilious).
Elementals	The spirits of the Elements; the invisible creatures usually associated with the mediaeval philosophers' Elements, viz., Earth, Water, Air, Fire, but there are other kinds; the living forces in Nature.
Elementaries	The kama-manasic reliquae of the dead in Kama-loca after the departure to Devachan of the higher trinity. Because of their separation from the Egoic influence, they tend to manifest only the baser, more depraved elements in the deceased's character. They can materialize at seances through a medium and can use elementals to produce phenomena.
Elohim	In Occultism taken to mean a hierarchy of creators in the formation of Cosmos. It is a plural noun.
Ether	In Occultism an Element (corresponding to the 5th Tattva) which will become manifest in the 5th Round. It is not to be confused with the chemical ether and is not the ether of 19th century science, i.e. the medium in which electromagnetic waves were supposed to travel; this latter meaning would correspond to the non-physical Astral light.
Fission	The process of reproduction by division whereby a biological cell divides into two; as in nuclear fission, splitting an atom.
Fohat	The primeval energy of Cosmos. Under its action the original homogeneous Substance Principle becomes atomic and differentiates; sometimes called Cosmic electricity and like electricity at physical level is transformable into many forms of energy, viz, light, heat, etc.
Hermes	Commonly Hermes Trismegistus, "thrice great", Egyptian or Greek. According to Plato, discovered numbers, geometry, astronomy and letters. The author of the famous Hermetic axiom "As above, so below" etc.
Hierarchy	From the Greek, hieros, sacred, and archein, to rule; a body classified in successively subordinate grades. In Occultism the body and grades are represented by collective hosts.
Jiva	The general cosmic Life Principle.
Jivatma(n)	The highest spiritual (Life) Principle especially when regarded as individualized, as in man.
Kama	The 4th principle in Cosmos and man. It is fohatic force regarded as expressing itself as desire, emotion and passions, particularly in man.
Kama Loca	That region of, or place in, the Astral Light where the kamic remains of defunct human beings exist for a while (maybe up to some years) and then dissipate.
Kama Rupa	The kamic form of the defunct which takes form only after death and in which the deceased under some circumstances may retain some consciousness. It is this form which may manifest at seances.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

Karma	(lit. action) In one sense the total of the dynamic effects of all cosmic processes. It has many aspects both cosmic and particular. It maintains, by its equilibrium (harmony) aspect, the universe as an orderly whole. For a fine definition see The Key to Theosophy Chap.XI, where it says, "it is the ultimate law of the universe, the source, origin and fount of all laws which exist throughout nature ... etc."
Kingdoms	The kingdoms of nature, but taken in Occultism to include three elemental ones below the mineral and three above the human, making ten in all.
Kriyasakti	The mysterious thought- (or will-) directed power that enables a potent user of it to produce phenomenal effects.
Kumaras	One class of Solar Pitris, closely concerned with humanity. In the formation of earth men they were said, because of their purity, to "refuse to create". They are sometimes referred to as "the mind-born Sons" and Agnishvattas, sometimes equated to Egos.
Law, The	A synonym for Karma in its broadest sense. It is the whole Cosmic operation. In The Secret Doctrine it says, "Deity is Law and vice versa." Because everything from the highest to the lowest in Cosmos is living and therefore sentient, it behaves in its characteristic way fulfilling its role in the grand scheme of things. This is how they are ordered. The Universe is self-regulating; there is no outside Law-giver or Regulator.
Laya	A condition of dissolution, of rest, of non-activity. A laya centre is a state of inactive neutrality, where substance ceases to be differentiated; sometimes likened to Nirvana.
Linga-sarira	The model body, the Sanscrit name for the Astral Body, man's 2nd principle, the vehicle of prana.
Lipika	(lit. The 'Recorders') They are said to enter in the book of the unfading cosmic memory every detail of all that has happened during a Manvantara. The highest in the Hierarchy of Celestial Beings; they create a division between the arupa (spiritual) and the rupa (lower, form) levels of existence.
Logos	(lit. word or sound) The Collective Being of a system, i.e. Solar or Planetary. Usually represented as being threefold; unmanifest (1st), manifest (2nd), intelligent (mind, Mahat, in action) (3rd).
Lunar Pitris	The beings who had reached the human stage in the Lunar (Moon) Chain who formed the chhayas (shadows) of the Astral bodies of the humanity to be on our planet.
Maha	Great, e.g. Mahatma, Great Soul.
Mahat	Cosmic Ideation, Divine Mind, Universal Mind principle, which reflected into and individualized in man, is his Manasic principle (5th). Regarded in The Secret Doctrine as an Entity, the highest in our scheme, a collectivity of divine beings.
Manasaputras	(lit. the Sons of Mind) Solar Pitris who bestowed the spark of Mind upon the up-until-then otherwise 'mindless' man of the Third Root Race.
Manus	The great Regents of a planetary system; the collective beings who act as

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

	the progenitors of the successive Races of men on the planet.
Manvantara	The period of influence of the Manu; otherwise a period of activity always alternating with a period of rest - Prayala.
Mayavi Rupa	An illusory, thought-projected form. The vehicle of so called 'astral' travel of any but a short distance from the physical body. Short distance travel may be in the Astral Body proper. The mayavi-rupa is also sometimes projected when someone dying thinks of another to whom it then appears.
Modus Operandi	Latin, literally the way or manner of operating or working.
Monad	(lit. a unit) An ultimate unit of being; in Occultism the Unit Spirit in or overshadowing everything. A unit of life. In man the combination of Atma and Buddhi when in association with an entity. Regarded cosmically as the indivisible One, the Unit Life of the System in existence, whence all 'lives'.
Moon Chain	See Chain. The Moon or Lunar Chain is said to be the one that next preceded ours, the Earth Chain, regarded as its re-incarnation inheriting its principles, life energies, etc.
Mulaprakriti	Root-matter, undifferentiated, the abstract Substance-principle unmanifest; corresponds to Akasa as undifferentiated Substance in manifestation.
Nirvana	A state of Egoic consciousness free of the limitations and conditioning of ordinary existence; the highest spiritual attainment. Not extinction but absolute existence and consciousness.
Niyama	Restraint of the mind achieved by controlling one's thoughts.
Noumenon	The inner, invisible, essential nature behind all visible, objective phenomena or anything that can be an object of sense.
Occult	Ordinarily, simply 'hidden' from Latin 'to hide'. "The doctrine or study of things hidden or mysterious - theosophy, etc." (Chambers). Occult Sciences, the Hermetic or Esoteric Sciences which explore the secrets of Nature.
Parabrahm	(lit. beyond Brahm) The indescribable, unknowable, unvarying 'absolute' postulated as preceding and sustaining the manifest Universe.
Pari Passu	Latin, literally with equal pace; together.
Prakriti	The manifest substance aspect, as opposed to the spiritual (purusha) aspect of the One, the material of the universe.
Pralaya	The period of rest or inactivity after a Manvantara, or period of activity. Literally meaning dissolution but often applying to a state of suspended being. Can apply variously to a Universe, a solar system or a planet.
Prana	The Life Principle (Jiva) when associated with an individual, e.g. man. No body or even inner personal principle can live without it. The breath of life.
Prithivi	(lit. the Earth) Sometimes the Element Earth, when regarded as a Tattva.
Quaternary	The fourfold constitution of man in the rupa or form planes as distinct from the three arupa or spiritual planes. The quaternary is the Personality whereas the upper spiritual triad is the Individuality or Ego.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

Race	In Occultism, humanity is represented as passing through seven main development stages during one Round; (q.v.) each such stage is a Root Race, which is divided in seven Sub-Races and each of these is further sub-divided.
Regent	A name given to the great (collective) Beings who initiate the cosmic 'creative' process after a Pralaya. They have other names, Maharajas, etc.
Rig-Veda	(lit. The Hymn Veda) The first and most important of the four Vedas; the most ancient sacred book of the Hindus; said to be "dozens of thousands" of years old.
Ring-Pass-Not	As a man's skin demarks him, as an entity, from his surroundings at physical level, so he is said in Occultism to be so 'entified' in the inner world by a ring-pass-not. Occultism also teaches that every manifest thing and creature has such a ring
Round	In Occultism this word is used in a special way to denote the passage of the "Life Wave" round all the seven globes of a Chain once.
Rupa	(lit. a form) This applies not only to the objective physical world but to inner worlds, normally invisible, but visible to clairvoyant sight. There even such normally subjective phenomena as feelings and thoughts become perceptible.
Skandhas	The "dispositions and tendencies" which persist through the after death states and condition the new personality of a re-incarnating Ego. Exoterically there are five but esoterically seven.
Sistrum	An ancient Egyptian musical instrument of the rattle type.
Sthula-sarira	Sanscrit for the physical body; the first principle in man's occult constitution. The body which gives expression in the physical world to all man's faculties.
Swabavat	The mystic Essence, equivalent to Mulaprakriti, Father-Mother, the primordial Spirit-Substance Principle from which all manifest existence, Nature, proceeds, and into which all returns at the end of the Mahamanvantara.
Sui Generis	Of its own kind, the only one of its kind.
Taijasa	From Tejas, fire; radiant, flaming. As a Tattva, the Element Fire.
Tanha	The thirst for life, that which brings us back into incarnation according to the Buddhists.
Tattva	From Tat, That, the original homogeneous Element of Life, in which the several basic qualities of things in Nature arise as the Elements or Tattvas.
Tejas	Fire.
Theosophy	From theos, god, and sophia, wisdom or knowledge. If God is regarded as universal Deity with everything as a manifestation of the One, Theosophy can be taken to mean an inclusive knowledge of the whole Cosmic process. H.P.B. has said, "It is the last word of possible human knowledge".
Triad	A threefold unity; a trinity taken as one. In Occultism the higher triad is the Atma - Buddhi - Manas combination. Its symbol is the triangle.

Deity, Cosmos and Man by Geoffrey Farthing

Upadhi	(lit. substitute or disguise) Usually base or vehicle, through which something higher than itself is given expression. The physical body (vehicle) of man gives expression to his 'soul' principles.
Vayu	Air, as such, and as a Tattva or Element.
Vidya	Knowledge. Avidya, not knowing, ignorance.
Yama	(lit.) God of the Dead. Unrestrained activities of the mind.