



The Upper Triad Material

Topical Issue 4.21

The Human Being 1

The Monad and the Soul



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Chapter 4.21

The Human Being 1



The Monad and the Soul

- The human being consists of an integrated, threefold life-consciousness-appearance. The three aspects are the monad or highest self, the soul or higher self, and the personality or human being in manifestation.
- In one sense the human being is a singular entity. In another sense the human being has three inter-related components (monad, soul, and personality). And in yet another sense the human being consists of seven aspects.

Human Constitution 1

The human being is considerably more than what appears to be, and in some ways considerably less. That which appears to be is the human personality as a distinct lifeform in space and time, having a physical, emotional, and concrete mental form (personality). The reality is a being (lifeform) in three aspects, distributed in space and time (more correctly transcending space and time).

The three aspects are the monad, the soul or higher self, and the personality or lower self. The monad is the highest, deepest, most noble aspect of the human being, which resides in-or-near God-consciousness and which does not suffer any sense of individual distinction or separation from that God-consciousness. The monad is a unit of life within a greater life (God), but distinctions within that oneness are merely academic. The monad resides on a plane of consciousness well beyond the physical, emotional, and concrete mental realm of ordinary human experience.

The soul is the periodic reflection of the monad into and onto lower levels (atma-buddhi-manas) and is the inner and higher self that utilizes the human personality for experience and expression. More correctly, the soul is the accumulation (integration) of all such reflections over space and time such that the soul is itself space-less and time-less (as is the monad), but nonetheless is approximate or in indirect contact with its reflection in time and space (i.e., the human personality consciousness). Like the monad, the soul does not suffer any sense of individual distinction except in the very most subtle sense of simultaneously being one with the monad (and humanity) (and all of life) and being able to live indirectly through all human lifeforms.

It is not really possible to describe monadic or soul consciousness, for none of the words or notions available in human language convey the sense of that consciousness, even partially. Those who are able to participate in the higher consciousness are simply unable to effectively describe the experience. It is more a matter of describing what the experience is not. It is not a human personality consciousness. There is only a very subtle sense of individuality, of being aware that there is an individuality but being unable (at the soul level) to

experience individuality (for as soon as one experiences individuality or separateness there is a lowering of the focus of consciousness back to the personality level). There is no thinking (mental activity) and no feeling (emotional activity), but there is a depth and breadth of intuitive realization (higher feeling, being a distinctly non-emotional and non-intellectual experience).

The soul in turn reflects itself periodically onto objective levels and incarnates (more or less alternately) as a male or female personality (while the soul and monad remain neither male nor female). The personality is what has form and manifests in the lower worlds, with a dense physical body, an etheric double, an emotional or astral body, and a concrete mental body (mind). In each incarnation there is a new (and hopefully improved) personality. In each incarnation there is additional depth and breadth of experience and expression that contributes to the growth and evolution of the higher self as that soul assimilates the experience of its lower self. In turn that which is assimilated by the soul is somehow conveyed to the monad. Thus the human constitution includes all of this, a triad-in-God (monad, soul, and personality), an upper triad (triune higher self) (atma-buddhi-manas), and a lower triad (triune lower self) (physical, emotional, concrete mental personality).

† Commentary No. 1038

Human Constitution 2

Given the depth and breadth of what constitutes the human being (monad, soul or higher self, and personality or lower self), that which appears to be is merely the most superficial aspect, that of the human personality apparently isolated or individualized in time and space. But even what appears to be of the human personality is merely superficial, for there is a considerable depth of sub-consciousness and super-consciousness of which the waking-consciousness (normally being self-absorbed) is generally largely unaware.

The problem of the human constitution, though, is the false identification of waking-consciousness with the reality (totality) of individual humanness. In a sense, only the monad is real (enduring), while the soul or higher self is transient

and the personality or lower self even more so transient (very ephemeral). The waking-consciousness (that which thinks and feels more-or-less self-consciously) is artificial and superficial, as is the sense of individuality or ego. Of course these artificialities and superficialities exist within the context of the real self, which is inclusive, but for one to identify with the artificial and superficial aspect(s) of the human being is to be deluded by the ego and the senses and to miss the realization of being, in fact, the inner, deeper, higher self. The (relatively) immediate evolutionary objective of the ordinary human being (i.e., within the foreseeable future) is the achievement of conscious realization of the next level of inner reality (i.e., the unity of the soul). That means overcoming the illusions of artificial and superficial existence and transcending the ego in realization of the higher (deeper) (inner) self.

What appears to be the human being is really the most outward symbol of what is human. That symbol (personality lifeform) has a role to play and a contribution to make, but it is still a symbol and not the reality that underlies and overshadows the apparent lifeform. Of greater reality than the symbol is the matrix or archetypal existence of the human being. The soul of upper triad (atma-buddhi-manas) is of a higher order of reality. And the monad likewise and even more so. This false identification gives power to the artificial-superficial ego (personality-centeredness). Transcending the ego brings freedom and realization.

In one sense, the human being is far less than what it appears to be, for the ego is artificial and transient and the individual human being is not a law unto itself as the ego may believe, but is, rather, merely an element of a much greater, composite lifeform (humanity). Those who view themselves as one with humanity (and/or one with all life) have taken the first (albeit intellectual) step toward true realization. But that realization is not actually achieved until all sense of separateness is overcome, not merely as an intellectual concept, however effectively it may be embraced. The individual human being is still sacred and has value, but that sacredness and value need to be viewed in the broader context.

In another sense and broader context, the real human being is (God), being both immanent and transcendent with regard to the human personality. And the real human being is the human lifewave that extends through a substantial range of

time and space (and as God is all of life). Thus the human being is much greater than what it appears to be. The dimensionality of being human is far greater than what appears in space-time. It is not that one is transformed into something higher and greater, but that one comes to realize what truly is. It is simply a matter of perspective.

† Commentary No. 1085

Seven-Fold Human Constitution

The seven rays are a fundamental aspect of manifestation. Likewise, the seven planes of consciousness constitute a fundamental, underlying aspect. And there is a direct correlation between the seven rays and the seven planes. Since each of the rays is reflective (with the first, second, and third rays being reflected into the seventh, sixth, and fifth, respectively), it does not matter in which direction the rays or planes are ordered. Only the relative order is significant. Likewise, each plane of consciousness is reflective with regard to the central (middle) plane.

Humanity relates directly and indirectly to the seven rays and the seven planes, in various ways. But humanity (and all lifewaves) are manifested in the context of the seven rays and seven planes. Humanity is the signal. The seven rays and the seven planes form the background or framework through which the signal is perceived, developed, and expressed. In this sense (only) humanity is not fundamental to manifestation (humanity is, however, more fundamental, in the sense of life and continuity).

Thus the relationship of humanity to the seven-fold dimension of the field of manifestation is rather dynamic. The human being has seven principles, although only a few are currently and partially being manifested. While those seven principles relate directly to the seven rays and the seven planes, the seven-fold human form does not. This inconsistency is a practical matter. It is sometimes convenient to perceive the human form in its more practical dimensions rather than according to its principles.

The upper triad of atma-buddhi-manas (soul) relates directly to the trinity (first, second, and third rays) and to the planes of consciousness through which these

three principles operate (third, fourth, and fifth). Likewise the lower triad of the mental-emotional-physical personality relates directly to the trinity (first, second, and third rays) and to the planes of consciousness through which they operate (fifth, sixth, and seventh). The six-pointed star and the placement of the seven numerals represents the seven rays and their relationships rather than the seven-fold human being. In representing the seven rays, the symbol is quite consistent, with many valid inferences. The problems in trying to use this symbol to represent the seven-fold human being are (1) that ray relationships are relative, not absolute, and (2) that the upper and lower triads do not correspond exclusively with planes of consciousness.

Sometimes the personality is viewed as three-fold and sometimes four-fold. This is because the physical body has two aspects, a dense physical body and an etheric double. This division is a convenient one for understanding the role of the etheric body in vitalizing the dense physical body and it helps explain the realm of physical plane forces. But in terms of principles, there is only one physical plane principle, the physical body as a whole. In this sense, the etheric body is not independent, except during sleep, and then it is only partially independent. Another problem arises on the mental plane, where there are two regions of consciousness, a concrete region involving mental forms and an abstract region which is considered formless. Again this is convenient for understanding the distinction between the higher aspect of the personality (concrete mind) and the lower aspect of the soul (abstract mind), but in fact there remains only one mental principle. The seven-fold human being is a matter of perspective, or how one chooses to perceive it. Some people look for seven principles, others look for seven bodies or sheaths in consciousness, which do not correspond completely to the seven principles.

Wholeness 1

The human being is simultaneously one-fold, three-fold, seven-fold, and a manifold. The human being is one-fold in the sense of there being a whole, whether or not there is any conscious or direct integration of the various aspects and levels (bodies). The human being is three-fold in the sense of there being three aspects, (1) a personality having physical, emotional, and intellectual dimensions, (2) a soul of atma-buddhi-manas, both transcendental and immanent, transcendental (on its level) with regard to the personality, yet underlying the personality with its immanence, and (3) a monad that remains on its level, virtually indistinguishable from the godhead or logos.

The monad is the highest, deepest, most noble aspect of the human being, yet remains largely uninvolved and unresponsive to the human being in its other (lower) (two) aspects. Similarly, the soul is for the most part, and for most people, largely uninvolved and unresponsive to the personality. The monad reflects itself into the soul which in turn reflects itself into the personality. Thus the soul is an artificial entity with regard to the monad, yet it is more real than the personality.

Each personality lives only for a single lifetime. Each successive personality is created by the soul and is generally improved over the previous personality, based on assimilation of experience. A personality matrix or archetype exists within the soul and it is that matrix that is developed through the experience and expression through the instrument of personality. The soul is sexless. But the personality matrix (archetype) is bi-sexual, though in each incarnation the personality is expressed sometimes as male, sometimes as female, so that the qualities of each may be developed and assimilated. The human being embodies both the masculine and feminine principles.

Thus the personality is the vehicle of experience and expression in the lower worlds. It is the personality that experiences the illusion of separateness and ego. The soul merely assimilates the experience of the personality, indirectly, through the overall consciousness, and primarily through sleep and through the interval between lives. The personality deals with knowledge and

understanding. The soul deals, indirectly, with understanding and wisdom. The understanding and wisdom of the soul is available to the personality only to the extent that the personality (mind) (heart) is responsive. That responsiveness requires very substantial cultivation and occurs primarily through the process of the spiritual path and its various practices.

The human being is seven-fold in the sense of having seven bodies or vehicles of consciousness, corresponding loosely to the seven planes of consciousness. There is a dense physical body and its etheric (vital) (energy) double. There is an emotional (astral) body. There is a concrete mind that is part of the personality and an abstract mind that is part of the soul. These are loosely related but become more closely related as the bridge of consciousness (antahkarana) between the personality and the soul is built. In addition to the abstract mind of the soul there is a buddhic sheath and an atmic sheath, not properly bodies. There is a causal body which is the vehicle proper of the soul in its three aspects (atma-buddhi-manas). This causal body is the storehouse of understanding, wisdom, conscience, quality, etc., gleaned from the experience and expression of the various personalities over various (many) lifetimes. And there is a monadic vehicle of some sort, well beyond the ken of the mortal mind.

† Commentary No. 1112

Wholeness 2

The relatively undeveloped and unrefined human personality is also manifold, in the sense that the physical, emotional, and intellectual components are not (generally) integrated and therefore in the sense that there are many centers of consciousness that compete for attention. Yet once the personality vehicles are refined and properly integrated (into a single, coherent personality energy), then it becomes possible to build the bridge (proper link) with the soul. Until then the qualification of the personality by the soul is minimal and indirect. After alignment, that qualification is substantial and more direct (although the soul on its level remains transpersonal). Integration occurs only after many lifetimes of experience and alignment of soul and personality occurs only after a number of lifetimes of dedicated “work” in the context of the spiritual path.

While the human being is a whole, a single entity, it is necessary to treat the person in its various aspects in order to achieve self-realization. This is because the waking-consciousness (ego) (intellect) (feelings) that most people identify with is not the whole self and is not even capable of embracing the whole self. The personality (ego) (intellect) is artificial and limited in consciousness and in expression. In order to achieve proper integration and alignment (of the whole self) one must be able to focus within the highest aspect of the Self. The personality cannot do this. The ego cannot do this. The intellect cannot do this. But the personality (ego) (intellect) often (but necessarily falsely) believes that it can (that it is the whole self).

In fact, resolution (realization) can only occur when the waking-consciousness (focus of objective awareness) can discern the distinction between the lower two aspects (personality-ego-intellect and the soul (atma-buddhi-manas)), between the lower self (not-self) and the higher Self. Once that realization has occurred (properly, not merely intellectually), then the lower consciousness is sublimated in the higher and the higher manifests holistically (because the lower self is no longer functioning in its sense of (false) independence and separateness). Of course this (sense of) wholeness does not include the monad (which remains on its level), but it is the best that a person can do while in incarnation under current circumstances (stage in evolution). Indeed, the monad is so far "beyond" the waking-consciousness that it can only barely be sensed even at the soul level.

Thus wholeness is progressive. It begins with a person (personality) integrating the various elements of the lower self (physical body, etheric double or vital body, astral or emotional body, and the concrete mind). Then it progresses to transcending the artificial self (ego) (intellect) in alignment of that lower self with the higher Self of atma-buddhi-manas (the practical union of soul immanent with soul transcendent). To do so, the manifold nature of personality becomes integrated as the three-fold nature of the whole person becomes resolved into (as) a single, coherent energy (which it is in actuality).

Wholeness is also progressive in the sense that identification becomes broader and broader as evolution proceeds. A person begins with (lower) self-identification. As self-identification broadens internally, it also tends to broaden externally, as a person progressively transcends identification with his

or her sex, race, country, culture, etc., to be more and more inclusive (all of humanity, all of life). Eventually one realizes this wholeness and inclusiveness not merely intellectually, but actually, as one feels (senses) through all lives and all levels, simultaneously, as one participates (more and more) consciously in the one life.



Section 4.211



The Monad

- The monad is the highest, deepest, most noble aspect of the human being, that aspect that remains on the monadic plane, well above and beyond the field of manifestation, i.e., that aspect that remains "with" God as a spark within the flame. It is well beyond the ability of the human mind to sense the presence or nature of the monad. Yet it is the monad that endures between and beyond the various cycles of manifestation.

The Monad and Its Reflections

The monad is the highest aspect of the human being, one of three major levels. The other two levels are the soul and the personality. The monad is the divine spark of God whose presence cannot even be glimpsed until the student has attained lasting soul-consciousness. The monad is the father or Shiva aspect which expresses itself through the upper triad of atma-buddhi-manas. Atma is the spiritual will; buddhi is the spiritual intuition; and manas is the abstract or higher mind. The reflection (manifestation) of the monad on those three levels of consciousness is the soul or higher self. The monad is constantly en rapport with the godhead, while the soul is the descent (reflection) of the monad into matter (consciousness).

The soul is that immortal essence that chooses to incarnate under the law of karma, time and time again, through the various personality rays, for the purpose of gaining experience and thereby evolving. Due to the interrelatedness of all life, the evolution of the soul contributes also to the evolution of the greater life. The soul is that essence which transcends the earthly worlds of consciousness and is the totality of individual experience, talent, virtue, and conscience. The soul is the individuality, and it functions through several vehicles or bodies. Each vehicle is attuned to a different rate of vibration of matter. These vehicles are the reflection of the soul into matter (which is the second reflection of the monad) and comprise the lower triad. With the dense physical body, the lower triad becomes a quaternary. The three aspects of the lower self or personality are the concrete mind, the astral or emotional body, and the energy body (the etheric or vital body). These are the instruments for the expression of the three lower human principles: mental, emotional, and physical. The physical body is simply an outer covering for the etheric body.

The personality (lower self) is the three-fold vehicle for experience during a physical incarnation. It is the creation (reflection) in matter by the soul. Upon the death of the dense physical body, there is normally a withdrawal of consciousness from the physical onto successively higher levels. The personality vehicles (etheric, emotional, and mental) are successively discarded and disintegrated. The individuality (the soul) then stands free of those earthly

limitations and rests. After the proper assimilation of the experience of the past life, and after due preparation, the soul seeks another birth for further experience and expression.

A new personality is built or created by the soul that incorporates improvements in the physical, emotional, and mental characteristics (as earned or developed). These improvements are based on the past experience and karma of the soul, and the resultant personality is (of course) subject to the karma that has been evoked for the individual and for the environment of the incarnation. But the form should be distinguished from the life within the form. The form is matter, and the life within the form is (a much higher) consciousness.

The personality is energized or organized matter with a rather primitive consciousness. The soul is the higher consciousness and individuality, while the monad is pure spirit. The monad and the soul are both sexless; it is only the personality that manifests as male or female. Each aspect (sex) contributes experiences to benefit the evolving soul. Often the soul will incarnate alternately male and female, or at least according to some pattern. The soul will normally incarnate a number of times in each sub-race of each of the great root-races, and through various national environments, each with its own special contribution of experience.

† Commentary No. 213

The Monad

The human being in the physical form known to ordinary consciousness is actually a small portion of a much more complicated lifeform. In reality, the human being is a spiritual monad of which the physical form is the lowest and most distant relation. The monad is the highest spiritual aspect of the human being, and it is one of the three major levels of existence through which that life manifests. The other two levels are the soul and the personality. The monad, the soul, and the personality form a significant triplicity.

The monad is the least objective and most abstract level of human existence, although it is misleading even to call it human; the human distinction is merely academic on monadic levels. The monad is the divine spark of the flame of the

life which is God. Its presence or nature cannot even be glimpsed by ordinary consciousness. The presence and nature of the monad can only be revealed through the conscious attainment of soul-consciousness, and even then, only through a difficult alignment of the soul with its monad. The monad is that aspect of the human life which remains on the atomic level without itself descending into the lower worlds. The descent of the monad is achieved only through its reflection onto lower worlds of consciousness, while the monad itself remains en rapport with the godhead. That godhead descends only to the level of consciousness adjacent to, and one degree higher than that of the monad. Since the monad exists on the atomic level, there is no substantial barrier between itself and the next higher level. On its own level, the monad is the only reality, an integral and undifferentiated part of the godhead.

The monad is the supreme element of that life from which the human being is a derivation. It is supreme in the sense that it is the only imperishable aspect of the triplicity; the personality is the least permanent aspect, while the soul is relatively, but not quite immortal. As the universe comes into and out of manifestation, the character of the monad persists, while all that functions on lower levels is dissolved, at least at the end of manifestation. Obviously, the monad is the least known of the three aspects from the standpoint of human consciousness, for the monad is beyond consciousness, and few (if any) souls in incarnation can be aligned consciously with the monad. Since the monad is beyond consciousness, it can only be approached on its own level (being).

The soul is the first but distant reflection of the monad onto the next lower levels. The monad remains unconcerned with the plight or experience of the soul, though a thread of life does link the two aspects. It provides a most vague form of qualified energy, but it should not be construed as guidance. For the most part, the soul is almost completely independent of the monad. One cannot even really say that the experience or quality of the soul is ultimately assimilated by the monad, for the process of assimilation implies consciousness, which is denied the monad on its own level. So the monad can only be described by analogy and correspondence, and only then in the most vague of terms. One can say that the soul somehow contributes to the purpose of the monad, but it would not be quite right to say that the soul contributes to the evolution of the monad, for the monad does not evolve on its own level.

The soul is the unit of human evolution; the monad is beyond evolution, since evolution is a process, and limited to the second aspect of trinity. Furthermore, the monad has no specific existence; the monad simply exists on its own level as a most vague distribution of energy. The only value of the monad to human experience is the distant provision of the ultimate energy (source) of life; and as an object of contemplation, akin to absolute recession.

† Commentary No. 866

Descension or Reflection 1

The descension or reflection of the divine monad (as a mere soul or higher self) onto the sub-monadic planes of consciousness, and the further and subsequent descension or reflection of the soul (as a personality or lower self) onto the three worlds of human experience and expression is a matter of perspective that yields a number of different ways of considering these phenomena. Some of these points of view appear to be mutually contradictory, giving rise to the paradox of descension or reflection, or what is the monad (soul) (personality)? This is not merely a matter of relativity or relative reality, but a question of substantive spiritual reality.

From one point of view, the monad remains on its level (being one with all of monadic existence) and is thereby unencumbered by manifestation or by absorption in matter. Likewise, from this point of view, the soul remains on its level (being one with all solar existence) and is thereby unencumbered by the limitations of physical, emotional, and mental existence. In this sense (perspective), the monad (and the soul, in its turn) periodically sends forth or otherwise induces a reflection of itself onto the lower levels of manifestation. That reflection is linked or related to its source (the monad or the soul) but does not compromise that source. The reflection exists and manifests on its level, evolving in consciousness by virtue of its activities (experience and expression).

The monad evolves as it assimilates the experience of the soul, although the timescale and manner of such lies beyond the ken of contemporary humanity, and the soul evolves by virtue of its assimilation of the experience of the personality. In this sense, the personality does not evolve, but is merely

developed and refined as an instrument of experience and expression (i.e., manifestation). At the end of a cycle (incarnation), the "value" or quality of the personality is absorbed by the soul and the personality is discarded, and likewise, at the end of a solar cycle, the "value" of the soul is absorbed by the monad and the soul is discarded.

The significance or strength of this perspective is that the monad on its level (and respectively, the soul on its level) is not corrupted or tainted or compromised or limited or obscured in any way by its reflection, but is able to assimilate or extract the value obtained through the manifestation of that reflection. By keeping the reflection "at arm's length" only the "good" need be assimilated, while whatever negative quality is embraced by the reflection can be ignored. Thus, only the good survives, and then only in the sense of what is assimilated or extracted as wisdom.

The weakness or limitation of this perspective is that it does not convey any sense of substantial "reality" to the reflection and it causes one who "is" such a reflection to wonder about one's own "reality" and relationship to the respective source. Is the reflection merely an inducement? Is what is reflected a shadow of that which remains on its own level? Is what is reflected a part or portion of that monad or soul? Is the human being merely an artificial and transient entity having merely substantial (material) existence, being utilized by some greater lifeform, or does the human being have a "spiritually substantial" existence and a future in its own right? These are important questions in the sense that one needs to know and understand one's own nature and "how" to evolve in consciousness toward monadic existence (that evolution being intended or implied in the overall (perceivable) plan of evolutionary manifestation).

Descension or Reflection 2

From another point of view, the monad actually descends onto the planes of manifestation (atma-buddhi-manas) and is thereby limited or obscured in consciousness, losing freedom and potency (for some period of time and/or manifestation) but gaining in opportunity for experience and expression. In this sense, the monad becomes the soul (i.e., a relatively blind or sleeping monad). Likewise, in this perspective, the soul actually descends in turn onto the lower planes of manifestation, becoming even more limited and obscured in consciousness, as a personality (i.e., a relatively blind or sleeping soul). What must remain on the higher levels (monadic and solar, respectively) is the archetype and associated thread of consciousness (matrix relating the source in its original state with the descended essence).

The significance of this perspective is that the personality is the soul and the soul is the monad, i.e., each “holds” the reality of the source within them and nothing is lost through the process of ascension (evolution in consciousness) back to the levels from which we came. As a personality, one can draw upon the soul within (not merely upon some “overshadowing” soul) and actually identify with something within oneself (more properly with what one really is), rather than merely aspiring to some reunion with some transcendental self. Likewise in the case of the soul in relation to the monad. This is of course much more appealing to the mind and personality.

This (relatively more personal) perspective does not imply that the soul or monad can be corrupted in any permanent sense, as one must still be purified, qualified, refined, and uplifted to the higher levels, leaving behind the lower, coarser vibrations, as the focus of (unitary) consciousness is repolarized successively on one (successively higher) plane or sub-plane of consciousness after another. The weakness of this perspective lies in the sense that one must evolve oneself, as there is (in this perspective) no higher self on some higher level to assist in the process other than in the sense of an underlying archetype or potentiality to be unfolded.

The paradox of descension or reflection is resolved in a third perspective in which rather than an “either-or” approach one can take an “and” approach to the problem. This third perspective acknowledges the combination of descension and reflection, with the monad periodically sending forth a part or aspect of itself (as a soul) to the lower levels while simultaneously remaining (albeit silently) on its own level. Similarly, the soul periodically sends forth a part or aspect of itself (as a personality) to (yet) even lower levels. The higher is not obscured by the lower and remains ready and willing to assist the lower to the extent that the lower can make itself responsive to the quality of the higher. One is, simultaneously, the immanent and transcendental aspects of one’s being (and both are divine). Nothing (at least nothing real) is lost in the process of ascension.

The human being is therefore a noble creature (as all lives are), yet embedded in matter (illusion) and having within the seeds of development above and beyond that illusion. One need only focus on the higher aspect of one’s being, and all of the necessary inner unfoldment will be subsequently achieved. In the final analysis, all three perspectives are correct, depending on one’s point of view. The only problem arises when one tries to draw conclusions and inferences based upon a limited or narrow perspective. But in the third perspective (the broad view) there is no such internal inconsistency. The broad view (holistic) is generally the more significant, in any application.

† Commentary No. 868

Descension or Reflection 3

Thus a paradox is merely a matter of limited perspective, but confusion may continue to arise due to semantics. When one refers to the monad (soul) (personality) [respectively], one should be referring to that aspect of the whole human being, on its level, not in its descendent or as its reflection. The aspect of the monad (soul) that remains on its level is the higher reality of that monad (soul). The aspect of the monad (soul) which descends (or is reflected) is the lower reality of that monad (soul). Thus the descendent (reflection) should be identified as such (as the soul (personality) (respectively)).

In much of the metaphysical and theosophical literature, however, this semantic discipline is not adhered to, either because an author lacks awareness of these distinctions (e.g., believes otherwise), or because words are used by different people to mean different things, or because words have been mistranslated, or because an author wishes to safeguard aspects of the teaching through blinks, etc. Thus, one should always look for the context of the material being read or studied (and the relative quality of the material) rather than presuming the meaning of a particular word (e.g., ego or soul).

Another aspect of the problem is identification. The bulk of humanity identify with their physical bodies and to some extent their emotions and minds, but virtually all with their egos (personalities), however those personalities are perceived. The "soul" is commonly (inconsistently) referred to as the deeper aspect of one's personality, due to semantic confusion (and the failure of the bulk of humanity to realize any self-essence beyond the superficial appearance of the material body). Thus attempts to "mechanize" or "materialize" the "soul" by association with the lower (or lowest) of the bodies effectively discourages or inhibits any real appreciation of the soul or higher self.

And yet, this is true, in the sense of that aspect or portion of the soul that is descended or reflected into the lower self. When one states "I am That Soul" one is (properly) identifying with that higher self, indwelling and overshadowing, but it is wrong (or at least misleading and inhibiting) to think or associate that "soul" with some aspect of the lower self, e.g., to attribute lower human qualities (affection, anger, etc.) to the soul or higher self. The soul is, properly perceived, impersonal and unaffected by the trials and tribulations (attachments and entanglements) of the lower self (personality). The love-quality-wisdom of the soul is thus properly perceived as distinctly different (higher in quality and composure) than the lower self.

From the standpoint of higher reality, oneness prevails and we are more correct in perceiving the personality and soul and monad as a single, wholly integrated entity. But in practical (manifested) reality, duality is more honest and more effective in the sense that in consciously recognizing the distinction between the lower and higher selves, we are thereby able to aspire from one to the other, not by discarding the lesser, but by purifying (qualifying) (refining) (uplifting) the lesser onto the higher, by becoming in conscious awareness that higher self (not

by bringing the lesser aspects along with the waking-consciousness, but by assuming the attributes and quality of that higher self). In short, effective ascension means approaching the higher self on its level, not by trying to draw the higher self down to the lower levels of the ego-personality. In fact, even the soul immanent remains effectively on its own (higher) level, and it is only the limitation of human (personality) consciousness that confuses the issue.



Section 4.212



The Soul or Higher Self

- The soul is the aspect of consciousness, the reflection of the monad into the field of consciousness. The soul consists of atma, buddhi, and manas. Atma is the principle of spiritual will. Buddhi is the principle of spiritual intuition. And manas is, in this context, the principle of mind in the higher, abstract sense. The soul as atma-buddhi-manas is beyond the ability of the bulk of humanity to sense, for it does not participate directly in the everyday life and consciousness, experience and expression, of the human personality. What is usually and popularly termed "soul" is something else entirely, and merely the relatively more subtle, deeper part of the human personality. "Soul" in the context of the esoteric philosophy is impersonal in the higher and warmer sense, sexless, and without focus or concern for mundane experience. The only known means for contacting the soul is through non-thinking and the egolessness of spiritual humility.

The Night of Time

According to the demands of evolution, the soul periodically descends into the world of matter, reflecting itself into the lower, objective world. That incarnation of the soul into the physical, emotional, and mental realms is sometimes referred to as the night of time. During the night of time, the personality consciousness is normally quite limited or constrained to the relative illusion (darkness) of separated existence in time and space.

The soul as the unit of human evolution gradually evolves from emptiness (unconsciousness) to completion. It is only during the later stages of the path that the soul has unfolded sufficiently and the personality is sufficiently responsive to the soul, that soul-consciousness can be achieved. Normally there is no recollection of previous lifetimes (nor is such recollection necessarily an indication of soul-consciousness), but the conscience that is the storehouse of experience, and the virtues and talents that have been earned are usually present, at least unconsciously. For most, it would be a hindrance and a distraction to have conscious knowledge either of past lives or of the probable future. Besides, it is the essence of that previous experience that matters, and that essence exists in the soul as quality and character.

The spiritual student learns to live quietly and peacefully in the eternal present, without clinging to the past or basing happiness on what the future may bring. True happiness is a quality of the timeless self (soul), an expression of the God within, an attitude of mind. Only when the timeless life has been achieved can there be true freedom and happiness. The purpose of life is not to escape from the world, but to evolve beyond the limitations of the world while retaining the ability to live and work in the world with true freedom (wisdom).

The truly free soul works unhindered through a purified personality nature. Circumstances of time and situation should be taken in stride, without distraction. The student need not be discouraged by world conditions or the particular situations and circumstances to be faced. As the spiritual student progresses, the hold of the various illusions (time and space, duality) lessens and the student is gradually led out of the darkness into the light of greater

existence, onward and upward toward higher consciousness and unity of life. The esoteric darkness (the limited awareness of the personality in the lower worlds) is overcome and the soul is then able to function more effectively in both worlds (objective and subjective). Having completed the evolution (relative perfection) in the physical, emotional, and mental planes, the soul then moves on into a higher spiral of evolution. But in order for the student of life to reach that state of relative perfection, the student must assimilate the experience and knowledge gained in the lower worlds and enter into the timeless (eternal) perspective (which is immortality).

The night of time for an individual may be measured in years, but the night of time for humanity is measured (in time) by millennia. The night of time for humanity becomes increasingly important as the spiritual student deepens and as the unity of humanity as one life is gradually realized. There is then increasing concern for humanity (and the greater incarnation). The soul is a unified onlooker who views the unfolding events and experience in time and space as an essential part of the timeless plan for the evolution of human consciousness. And it is as that soul that the individual truly contributes to the consciousness of humanity. As life and all events are seen in terms of consciousness (rather than in terms of individuals in time and space), then the night of time shall become a dawn of continued awakening for all of humanity.

† Commentary No. 133

The Higher Self

The soul is the abstract and subjective expression of the monad, the upper triad of atma-buddhi-manas, and the unit of human evolution and synthesis. It is the true individuality, of which the human personality is but a shadow (reflection) (expression) (instrument) in the lower worlds.

Whereas the personality is mortal (temporary), the soul is relatively immortal, incorporating the patterns for personality development (incarnation) and assimilating the character, experience, and quality produced through the personality. As the higher self, the soul is relatively insensitive to the pain or pleasure of the personality; the soul is not concerned with specific events in time

and space in any objective sense. The soul is only really sensitive to overall quality, which is the integration of personality experience. Thus, quality (the soul) is beyond (the transience of) time and space.

The three aspects of the soul form a trinity in consciousness. The first or highest aspect is atma, which implies spiritual will and purpose, the seat of identification. Atma is the aspect which is most detached or removed from the lower life, and provides a thread or link to the monad. The second aspect is buddhi, which implies spiritual intuition, the seat of union. Where atma provides the power of choice (in the divine sense), buddhi provides the power of insight. Buddhi is the real seat of spiritual perception, being the central element in soul-consciousness. In buddhi is found the dynamic quality of the soul itself, which is love (inclusiveness) in its higher (impersonal) sense. The third or lowest aspect of the soul is manas, which is the principle of mind. Manas provides the thread or link between the soul and its personality, through intelligence and spiritual activity. Through the union of buddhi and manas (love and intelligence) (soul and personality) is produced wisdom.

The soul is the consciousness of life which is expressed through the three elements (physical body, emotions, and mind) and the seven major chakras (and the many lesser centers) of the personality. The chakras provide for the communication of energy between soul and personality. The personality is the agent (means) of experience and expression, while the soul is the method of consciousness (uninvolved and unentangled). The soul perceives the effects (as integrated experience and quality) of life in the lower worlds, but only indirectly. For those who are not on the spiritual path, the soul extracts (assimilates) the experience of each lifetime in the interval between incarnations. For those who are on the path, that process of assimilation becomes more direct as soul contact is achieved during the lifetime.

At the interface between the concrete (rational) (personal) (objective) mind of the personality and the abstract (impersonal) (subjective) mind of the soul is found a key to soul-consciousness. The concrete mind is limited by form, whereas the abstract mind is free of thinking entirely. In the soul, thinking is replaced by direct realization and comprehension. In the soul is consciousness without form, and the awareness of consciousness itself. The soul is thus characterized by internal recollectedness and constant (unstructured)

meditation. The various personal attributes relate to the higher ones through the principle of correspondence, but to think of the soul in ordinary human terms can be quite misleading. Through identification (in actuality) with the soul, the meaning of the character of the soul becomes apparent. Words are not enough to describe the true mystical experience (realization) imparted through the inner communion. The silence of the presence of the soul must be entered, almost constantly, in order to appreciate or understand that nature of reality.

† Commentary No. 214

The Soul

The soul is the first or primary reflection of the monad into consciousness. The soul is itself a triplicity, functioning on three levels of consciousness. Those three levels associated with the soul form an upper triad of atma-buddhi-manas. Atma provides a quality analogous to the spiritual will. Buddhi is the next lower level of soul-consciousness which manifests as the true (subjective) (spiritual) intuition. Manas is the next lower dimension, the principle of mind. In the case of the soul, manas refers primarily to the abstract or higher mind, that aspect of mind that is unburdened by thought-forms. This upper triad of atma-buddhi-manas is the derivation or reflection of the monad on soul levels. By correspondence, atma is more directly related to the soul itself; and manas relates the soul to its own reflection, which is the personality.

Also by correspondence, the seven rays relate directly to the three aspects of the human life, to the three aspects of the soul, and to the seven principles of human experience. The monad is the first ray aspect, providing the ultimate thread of unrealized purpose. The soul or upper triad is the second ray aspect, providing the method or process of evolution (consciousness). The personality is the third aspect, providing the means of experience. Atma is governed by the third ray since it is the third of seven planes of consciousness, but as the first or highest aspect of the soul it is also qualified primarily by the first ray. Buddhi is governed by the fourth ray since it is the fourth plane of consciousness, but as the second aspect of the soul it is also qualified primarily by the second ray. Manas is governed by the fifth ray since it is the fifth plane of consciousness, but as the third aspect of the soul, it is also qualified primarily by the third ray.

Thus each aspect or element is qualified by one or more of the seven rays, by correspondence and by relativity.

The soul is viewed as the relatively immortal essence that incarnates under the law of karma, time and time again, through the various personality rays. That evolution of the soul contributes also to the evolution of the greater life, for each of the three aspects of the human being correspond (analogously) to cosmic, solar, and planetary manifestations. The human monad is inherently absorbed in the unified and singular monadic life which corresponds to a reflection of the planetary monad on cosmic physical levels. And the human soul is inherently a part of the soul aspect of planetary life, as a group soul that corresponds to the planetary soul as reflected into the cosmic physical plane.

The human soul is the aspect of consciousness, that essence that relates life in the lower worlds to the divine life of monadic and cosmic existence. The soul naturally transcends the earthly worlds of consciousness, yet persists as the totality of integrated experience, talent, virtue, and conscience. As the subjective individuality, the soul reflects itself into the lower regions of human consciousness as a personality that, in turn, functions through several vehicles or bodies. Like the monad, the soul is without sexual distinction; only the androgynous personality is manifested as either male or female.

The soul also exists as a seat of dispassion, uninvolved in personality matters, yet in its own way it is subjectively linked to the quality of personality experience. The indwelling (overshadowing) soul creates the personality (as the soul is a creation or reflection of the monad), and although the soul does qualify the personality more directly than its higher counterpart. The soul remains essentially on its own level, a part (aspect) of the soul is imbedded in the personality instrument to provide the needed linkage and continuity.

The Soul and Associated Notions

In most cases people (wrongly) consider the brain synonymous with the mind, without realizing that the brain is (merely) a physical instrument and that the mind is something else entirely, which just happens to utilize the brain (sometimes). Similarly, most people (wrongly) consider the soul as a matter of their innermost feelings and “true” nature, and thereby consciously or otherwise associate that (soul) with the higher and deeper part of the human personality (psyche). Those who actually think about the soul as an entity (reincarnating or otherwise) then usually progress to an association of that soul with the (even) more noble aspects of the personality. In short, virtually everyone (then) naturally (and wrongly) associates the soul with that with which they identify, which is, after all, the most noble aspect (of themselves) that a person can easily conceive.

Yet this is one of the biggest errors-of-thinking that we can make, i.e., viewing the soul or higher self as the more noble part of the human personality, as merely better and more noble than the human animal, yet an extension of the personality (e.g., being more kind, having greater reliance on reasoning, etc.). By attributing (unconsciously or consciously assuming) human (personality) (lower self) characteristics to the soul, e.g., as having noble desires and interests, we become entangled in our notions. This concept of the soul contrasts with the actuality of the soul, which is beyond the personality and of an entirely different order or dimension. As long as we view one as an extension of the other, we will continue to delude ourselves. It is only when we fully and consciously realize this distinction that union of soul and personality becomes possible.

Whenever we assume something that is not correct or real, then that assumption creates a very real barrier to the perception of the truth and subsequent understanding. Thus our assumptions, beliefs, opinions, etc., are all obstacles to union with the soul. If the waking-consciousness that identifies with the personality aspect (wrongly) assumes that it is the soul, then a rather formidable barrier is thereby established. If the waking-consciousness accepts the delusion of reality in three spatial dimensions and time, then a very substantial barrier is thereby established that prevents apprehension of the

fourth (spatial) dimension and that which is beyond time. In a sense, virtually every notion we have is a limitation of some sort. It is only when we pass beyond notions that we can embrace the truth of anything. By virtue of our lack of involvement (attachment) we are able to see clearly.

The problem comes from both the natural identification with the senses (the delusion of external and separate existence) and the reliance on intellect. The senses are greatly deceiving, even though they serve a purpose. When we identify with the senses, we deceive ourselves even further. We confuse our impressions with reality. We therefore “believe” based on superficial observations compounded by our own conditioning. When the intellect is brought to bear, it generally complicates matters by virtue of its lack of realization, i.e., if it does not (because it cannot) recognize the soul for what it is, it imagines or postulates or assumes or reasons what the soul must be, and then loses even the realization that this is merely imagination (postulation) (assumption) (reasoning) [respectively] and accepts its conclusions as facts.

Through detachment (more properly through intelligent non-attachment), one can (and must) rise above the notions of the intellect and (without expectation or preconception) actually contact the soul and (ultimately) achieve union.

† Commentary No. 1044

Self and Not-Self

In the preponderance of serious spiritual teachings, regardless of particular religion or spiritual approach, all of the great spiritual teachers have said essentially the same thing, in their various ways, namely that, eventually, in order to awaken and achieve conscious union with the God-Self, one must recognize the distinction between the Self and the not-self, recognize that one is asleep in the not-self, achieve disentanglement from (reliance on) sense experience, and definitely subordinate the not-self to the Self, thus transcending the bulk of glamour and illusion associated with egoistic and personality-centered experience.

There is no well-defined prescription for this process. Each must find the way alone, by turning within. By turning within, by subordinating the lesser self, the inner guidance (voice of the silence) (conscience) (wisdom of previous experience) (qualification from the higher Self) is revealed, naturally and to the extent that the student is responsive. Responsiveness depends on preparation, e.g., relative purification and qualification of the physical, etheric, astral (emotional), and concrete mental (intellectual) nature. Without both preparation and determination, the ego will continue to dominate.

Most people, even spiritually-minded people, have yet to realize that what they identify with as the Self or soul is in fact merely the artificial personality or not-self. That not-self will do whatever it can to prevent and undermine this realization, seeking to sustain its own artificial existence and power as the center of apparent consciousness. Even those who recognize this intellectually, tend to make excuses (in the not-self) for sustaining the hold of the not-self on the waking-consciousness. But those who really do turn within, making the necessary distinction between Self and not-self, effectively temper the lower nature and all of its involvements in the realm of sense experience and expression, achieve disentanglement, and achieve the fulfillment and joy of union with the God-Self.

Some argue that by giving themselves completely to their sensual experience they achieve spiritual union with all life. This is a delusion of the ego. Some argue that there is no distinction between the Self and the not-self, that all is one. This is true, in the higher sense. But to hold on to the not-self (in itself) is to experience the delusion of oneness and undermine and inhibit real union with the higher Self. That delusion may be sensual and/or intellectual, but it is simply not real. Before the truth (reality) (Self) can be realized, one has to pass beyond the state of separation that exists in the not-self. And in order to do that, one must make the distinction between the Self and the not-self, let go of the lesser (not-self), overcoming the power of that artificial existence, and in subordinating the lower to the higher, allow the Self to completely qualify all of the lower life. The resulting (inner) joy is almost overwhelming in its magnitude and extent, subtle though it is.

No sense experience whatsoever can compare with that inner joy. For those who have ever (even) touched that Self, even momentarily, will forever be

haunted (gratefully) by that greater Self, and the pleasures of worldly and personality experience will gradually lose their appeal. One will continue to enjoy life, incidentally, but the orientation will be almost entirely to the inner life and not the outer. The outer life will then always be placed in the context of the inner life. Rapport with all life is then revealed as a decidedly interior experience. And the enlightened will then walk among the world without even being noticed.

† Commentary No. 1157

The Presence of the Soul

The soul, as defined and understood in the context of the esoteric philosophy (i.e., as the upper triad of atma-buddhi-manas), is always present, within the human being, whether a person is in or out of incarnation. However, the presence of the soul is generally not felt or sensed until the personality nature (physical, emotional, intellectual) has reached quiescence. Or, in other words, the presence of the soul is perceived to the extent of the absence of personality-centeredness (ego).

While many people refer to the soul, they generally refer to the inner feelings of the personality, or the deeper aspect of the lower nature, which is not the soul (atma-buddhi-manas) or higher Self. While the soul manifests in relatively subtle ways, to the extent that the personality will allow (unconsciously), the soul is not involved or entangled in the day-to-day life and experience and expression of the ego (personality). Until the person matures sufficiently, through tempering the personality nature and achieving some degree of non-entanglement (in the senses and the world), the soul does not have any direct influence on the personal life. But once the personality is tempered, once the ego is transcended to some extent, once the lower consciousness is refined sufficiently, then the soul will gradually make its presence felt on the lower (more objective) levels.

The presence of the soul is not exciting. Being excited precludes the presence of the soul. The presence of the soul is a quiet, rather subtle joy that goes well beyond and tempers even more so the personal experience. The presence of the soul also generally evokes considerable pain, as the remnants of ego work to

obstruct and resist that higher presence. The soul brings a sense of otherworldliness, of not really belonging in this lower, outer world, yet brings also love and light to qualify the lower experience and thereby make it more meaningful (not meaningful in the ego-sense of importance but meaningful in the subtle sense of balance (dharma)). There is evoked both a strong, inner (real) sense of unity, with humanity and all of life, felt not merely experienced through intellectual appreciation, as well as a sense of distance, from the worldly nature of humanity entangled in sense experience (asleep in personality-centeredness).

The presence of the soul is a very quiet, very subtle experience. Whenever the personality emerges into manifestation (through thinking or feeling) then the presence of the soul is lost. But when the emotions are calmed and aspiration is subtle, when the mind is clear and quiescent (merely observing without thinking or judging), then the presence of the soul can be felt. The presence of the soul is felt during (true) meditation (rarely achieved by the preponderance of people who meditate) but the objective of the spiritual student is to so feel or sense the presence of the soul that that presence dominates the waking-consciousness, even while the student is engaged in worldly non-entanglement (i.e., going about his or her business in the world, without being absorbed at the personality or worldly level).

The role of the lower self is to provide a vehicle for the manifestation of the higher Self. Yet the preponderance of experience and expression in the world is merely preparatory to that manifestation. Preparation is essential. Without preparation, the presence of the soul would overwhelm the personality. Yet as the personality-centeredness is overcome, as the student becomes more and more attuned to the soul, then the presence (energy) (quality) (value) of the soul comes streaming through the purified, refined, uplifted lower self.

Section 4.213



Aspects of the Soul 1

- The soul is the source of accumulated wisdom for the incarnated human being. The soul is the vehicle of perfection or completeness. Experience at the personality level is extracted, refined, and retained by the soul, and made available to some extent to the personality in subsequent incarnations.

The Individual Heritage

The individual heritage of a soul is the totality of experience acquired during its existence coupled with all of the energies of experience available to it. That experience may manifest itself in many ways, through capabilities, quality (consciousness), and character; everything that the soul is or can manifest on any level of its consciousness (including those of the personality).

The largest portion of the individual heritage is that which was acquired during earlier existence, both in the case of the individual life (consciousness) and in the case of the independently-evolved form. All of the experience of the soul (consciousness) assimilated from prior incarnations contributes directly to the individual heritage. From the earliest existence of the soul (as a distribution of consciousness within the group soul) through the various stages of involution (prior to self-consciousness) and evolution (after self-consciousness (individualization)), all of the experience is enfolded into the energy pattern (reservoir) of the soul. Thus, all of the specific lessons of evolution through the various kingdoms (elemental, mineral, plant, animal, and human) contribute to what the soul is and to the capabilities and consciousness of that soul. The same is true for the forms which the soul appropriates for utilization in any particular lifetime (incarnation).

By association with the forms of the personality (the various bodies), the soul inherits the experience of the forms in addition to its own experience. In other words, the form follows its own pattern of evolution, and as the soul appropriates (creates) the form out of matter, the actual (earlier) experience of the atoms of matter which comprise the form is available to the indwelling consciousness. The experience of the form in manifestation is also a part of this heritage. The present (immediate) existence of the form and its derived character are also important, for many characteristics are passed on by parent-atoms during the creative process. Those characteristics are, in part, the immediate consequence of the physical, emotional, and mental characteristics of the forms of the parents (or however the form is derived) and, to a certain extent, their qualification by the consciousness of the parents. This is, of course, in addition to the historical experience of the atoms themselves.

Probably the most potent factors in the individual heritage are the immediate experience of the soul (including its physical, emotional, and mental development through (and weighted heavily towards) the most recent incarnation) and the current state of its karma. Many environmental factors controlled largely by the soul and its karma contribute directly to the immediate heritage of the soul. Much depends on the ability of the soul to sift through the environmental (karmic) factors and control them (or more precisely, to control the response (if any) to those factors). Furthermore, the soul chooses (subjectively) (within karmic limits) what characteristics will be manifested or emphasized in a particular incarnation (out of those which have been earned or developed). Thus the entire heritage is available, but not all of that heritage is used. Only that which is needed or pertinent is actually enfolded into the personality patterns.

Finally, perhaps the most important factor is the dynamic and creative ability of the soul in incarnation (how the soul applies its heritage to life in the lower worlds and lessons in consciousness). The soul may (if it can), from time to time, adjust various factors, bringing in new energies and withdrawing old ones, as needed. The soul (and the enlightened personality) can actually draw consciously upon its entire heritage, and that of the entire lifewave.

† Commentary No. 365

Perfection and the Soul

The impulse (impelling force) for human evolution arises from the underlying qualification of manifestation (i.e., evolutionary purpose) and from the archetype of the soul (and its relationship to the soul and to the reflection of the soul (the personality)). The general evolutionary impulse is actually a broad wave of qualification, stimulation, and encouragement. The archetypal impulse is a response to the distinction between the archetype and the soul, serving to draw the soul to its completion in fulfillment of its archetype.

The quest for perfection for the soul as an evolutionary unit and for humanity as a lifewave is a natural response to evolutionary encouragement. The reflection

of the soul (i.e., the personality) is the means or instrument of experience leading to assimilation (wisdom). The archetype of the soul represents the intended (idealized), perfected state for the soul (i.e., the relative, intermediate perfection (completion) that is possible at this stage) (each stage is a portion (phase) of an unlimited chain of progressive states). The archetype is perfect in the sense of intended quality of consciousness (and other, general characteristics). But the archetype is only a qualified matrix (the potential of the perfected soul), not the soul itself.

The soul begins as an unfulfilled reflection of the monad, as a focus for assimilated experience and related forces of manifestation, but essentially void of experience. It incorporates (reflects) the basic quality and character of the oversoul (the essential nature of the soul), but is lacking in achievement. The perfected soul, on the other hand, has achieved all of the intended quality and character and more, for the experience leading to that (intermediate) perfected state brings with it particular (complementary) achievements that are the creative contributions of the lifewave. But for those particular achievements to be included in the soul requires that they meet the more general standards of quality and character as well. The soul's nature is to assimilate (subjectively) the integrated experience of the personality, incorporating only the positive quality and character (i.e., that meets the general standards of the soul (archetype)). Thus, the soul is gradually filled with proper quality (consciousness) and ultimately is fulfilled (completed).

The role of the personality is to learn by virtue of earned experience and gradually express more and more of the soul's character and quality. The personality does not evolve, per se, but is developed, cultivated, and utilized by the soul for evolutionary purposes (the composite lives within the personality do, however, evolve by virtue of personality experience). The personality is a reflection or indication of the soul's maturity, and the qualities and characteristics of that personality are an indication of the more refined quality and character (or lack thereof) of the soul. The soul does not incorporate any of the lesser characteristics of the personality.

The wisdom (assimilated experience) of the soul can be evoked to the extent that the personality is aligned and/or responsive. Since the soul has an intrinsic rapport (coherent relationship) with the oversoul (and the Christ or cosmic

principle), the soul can also act as an intermediary between the higher wisdom and the mind of the personality. Thus energies can be evoked (potentially) by virtue of the intrinsic nature of the soul as well as the soul's particular quality. As the soul progresses, it gradually achieves the perfection implied by the archetype, and becomes a considerable creative (intermediate) source of energy. And as even the soul is transcended, another path to "perfection" is realized and another sojourn or quest begun.

† Commentary No. 505

The One Soul

The second ray aspect of unity is the one soul, otherwise known as the oversoul or the basic consciousness of the planetary logos. All individual and group souls within that basic consciousness are part of the second ray aspect of the planetary logos. The oversoul is singular (unitary) in the sense that it is a coherent, integrated, unified whole, with a distinct, functional identity within the life of the planetary logos and an internally and externally recognizable aspect of planetary manifestation.

When the planetary logos begins its manifestation as a planetary scheme, its first aspect evokes the second aspect (the one soul) into being. That evocation includes a succession of lifewaves, the souls of each of which are part of the continuum of the one soul. As each lifewave is differentiated into group souls and (in some cases) individual souls, the continuum remains and differentiated existence (at the soul level) is not the separation in consciousness that is so apparent at the level of the reflection of the soul (i.e., at the personality level). At the soul level, differentiation implies a consciousness that is simultaneously distinct and indistinct from the one soul, but any particular soul does not lose the consciousness of the whole (if a soul at any stage of evolution loses the consciousness of the whole, then that soul is destroyed (dissolved) and its monad must recreate a new solar distinction within the fabric of the oversoul).

The one soul provides the basis for intuitive, telepathic rapport for any who can embrace the soul on its own level. The one soul provides a major facility for the unfoldment and fulfillment of the evolutionary plan (in the context of the planetary scheme). The one soul provides a basis for relationship (unity)

between the various lifewaves and lesser constituents, since each is one with the oversoul and distinctions are merely apparent in the manner of manifestation but not essentially so. The oversoul provides a means of overcoming any paradox (conflict) within (incarnated) manifestation, since distinctions on the lower (objective) levels serve a more general purpose (experience and development and expression of the one soul). The oversoul also provides the power (potential) for overcoming the illusion of separateness and for dissolving the various glamours which serve to challenge the evolving consciousness.

The practical significance of the one soul exceeds that of the one spirit and that of the manifold. The one spirit (first ray aspect) is undifferentiated from the perspective of the incarnated consciousness, while the manifold (manifested forms and their respective (lower) consciousness) is quite distinctly differentiated (at that lower level), although unity is still embraced in two dimensions (the field of manifestation (etheric web, etc.) that binds all separate (incarnated or manifested) units of consciousness together and the bridge to the soul). The practical significance of the one soul is its essential simultaneity in perspective, being one (a continuum embracing all souls, all souls being aspects of the one soul), and being many (group souls, soul groups, individual souls, etc.) without loss of unity. The practical significance of the manifold is merely that of experience, while the soul provides endurance and continuity.

An evolutionary unit in the highest (immediate) human sense is one who can consciously embrace the consciousness of the soul at its level, bathe in that oneness (and beauty) (and intensity), and manifest that embraced energy (force) on all levels of its (local) manifestation.

Group Souls

The first differentiation of the (planetary) oversoul is that of the succession of the various lifewaves. Each lifewave is a relatively distinct qualification within the one soul, having certain characteristics and potentials (and intentions), and serves as a unifying force for all subsequent differentiation (within the soul of the lifewave). Each lifewave is thus specialized to some extent and has faced (and will face) relatively different conditions (environments and forces acting therein), although each passes through the various kingdoms in turn and achieves the same (basic) overall experience (in the most integrated and general sense).

The differentiation of the oversoul takes place as a consequence of the forces applied to it. Those forces (which are in turn a consequence of the evolutionary plan) provide a variation in qualification throughout the continuum, with both major and minor distinctions (variations). Each lifewave emerges as a coherent group soul within the one soul (oversoul). Further differentiation may occur according to the degree of development of the lifewave, its place in the cycles of manifestation, and the conditions to be faced. A group soul is typically evoked for every intended species (or group of species) within a lifewave. Each group soul provides a means of particular and appropriate qualification for its (group) manifestation on more objective (physical, astral, or mental) levels, and a means of integrating and assimilating the experience and progress of its elements.

Each element of (objective) manifestation within the field of consciousness of a group soul will naturally reflect the basic consciousness, character, and temperament of its group. The relatively more highly evolved elements (and groups) will also naturally reflect some measure of localized distinction due to particular experience and/or particular conditions (but upon subsequent manifestation (group incarnation) there will not normally be any correlation between (particular) current and previous elements, since the group soul (for subhuman lifewaves) is not differentiated into individual elements). All nonetheless contribute to the evolution of the (group) soul (and oversoul), each according to their experience.

The group soul provides some measure of guidance for its elements by virtue of its qualification. This is manifested in terms of physical (emotional) (mental) characteristics, abilities, instincts, etc. But there are some basic, considerable limitations upon that group qualification, including external (environmental) qualification and internal (elemental or constitutional) qualification. The forms utilized by the (group) soul are normally more responsive (reactive) to environmental and constitutional forces than they are to higher (soul) qualification. The Earth's environment is heavily qualified by the fourth ray of harmony through conflict, and this provides a considerable opportunity for experience at the expense of considerable difficulty and effort to meet the implied challenge. The elemental nature further provides considerable (instinctive) qualification of the form and its consciousness. Thus much of the intention of the group soul is to develop particular forms, through experimental (experiential) trials, and particular qualification to encourage or insure a successful (eventual) overcoming of these limitations.

Group souls provide a necessary intermediacy between the one soul and the elements (forms and associated consciousness) of objective manifestation. Eventually as a group soul progresses sufficiently, it is able to give birth to a number of self-conscious individuals.

† Commentary No. 507

Individualization

The process of individualization marks the transition of a group soul into the human kingdom and is the culmination of aeons of involutory and evolutionary preparation. Individualization is the process by which the fabric of the group soul is distinctly qualified such that each incarnated expression is associated with its respective elements of that group soul, in a recurring manner, until the incarnated expression achieves self-consciousness.

The group soul is alive and conscious as a group soul regardless of having undergone the differentiation that individualization implies, but each soul that emerges within that group soul by virtue of the individualization process then becomes conscious as a distinction within the group soul, ever impersonal and ever aloof with respect to its incarnated reflection (personality).

Individualization does not diminish the coherent (unifying) consciousness of the group soul (or oversoul); rather, it magnifies the potency of that group soul and lifts it to a higher level from which to guide and qualify its elements (individual souls), without losing its embrace of its constituents.

Individualization occurs in response to the plan and by virtue of variabilities in the qualification of the group soul and variabilities inherent in the fabric of that soul. A primary variability in qualification is according to the seven rays, so that the group soul is naturally differentiated into seven soul groups, each being qualified by and a manifestation of a particular ray. Thus each soul has a primary (major qualifying) ray that indicates its nature (character) (potential). As the soul evolves it incarnates progressively through the seven rays, (meaning that for any particular incarnation the soul will evoke one or another of the seven rays as a personality ray, to qualify the experience and expression of that incarnated personality), but remains as a soul qualified primarily by its own (soul) ray.

Within a lifewave, all of the group souls do not individualize at the same time, but progressively until all are individualized, according to the plan. The age of a soul (in the context of the esoteric philosophy) does not normally refer to the measure of time since it was individualized; it refers rather to the relative place of the soul with respect to the evolutionary path. Of all those souls who (which) individualize at a particular time, some will naturally evolve at a faster rate than others because of their inherent nature (responsiveness to evolutionary qualification) (consciousness, character, and temperament related to the variability of the substance or fabric from which souls are formed). That some should evolve quickly and others relatively slowly is necessary for continuity and progress on a larger scale. The pioneers provide encouragement to the whole (group soul) and lead the way to the next kingdom. The stragglers tend to develop different, even to some extent unanticipated characteristics, which nonetheless contribute to the whole.

The experience of an individual soul assimilated by virtue of its incarnated expression contributes both to the evolution of that soul (as a basic unit of evolution) and to the group soul (soul group) (humanity) (oversoul). The magnitude of the particular assimilated energy will be greater for the individual and will potentially directly affect any subsequent incarnated expression, but

the magnitude of the characteristic (generic) assimilated energy (within the group soul) will still be considerable and will simply less directly qualify all within that group soul. As a soul (and as a group soul) evolves, its capacity for learning increases and therefore its evolution in consciousness is naturally accelerated (which implies that time is non-linear).

† Commentary No. 508

Soul Groups

An individual soul is simultaneously one with the planetary oversoul, the human group soul, and a ray group soul (one of seven within the group soul of the human lifewave). In addition to these inherent associations, a soul may be associated with one or another or more of a number of soul groups. Soul groups are more specialized than group souls and may or may not be related to the individualization process. Soul groups may be relatively transient or enduring (more significant) as is the association of an individual with a soul group, depending on the nature of the soul relationships.

In the early stages following individualization, the soul groups to which an individual is related are primarily part of the individualization process and the ensuing incidental (karmic) relationships (associations). As racial, tribal, and family groups emerge (by association), so are the participating souls casually related. Normally, through the course of diverse experience in many incarnations those (racial) (tribal) (family) (karmic) relationships lose significance. Sometimes attachments are persistent even in diversity and strong measures are necessary to dissolve those relationships. These groups by association (lesser soul groups) are significant and purposive for their time, but are (should be) relatively transient, being incidental to the evolutionary process, while (greater) soul groups that emerge as a consequence of evolutionary progress (rather than merely evolutionary experience) are more enduring and therefore more significant.

From the standpoint of the oversoul and the group soul (humanity), the path from individualization (the birth of self-consciousness and the entrance into the human kingdom) to initiation (the birth of group consciousness and the exit

from the human kingdom) is one in which the group soul is transformed and reconstituted, beginning with the group souls and ending with (evolutionary) (greater) soul groups. In some cases a karmic group from the individualization process (a group soul) will be strong enough and sufficiently distinct (and responsive to the evolutionary plan) to endure as an evolutionary group, but for the most part the (proper) soul groups emerge during the later stages of the path as those who evolve at a particular pace and in a particular manner (i.e., being responsive to the same forces and in essentially the same ways) naturally work together on the soul level and form soul groups for progress (service) rather than (incidental) experience.

Thus in this proper sense, a soul group is a group of souls which evolve together (not necessarily in incarnation together) and develop a certain telepathic rapport (on soul levels) that helps constitute the soul group as an evolutionary entity. This soul group then (at some stage of evolution) constitutes an ashramic group within the human hierarchy and serves as a basis for service (the work of the path) and eventually for liberation. Souls can be attracted to such a (proper) soul group by virtue (maturity) (quality of consciousness) and participate in its work and pass on to appropriate (further) work according to their abilities and calling.

The early soul groups are constituted within a framework of the seven (ray) group souls (not necessarily each within a ray group). So too are the (later) (greater) soul groups constituted, but in a much more meaningful way, for the early alignments are largely incidental while the later alignments are according to developed character and therefore much more contributive as soul groups. Ultimately, as group consciousness in the higher sense is developed, these proper soul groups are effectively constituted as group souls.

Section 4.214



Aspects of the Soul 2

- The soul is related to the angel of the presence. The soul is the essence of Self, in the higher, transcendental and deeper, immanent, sense. It is the qualification of the personality by the soul that offers encouragement in the context of the path. The fundamental quality of the soul in relationship to personality is humility. The personality is merely the echo of the soul. The real Self, the noble Self, is beyond all personality experience and expression, beyond individuality.

The Angel of the Presence

The angel of the presence is the soul of the monad and results in part from the activity of agnishvattas, the fire devas of the mental plane. The human soul is, from the personality perspective, the higher human consciousness and the link in consciousness between the lower self (personality) and the monad. But from the monadic perspective, the human soul is a vehicle of consciousness as much as it is consciousness. From the personality perspective, there is a clear distinction between the human personality and soul on the one hand and the comprising substance on the other. Likewise, from the personality perspective, there is also a clear distinction between human (active) lives (the human lifewave) and deva (passive) lives (the deva lifewave). But from the monadic view, the two (human and deva) are so closely coupled that the common distinctions are not so clear after all.

If the monad is the (realized) presence and the soul is the (unrealized) angel of that presence, then the soul includes its reflection (the personality) and a distinction can be made between rupa and arupa devas in connection with that soul. The lunar pitris are rupa devas which form the forms (substance) of the personality on its four levels (dense physical, etheric, astral, and rupa manas (lower mental)). The solar pitris are arupa devas which form the (relatively formless) substance (essence) of the soul. The devas of form (rupa devas) are called lunar, in part because they are (associated with) matter (the third aspect) and are therefore qualified by and naturally responsive to the forces of matter. The devas of formless substance (arupa devas) are called solar pitris, in part because they are (associated with) consciousness (the second or solar aspect) and are therefore qualified by and naturally responsive to the forces of consciousness.

Furthermore, the lesser (composite) deva lives on all levels are impelled by greater (composite) deva lives on those levels, so that, from the one perspective, the greater (planar) devas work upon the forms and vehicles of human consciousness on all levels, and forms are made of their substance (consciousness) (life) so that the human personality and the human soul are undeniably devic. From the deva perspective, the human (active) consciousness

is an inductance arising essentially from composite and synergistic deva substance, and therefore (from that perspective) artificial. From the human perspective, the opposite is true (the induced consciousness being real and the substance being relatively artificial).

The agnishvattas (fire dhyanis) (fire devas of the mental plane) are the builders of the (human) causal body, and are (in part) concerned with the development of the manasaputras, the (human) individualities (on the soul level where the principle of self-consciousness (individuality) is dual (simultaneously individual (particular) and collective (general))). The causal body (with its devic implications) is important as the seat of accumulated (substantive) evolutionary experience (wisdom), but is (in a broader perspective) simply one element of a master (and delicate) intersection of human (reflected monadic) force and deva force constituting the solar angel (more properly it is unfair (misleading) to refer to a (the) solar angel in human context, for it is a plurality of solar angels that form the soul with their substance (consciousness) (life)).

The work of human evolution is accomplished when the human being becomes one with the solar angels, when the (individual) inductance becomes self-realized and the distinction of human and deva is properly recognized (dissolved).

† Commentary No. 567

The Soul and the Self

In metaphysical philosophy the soul is commonly referred to as the higher self, in distinction to the personality (ego) or lower self, and to indicate a process of upliftment of that lower self into the life (love) and energy (qualification) of that higher aspect of the human being. The higher self (soul) is then a source of energy (wisdom) for the lower self (the mind) (the personality) to the extent of the responsiveness (alignment) (purification) (silence) of the lower self.

In this same sense (of soul as higher self), the soul is the true self (individuality) (unit of consciousness) (unit of evolution) which leads to God, the one (the divine self) (monad), and to humanity as a whole (the lifewave as a soul), while the ego (personality) is not the true self, but is, at best, a responsive instrument

of the soul (which affords conscious assimilation of experience), and, at worst, an unresponsive instrument of the soul (which denies conscious assimilation of experience but which affords experience nonetheless). In this same sense, the ego (personality) (lower mind) as a separate existence is part of the not-self, all of that which is not (real), which is merely illusion (associated with material existence), while the mind aligned with the higher self is relatively (more) real by virtue of its association with the soul. The soul then represents oneness (reality) while everything lesser sleeps within the illusion of objective experience.

But the implication of selfness to the soul (by the designation of its being a higher self) is somewhat misleading, for the soul is not a self in any sense comparable to the selfness of the personality. The personality is the illusion of individual existence (and the ego is an illusion within an illusion, being the illusion of the personality (mind) as a center, within the illusion of individual existence), while the soul is a window of oneness and the embodiment of selflessness, without the distraction of selfness. The personality looks outward to all that is not itself, while the soul looks inward in realization that the true self is all. While the personality identifies with itself (as a separate existence) and sees all through the perception or perspective of itself as an entity, the soul does not identify with itself (nor even with its instruments) but does see all through the perception or perspective of all. The perception of the soul as a soul is very, very dim, while the perception of the soul as the one (in which the soul is a barely differentiated element) is very bright.

To be truly oneself (in the highest sense) is nonetheless a goal of the spiritual aspirant, but the student should recognize that being oneself (in that highest sense) is to pass beyond selfness to being, and that one cannot take any aspect of separateness or ego to that beingness. The presence (extent) of ego rather effectively prevents any true realization of that which is beyond (yet hidden deeply within). Until the mask of the self is properly set aside, the value (vision) of the one cannot be appreciated. The path beyond selfness is relative detachment and the embrace of relative existence, in which the self is looked upon from without, as an object and not a subject (viewed subjectively and not objectively).

The effectiveness of the soul as an evolutionary unit (of consciousness) lies in its inherent notselfness. The personality is self-conscious and effective only as an instrument, while the soul is not self-conscious (being group-conscious) and is effective as a wholly absorbed element of that group consciousness.

† Commentary No. 571

Soul Qualification

The soul is the intermediary between the monad and the personality and neither directly qualifies the incarnated personality nor is directly qualified by the monad. The qualification of (by) the soul is necessarily relatively indirect, for the monad is not active relative to the soul and the soul is not (in most cases) active relative to the incarnated personality. The soul is qualified more or less indirectly by the ray (nature) of the monad, by the ray of the particular soul, by the ray of souls as a class, by the ray of the solar logos, by the ray of the planetary logos, etc., with the ray of the particular soul (being programmed in advance by the monad) and the ray of souls as a class (the second ray) dominating (the ray of souls as a class being reinforced by the ray of the solar logos).

The soul ray (the ray of the particular soul) is determined by the monad more or less independently of conditions on the level (consciousness) of the soul and is not directly or causally related to external (astrological) forces (qualification). Similarly, the personality ray (the ray of the particular (incarnated) personality) (the principal qualification of the (integrated) personality) is determined by the soul prior to incarnation (it is the personality matrix that is directly qualified by the soul) more or less independently of conditions on personality (physical, emotional, mental) levels and is not directly or causally related to external (astrological) forces (qualification). Although external (astrological) forces are not active on soul levels (the soul has (is) internal significance), they are active on personality levels, as external (dynamic) qualification to the extent and character of qualification (and inversely to the extent and character of the personality's responsiveness to the (qualification of the personality by the) soul).

Thus astrological forces dynamically and temporally qualify the (relatively) unaligned personality, and that (external) qualification is in addition to the fundamental ray qualification of the personality itself (which does not in general or necessarily correlate or coincide with the ray qualification that is derived from external (astrological) coincidence). The unintegrated or poorly integrated personality may more or less reflect the presiding astrological (ray) influence, while the (properly) integrated personality will reflect the fundamental (personality ray) qualification (and while the aligned personality will be more or less overshadowed by the soul ray). Astrological qualification is nonetheless derived from the (cyclic nature of the) seven rays, but in no way changes or determines the basic ray nature of the monad, soul, and personality (given that the personality ray of the bulk of human beings is generally masked by external forces (since the bulk are simply not aligned)).

The purpose of individual development along mental and spiritual lines is linked to increasing and expanding (the depth and breadth of) the responsiveness of the (integrated) personality to soul qualification. The only real difference between the highly evolved human being and the average human being is that the highly evolved are aligned (with their respective souls) and responsive to (manifesting) their respective soul rays (and soul nature) while the average are not so aligned and manifest merely the personality ray (and the personality nature). The graduation criteria for (from) the human experience is simply the achievement of (proper) alignment of soul and personality.

The personality (soul) does not qualify the soul (monad) except in the sense that the experience (existence) of the personality (soul) is assimilated by the soul (monad) (respectively).

Humility and the Soul

The nature of the soul is impersonal love. On the level of the soul that sense of love is pure, wholly impersonal, and uncluttered by any of the concerns of the personality or ego. The soul lives reposed, without activity per se, merely assimilating the experience of its reflection (the incarnated personality) and serving (qualitatively and subjectively) (not passively) to receive, qualify, and direct (transmit) (focus) energies of various (appropriate) kinds and measures.

The soul is not humble in the sense of “human” humility, for the soul does not characterize the range of human attributes in any personal sense. But the soul is characterized by what is considered (in the context of spiritual endeavor) the humble state. It is thus called not because the soul is humble (it is not, but neither is it lacking humility in any sense), but because in order for the mind (or focus of waking-consciousness) of the personality to achieve alignment with the soul, that mind must first achieve “the humble state.” Or in other words, humility is a necessary prerequisite for alignment. The human personality cannot be aligned with the soul unless it has achieved (proper) (active) humility and has achieved (is functioning within) the humble state (the mind needs to approximate the character and quality of the soul).

Humility (in this, positive sense) cannot be achieved and the human personality cannot be aligned with the soul (the God-Christ within) for as long as the mind or personality is relatively coarse. Humility cannot be achieved and the human personality cannot be aligned with the soul for as long as the ego is allowed to persist in any role other than complete subservience to the soul (and the path). Humility cannot be achieved and the human personality cannot be aligned with the soul for as long as there are emotional or (concrete) mental attachments, or for as long as the mind is noisy with its own thoughts and ideas (i.e., unresponsive to the soul qualification).

The soul is neither active nor passive, but reposed in the (true) humility of being. Anything that is false cannot be uplifted into the state of consciousness of the soul. Since the ego is the false (not true) self, the presence of ego effectively prevents or inhibits the alignment of the soul and personality. The soul is not

even open (responsive) to the personality (mind) until that mind (personality) is properly integrated and refined, and until the ego is properly subsumed (sublimated) (neutralized). In order for the mind and the soul to be aligned, the ego (concrete mind) must be entirely quiescent. As soon as the ego (separate, concrete mental activity) is resumed, the alignment of mind and soul is dissolved. Almost every aspect of life (discipline) approaching and upon the spiritual path has to do with subsuming the ego and (preparation for or) active service.

Thus humility is the key to approaching the soul and the key to the nature of the soul. In the humble state, the power of the soul can flow unimpeded by the separative mind or personality (because in such state the separative mind is not apparent). It is only when the mind (and heart) routinely (continually) achieve the humble state that the soul begins to respond to the presence (quality) of the personality (until that point, the soul is not aware of the personality (for the focus of the soul does not extend to objective levels of manifestation) and even when that point is reached, the soul remains indifferent to anything other than the presence (quality) of the mind of the personality). The concerns of the personality simply cannot intrude upon the repose (humility) of the soul.

† Commentary No. 823

The Echo of the Soul

The soul is a wave in the field of being of the monad. The human personality is a wave in the field of consciousness of the soul. This (solar) wave is an echo of the wave that constitutes the soul and is therefore a second-order wave relative to the soul (which is in turn a second-order wave relative to the monad and thus the personality is a third-order wave). In this sense, a wave is an intelligent (purposive) and qualified energy distribution and constitutes reality (life) (consciousness) (appearance) on some level. And in this sense, an echo is a reflected wave, and conveys the response of the medium through which the incident wave is passed.

The human personality is thereby an echo of the soul and a function of both the incident wave (the soul as projected) and the medium of the three (lower) worlds

of human experience and expression (i.e., the physical, emotional (astral), and concrete mental planes of consciousness). The incident wave (impulsive incarnation (the underlying purposive and karmically qualified impulse to incarnate)) is distorted (modified) by the relative coarseness (materiality) and quality (tonal response) of the medium (environment), as is the reflected wave (echo) distorted by the induced consciousness (the relative coarseness and quality (tone) of the human personality) (distributed incarnation (the induced response to the soul's impulse)).

From the perspective of the soul, the problem consists of assimilating the energy content (experience) of the reflected wave (echo). If the reflected wave is distorted appreciably (as in the case of the savage and even in the case of the average person), most of the energy content is diffused on more concrete levels and there is relatively little content that is detectable (and therefore able to be assimilated or absorbed by the soul on its level). As the human being evolves in consciousness the relative purity of the personality is improved and the quality (tone) of the personality begins to be felt by the soul. This is so because the personality then projects its quality more effectively "upward" and because the personality is functioning on relatively higher (less coarse) levels (i.e., the higher sub-planes). The medium (matter) acts as an effective filter. The coarse emanations of a personality are absorbed (or are reflected downward) by the material nature of the lower planes (and sub-planes) of consciousness, while the more refined emanations are passed onward (upward) to levels upon which the soul can operate.

The concrete mind of a highly refined and properly trained and qualified personality can actually reach equilibrium (balance) (relationship) with the abstract mind of the soul such that energy (qualification) can be exchanged (meaning that the soul can extract (assimilate) experience more directly and that the personality can be more directly qualified by the soul). But this can only occur (properly and effectively) where the personality (echo) is particularly clear (pure) (refined) and without even the hint of ego or personality-centeredness (personality presence) (personal or mundane energy). It is thus only in the absence of personality (in the sense of the personality being so refined that it reflects the energy of the soul without any distortion) that the soul (wave) and the personality (echo) can work effectively (harmoniously and contributively) together.

This (energy) perspective of the (incident) wave of the soul and the (less real) (reflected) wave (echo) of the personality is more descriptive of the way these entities operate (and appear from the higher perspective) than any material sense (illusion) (of separate or independent existence).

† Commentary No. 1061

The Noble Self

The process of evolution in consciousness and returning to the creative source (God) through that process of evolution in consciousness can also be viewed as a process of allowing the inner, deeper, noble Self (soul) to express itself through the outer, more superficial personal self (personality). Growth in consciousness can then be viewed as transcending the limitations of personal existence and embracing the reality of the noble, perfect Self. As that higher Self then expresses itself through the lesser vehicles (physical body, emotions, concrete mind) the lesser vehicles become more refined and even more responsive to that higher, inner presence. In this sense, the student does not so much “work” toward changing and improving himself or herself as cultivating responsiveness directly. The “changes” and improvements are thereby evoked as consequences of that reorientation in consciousness (focus on reality).

The higher Self is perfect. It is not lessened in any way by the passage of the lower self through the material and personality realms. The personality (mind) (ego) is what is absorbed in the lesser (less real) worlds of human endeavors. The personality is what suffers limitation and imperfection. The personality is what experiences and is deluded by the sense of separateness. But the higher Self remains perfect, on its level. Thus the “new age” concept of each person being perfect is not inconsistent with the more theosophical view of evolution in consciousness through the various cycles and planes of consciousness.

That leads to the question of why is there a need for evolution in consciousness if one is already, in actuality, perfect. The answer is that one is perfect in the sense of God’s presence, i.e., in the higher Self, but while that higher Self is indeed one with (connected directly with) the God-Self, that higher Self is

functioning only as a spark within a flame. As evolution proceeds, that spark becomes a flame. The higher Self becomes “complete” and is able to then manifest fully in the sense of being a creator within God (the logos) rather than merely as a perfect (but unfulfilled) existence. In other words there is purpose to this pilgrimage through matter and personality.

The inherent perfection of the higher Self lies in its direct connection to (being an expression of) the consciousness of the logos. But the higher Self is fundamentally a potentiality rather than an actuality. The actuality occurs only as and to the extent that the experience of the lesser self is assimilated into conscience. In the meantime, any connection that the lesser self is able to make with the higher Self facilitates both the growth in consciousness and the higher expression (uninhibited or less inhibited expression of the character, quality, and values of the higher Self through the medium of the lesser self).

The problem is that the lesser self is generally absorbed in its mundane, personal existence, and lacking awareness of its higher Self and true nature. As the light and love of the higher Self dawns in the consciousness of the lesser self (personality) (mind), an awakening occurs such that the existence of the higher Self is realized. Thereby haunted (inspired), the human consciousness (lesser self) gradually transcends its limitations, overcomes its delusion of separateness (independence) (ego) (materialistic and egoistic existence), and begins to manifest its true nature. The artificial essence (ego) is thereby relinquished in the higher reality, and the noble Self is fulfilled. The objective, then, of the spiritual student, is simply to consciously and deliberately facilitate this process.

