

Out-of-Body Perception & Ancient Cosmology

By Jim DeKorne

Jim DeKorne concludes his series of articles on the structure of reality by examining out of body awareness in the light of the perennial wisdom.

Rudiments of the Perennial Philosophy may be found among the traditional lore of primitive peoples in every region of the world, and in its fully developed forms it has a place in every one of the higher religions... [Its] inexhaustible theme has been treated again and again, from the standpoint of every religious tradition and in all the principal languages of Asia and Europe.

- Aldous Huxley, *The Perennial Philosophy*

Paraphrasing Hermes who said, “all is above as it is below to make up the miracle of a single thing,” we could say that all is within us as it is outside of us to make up a single reality.

- Pierre Mabilie, *Mirror of the Marvelous*

collective unconscious n: the psychical inheritance of racial experience functionally potential in each individual.

- Webster's Third New International Dictionary

Out-of-body (OOB) perception is a latent faculty of human consciousness - an unusual, albeit universally described phenomenon which is theoretically capable of development in anyone. In the first two articles of this series we compared the out-of-body experiences of Robert A. Monroe with both shamanic and gnostic world-views, showing how they correspond to a common archetype of expanded awareness.

Since OOB awareness is not measurable by scientific methods, we next discussed how any subjective observation must be evaluated to avoid either uncritical acceptance or gratuitous refutation. We concluded that, whether scientifically verifiable or not, the world-wide historical consistency of out-of-body testimony offers overwhelming evidence of a universal human experience - which doesn't make it any easier to evaluate, but does demand that we not dismiss it arbitrarily as a hallucination.

Our last article presented the most plausible hypothesis to be drawn from these data: that our four-dimensional space-time continuum is the integral component of a higher dimensional construct, and that out-of-body perception constitutes the penetration of subjective awareness into this trans-dimensional realm. If true, then logic argues that we should seriously consider the idea of Consciousness itself as a dimensional phenomenon.

Anticipating that some people might regard this exposition as “speculative,” it is time to reinforce our emerging thesis with analogous ideas found in other systems. This is not difficult to do - it has all been described before in the Perennial Philosophy.

The phrase “Perennial Philosophy” refers to a complex of archetypal ideas underlying the esoteric lore of every culture in the world. In its simplest form it describes a “spiritual” (i.e. higher-dimensional) *Primal Cause* which originally emanated and still animates all of reality. Our physical space-time continuum (“All That Is”) emerged from this higher-dimensional source and is continuously being nourished by it. By definition then, every entity in the universe has its origin in this reality and is both an observing component and subjective reflection of the whole of which it is a part. Every projected fragment of the Unity is thus eternal and immortal. According to the Perennial Philosophy, the goal of life for each reincarnating being is to ultimately reunite with the *Primal Cause* which is both our source and our destiny.

These ideas are found in Hinduism, in Buddhism and in Taoism. They are also manifested in the corpus of the Western Mystery Tradition, which includes Hermeticism, the Hebrew Kabbalah, both Pythagorean and Neo-Platonic Greek thought, and of course Gnosticism. You can find its images in all shamanic religions, in Wicca, in Alchemy and in concepts such as the *Dreamtime* upon which Australian Aboriginal cosmology is founded. Analytic (Jungian) Psychology is a Gnostic system, hence a contemporary interpretation of these ancient concepts. Were you to boil all the above systems down to their essence the result would be pure, unadulterated, “Perennial Philosophy.”

The fact that these structures (like out-of-body data itself) are so universal argues that they are cognate with the Objective Psyche, from which subjective awareness emanates. The fact that they are generally regarded in the West as “occult,” “pagan,” “heathen,” “mystical,” or “heretical” suggests Archonic censorship by the world’s Monotheisms. This is because the essential message of the Perennial Philosophy mandates the evolution of consciousness via individual responsibility and freedom of choice - ideas which challenge the control of any centralised authority, be it religious, political or corporate.

It is highly significant that some of the most fundamental insights of quantum physics are symbolically explicit in the Perennial Philosophy. Indeed, this venerable tradition actually propounds an esoteric “Big Bang” theory which was extant thousands of years before the idea was proposed by modern science. Let’s compare their analogous concepts.

The generally accepted “exoteric” theory of Cosmogogenesis offered by science is that it all began with the explosion of a “singularity”:

singularity: 1: Something that is separate or singular: UNIT. *2a:* An unusual manifestation or eccentricity in manner or behavior. *b.* A unique or

remarkable characteristic or development. c. An odd or peculiar feature or characteristic.

- Webster's Third New International Dictionary

Cosmologists interpret the word "singularity" in a special sense which seems to encompass all of the above definitions - i.e., as the "remarkable behavior" of a "single unit" (conceived of as infinite mass compacted into a zero-dimensional point) - which then "explodes":

The evidence suggests that the Universe was born out of a singularity - a point of infinite density occupying zero volume - and that in the first split second the tiny seed containing all the mass and energy in the observable Universe went through a period of exponential expansion, known as inflation.¹

This concept of the universe emanating from an expanding Singularity, or Unit is found in many spiritual traditions world-wide. Here is a version described in the sacred literature of Hinduism:

In the beginning there was Existence alone - One only, without a second. He, the One, thought to himself: Let me be many, let me grow forth. Thus out of himself he projected the universe; and having projected out of himself the universe, he entered into every being. All that is has its self in him alone. Of all things he is the subtle essence. He is the truth. He is the Self. And that, Svetaketu, THAT ART THOU.²

The Taoists (anticipating modern science perhaps) chose to render this archetypal idea in mathematical terms:

Out of Tao, One is born;
Out of One, Two;
Out of Two, Three;
*Out of Three, the created universe.*³

The same idea is found in Pythagorean and Neo-Platonic thought, where the "One" is called the "Monad" (from the Greek *monas*, meaning a unit, or singularity.) Note that the Taoist and Pythagorean concepts of numerical progression emanating from a primordial unit differ only in the detail of "Tao" (Zero?) being the source of the Monad:

[The Pythagoreans] taught that the Monad is the beginning of all things. From the Monad came the "Indefinite Dyad," and from the Dyad the other numbers and geometrical quantities... The Monad in Pythagorean arithmetic was not itself a number, but the source in which the whole nature of all numbers was gathered up and implicit.⁴

This archetypal idea has been stated even more concisely. Here is Irish poet William Butler Yeats, a life-long student of the Western Mystery Tradition:

All things are a single form which has divided and multiplied in time and space.⁵

The essential idea is quite clear: the creation of multiplicity out of unity - *many* things out of *One* thing. (This is indeed the Primal Differentiation: all the questions of philosophy can be traced back to the polarity between unity and multiplicity, objectivity and subjectivity.) The fact that contemporary scientific speculation about the origin of the universe accords with such an ancient pattern is a strong argument for the Objective Psyche being the Monad from which everything originated: where else could these archetypes come from? Jung of course, describes the Big Bang using psychological metaphors:

The alchemist... knew definitely that as part of the whole he had an image of the whole in himself, the "firmament" or "Olympus," as Paracelsus calls it. This interior microcosm was the unwitting object of alchemical research. Today we would call it the collective unconscious, and we would describe it as "objective" because it is identical in all individuals and is therefore one. Out of this universal One there is produced in every individual a subjective consciousness, i.e., the ego.⁶

Actually, the fact that we naively refer to our greater reality as a "universe" harks back to this primordial Singularity, this One from which we emerged. To be semantically precise, we do not perceive *One* thing (a *Universe*) at all - we are the subjective observers of a *multiverse*, an infinity of *many* things. This mandates that for any differentiated being, objectivity is an impossible abstraction. We can *imagine* objectivity, but that is not the same as being able to *perceive* objectively. "God" is our traditionally imagined Objective Observer, so it is a semantic *non sequitur* for any observer but "God" to be able to perceive the multiverse as Universe.

The fact that these constructs emerge into awareness at all is strong evidence that "something in us" remembers that preexistent Monad which held the multiverse within itself. That "something in us," of course, is the "spark," the "chip off the old block," dwelling in the deep unconscious of everyone, that can and does remember the original Unity. What this means is that each of us is a monad (small "m") which is a part, a fragment, of the original Monad (capital "M"). As immortal sparks of the Creator, we are essential participants in the evolution of Divine Consciousness as it contemplates its own hierarchy of self-emanated dimensions. This is one of the fundamental concepts of the Perennial Philosophy.

The monad is frequently described as a "Divine Spark"... Its ray is borne downwards through the various spheres of matter... [to eventually appear] in a causal body as a spirit possessing the aspect of activity... These three lower bodies the mental, the astral, and the physical, constitute the human personality which dies at death and is renewed when the monad, in fulfillment of the process of reincarnation, again manifests itself in these bodies.⁷

The idea expressed above, which we will explore in more detail momentarily, is that when the Singularity exploded, its contents settled into a descending hierarchy of awareness manifesting as *dimensions* containing spiritual, mental, emotional and physical “matter.” Each separate monad is fated to work its way through the entire spectrum, gaining gnosis of the multiverse until it has rectified itself enough to reunite with the Primal Monad from which it emerged.

Crudely, and perhaps irreverently: God blew Himself up so that all His parts could get to know each other and reposition themselves within the Whole from which they were born. It’s a kind of Divine Solipsism in which we are all personified ideas in God’s Mind, trying to (as Paul McCartney sang so poignantly): “get back Homeward.” Stated bluntly, a case could be argued that if the above is true, then “God” (as traditionally imagined) fits the description of a schizophrenic! The Judeo-Christian concept of the Fall of man into a world of sin could be just another way of describing this Primordial Nervous Breakdown.

Creation, the incomprehensible passage from the unmanifested One into the manifest multiplicity of nature, from eternity into time, is not merely the prelude and necessary condition of the Fall: to some extent it is the Fall.⁸

This implies that “God” must remain dissociated, deranged, incomplete, psychotic, insane - at the very least, “scattered” - until every differentiated monad in the Cosmos gets its respective act together. It puts full responsibility on each of us monads to integrate our awareness, in effect: to stop being crazy - a powerful directive, given the contemporary state of the world. This idea is implicit in the Kabbalistic version of the Perennial Philosophy, although of course, it isn’t stated *quite* that starkly!

At opposite poles, both man and God encompass within their being the entire cosmos. However, whereas God contains all by virtue of being its Creator and Initiator in whom everything is rooted and all potency is hidden, man’s role is to complete this process by being the agent through whom all the powers of creation are fully activated and made manifest. What exists seminally in God unfolds and develops in man... To use the neoplatonic formula, the process of creation involves the departure of all from the One and its return to the One, and the crucial turning-point in this cycle takes place within man, at the moment he begins to develop an awareness of his own true essence and yearns to retrace the path from the multiplicity of his nature to the Oneness from which he originated.⁹

In Analytical Psychology, this is called the process of “individuation,” in which the purpose of life is to integrate one’s psychological complexes and eventually unite with the “Self.” (More of this later on.) The movement is from multiplicity (which at its worst is identical with psychosis) to integration, unity, or sanity. Other versions of the Perennial Philosophy refer to the product of this process as “Enlightenment.”

Following this reasoning, one could say that to the extent that we are not enlightened, we are demented or at the very least deluded. Every version of the Perennial Philosophy, from Buddhism through Kabbalah to the Gurdjieffian “Great Work” is based upon this general assumption: we are all incomplete, and the entire meaning of life is to work our way “back Homeward” via any of a number of different paths.

Although these universal postulates can be found in many different systems world-wide, there is one particular assemblage of observations which corresponds almost exactly with the out-of-body cosmology of Robert Monroe. This is the metaphysical system known as Theosophy.

Theosophy has two meanings - generically, it denotes “divine wisdom,” hence could be a synonym for the Perennial Philosophy itself, since they encompass the same ideas. In contemporary usage however, “Theosophy” usually refers to the philosophical-religious system presented to the world in 1875 by Madame H.P. Blavatsky as the doctrine of her newly-founded Theosophical Society.

Blavatsky was one of those flamboyant, “egregious” characters (like Gurdjieff, Crowley, and Castaneda), who seem fated to play defining roles in public perceptions of the esoteric. These people act as objective correlatives for the ideas they espouse, each manifesting some degree of genuine psychic ability, yet inevitably presenting themselves as tricksters. Because they can’t help surrounding themselves with outwardly pointless controversy, their apparent function is to polarise public opinion into true believers and debunkers. (The Mystery they represent evidently demands that this be their role in life!) All “paranormal” phenomena (including the UFO enigma) exhibit this maddening ambiguity. Since all anomalies are rips in the “seems” of illusion, we can regard the dilemma as a *Koan* posed by the Objective Psyche.

At any rate, as one part gifted psychic, one part confidence trickster and two parts psycho-neurotic, Madame Blavatsky introduced the Western world (most of which had never heard of it before) to the Perennial Philosophy. This happened during the era when Darwin’s theory of evolution was ravaging traditional belief systems and disillusioned people were desperately searching for a more “scientific” cosmology than the one found in the Bible. Clearly, the evolution of consciousness explicit in Theosophy reconciled science with religion for many latter-day Victorians.

As the originator of modern Theosophy and cofounder of the Theosophical Society, [Blavatsky] saw her mission as sublimely messianic: to save the world. Theosophy, literally interpreted from the Greek, means divine wisdom or knowledge of God, and, pre-Blavatsky, had been associated with the Christian Gnostics, Hebrew Cabalists and the teachings of Jakob Bohme and Paracelsus. Madame Blavatsky’s Theosophy was nothing less than an attempt to synthesize Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Occultism into a new religion.¹⁰

The continuing controversy over whether or not Blavatsky was a fraud is irrelevant to our discussion because most of the concepts revealed via her often plagiarised writings are pure Perennial Philosophy and, as such, commensurate with a multitude of established sources. For the purposes of this essay, the Theosophical classification of Monroe's *Locales One* and *Two* (which were most accurately portrayed by authors other than Blavatsky) is highly relevant.

THE COSMOS ACCORDING TO THEOSOPHY

C.W. Leadbeater was an early Theosophist and out-of-body adept at least as gifted as Robert Monroe, who also wrote books about his perceptions. A major difference between the two authors is that Leadbeater was initiated by a guru, and described his explorations using traditional Theosophical terminology. Since Monroe was "self-taught" and knew nothing of these categories (at least he never mentions them) it is instructive to compare their respective interpretations of the same phenomena.

Monroe's "rings" or "Belief System Territories" are described in great detail by Leadbeater as "planes" and "subplanes." For example, the lower rings of *Locale-II* are called "the astral plane," an ancient, though perhaps unfortunate label, since even the Theosophists don't seem to like it very much.

The word "astral," starry, is not a very happy one, but it has been used during so many centuries to denote super-physical matter that it would now be difficult to dislodge it. It was probably at first chosen by observers in consequence of the luminous appearance of astral as compared with physical matter.¹¹

In *Far Journeys*, pages 243 to 246, Monroe provides a conceptual map of the rings, describing in general the types of awareness represented therein and the kinds of entities dwelling at each level. Although he does outline a hierarchy of generic environments, it is impossible to total them, since Monroe regarded the rings as virtually infinite in number. Superficially, the subtle planes of Theosophy seem more limited because their tradition confines *Locale-II* to a septenary hierarchy of divisions and subdivisions:

It must be understood that the astral plane has seven subdivisions, each of which has its corresponding degree of materiality and its corresponding condition of matter... The matter of each plane or subplane interpenetrates that of the plane or subplane below it, so that here at the surface of the earth all exist together in the same space.¹²

These seven subdivisions of the astral plane are immediately contiguous to a higher realm, the mental plane, which in turn has its own seven subdivisions. What's important here is not how many levels there are but how Monroe's modern portrayal of them obviously matches the classical description. Unless he's plagiarising, which I sincerely doubt, he is

confirming the multi-dimensional structure of reality as it has been observed for millennia by countless out-of-body observers.

The planes, or rings (regardless of how many subdivisions they contain), constitute a sedimentation of Consciousness mirroring the contents of the Primary Emanation. Our original “Home” lies in an impossibly abstract realm, somewhere above the “spiritual plane,” and we are separated from it by a spectrum of ever coarser “matter” - mental, emotional, etheric and finally physical. In many (not all) traditions, the symbolic assignment of density for each is correlated with *fire* (spiritual or intuitional plane), *air* (mental plane), *water* (emotional plane) and *earth* (physical plane). Thus: the four increasingly dense elements of matter as described by the ancients.

As each differentiated monad descends through these planes it attracts to itself subtle bodies made of the matter comprising each realm. These are often depicted as the “vessels” or “garments” which clothe the divine spark of awareness like a series of increasingly bulky space suits.

While in the act of emanation the divine substance goes forth into vessels, these vessels or garments assume an increasingly less refined existence as the process continues downward. And yet behind these infinite garments there is not a single link in the chain where the substance of [divine essence] does not remain present and immanent.¹³

Hence, we have (at bare minimum) a mental body for the mental realm; an emotional (astral) body for the emotional (astral) realm; and an etheric body which links them to the physical body. In essence, we are spiritual monads *simultaneously* inhabiting at least four bodies in at least three realms of awareness. With clear perception smothered by all these garments it’s understandable why so few of us are able to experience our pure spiritual essence!

Psychological systems derived from the Perennial Philosophy (such as those formulated by Jung and his disciples), don’t specifically postulate “bodies” *per se*, but their basic conceptualisation is clearly analogous:

Our spiritual being, the Self, which is the essential and most real part of us, is concealed, confined and “enveloped” first by the physical body with its sense impressions; then by the multiplicity of the emotions and the different drives (fears, desires, attractions and repulsions); and finally by the restless activity of the mind. The liberation of the consciousness from the entanglements is an indispensable prelude to the revelation of the spiritual center.¹⁴

Although most versions of the Perennial Philosophy describe multiple bodies, there is some difference of opinion about just how many we actually have. The number can range from four to seven or more, and some out-of-body observers, such as William Buhlman, speculate that we may have as many bodies as there are differentiated realms in the multiverse! (As mind-numbing as this concept is, it is consistent with quantum theory which

postulates an infinite number of dimensions or universes.) However, for the purpose of this essay, we will discuss only those vehicles necessary for a comprehension of the general system we're describing.

THE ETHERIC DOUBLE

The so-called etheric double is an energy body which is more or less "hard-wired" into the physical. Although it does dissociate from the physical body during sleep, it cannot travel more than a short distance away from it. It has only a rudimentary awareness, corresponding in some respects to the Kabbalistic concept of the *nefesh*, or "animal soul." The Theosophists describe it thus:

The etheric double... [is] the exact duplicate of the visible body, particle for particle, and the medium through which play all the electrical and vital currents on which the activity of the body depends.¹⁵

Those familiar with computers might regard the etheric double as a kind of "DOS" - the Data Operating System which activates the physical body. Robert Monroe describes his own etheric double this way:

One of the earliest discoveries... was that I had more than one nonphysical body... My physical body appeared to be not one, but two - much as when your vision is slightly impaired by astigmatism... I began to take particular notice of physical reentry and found that I did indeed reenter a second form just prior to the physical body... I could stay in the second body, hovering near the physical, but could move no more than ten or fifteen feet away.¹⁶

Since consciousness cannot function very well in the etheric double, it holds comparatively little interest for us in this discussion. The body that most people experience while in the OOB state of awareness is the so-called astral, or emotional body.

THE ASTRAL BODY

The celebrated astral body is known in Hindu philosophy as both *mayavirupa* ("shining illusory body") and *kamarupa* ("desire body"), and the astral plane itself is called the *Kamaloka*, or "desire world." (Since much of Theosophy is based upon Vedic and Buddhist concepts, its earlier authors often used the terminology of those systems.) This is the body Monroe describes travelling in while visiting the lower rings of *Locale-II* (i.e. *Kamaloka*). As portrayed in our previous articles, it is quintessentially an emotional-desire vehicle - sexuality being perhaps the most compelling force experienced while in this state of awareness. Here is a description of what the astral body of an average person might look like when seen by an out-of-body observer:

When he is asleep a separation has occurred, and we see the physical body - the dense body and the etheric double - lying by themselves on the bed, while the astral body is floating in the air above them. If the person we are

studying is one of mediocre development, the astral body when separated from the physical is the somewhat shapeless mass before described; it cannot go far away from its physical body, it is useless as a vehicle of consciousness, and the man within it is in a very vague and dreamy condition, unaccustomed to act away from his physical vehicle... The whole effect given to the observer is one of sleepiness and vagueness, the astral body lacking all definite activity and floating idly, inchoate, above the sleeping physical form.¹⁷

Here is how an advanced adept, such as Oliver Fox, Robert Monroe or William Buhlman might appear to someone with astral vision:

But if a person be observed who is much more developed, say one who is accustomed to function in the astral world and to use the astral body for that purpose, it will be seen that when the physical body goes to sleep and the astral body slips out of it, we have the man before us in full consciousness; the astral body is clearly outlined and definitely organized, bearing the likeness of the man, and the man is able to use it as a vehicle - a vehicle far more convenient than the physical.

It is significant to observe that few modern out-of-body explorers make further distinctions between their subtle bodies, leaving the impression that the etheric and astral vehicles are all there are. The Theosophists however, have differentiated realms and bodies of ever increasing abstraction. The next level of subtlety is the mental plane, and of course the vehicle used to explore it is referred to as the mental body.

THE MENTAL BODY

The mental body sheathes the astral body in the same way that the astral body sheathes the etheric double, which in turn sheathes the physical body. Indeed, all fit into one another like Chinese balls. They constitute the spectrum of our aura - each body and its perceptual attainments being represented by a range of colours visible to those observers with the ability to see them.

It goes without saying that when consciousness is focused in the physical vessel, none of these subtle bodies feels like a "body" - each is experienced as a *capacity of awareness*: when thinking, we use the mental "body," when feeling, it's the emotional "body." It is only while in the disembodied state that we perceive these functions as differentiated vehicles of perception.

Experienced out-of-body observers are unanimous in saying that the mental body (whether or not they call it that) in the upper rings of *Locale-II* (i.e., the mental plane) is perceived as an ovoid sphere:

[The mental body] does not, like the astral body, become a distinct representation of the man in form and feature when it is working in connection with the astral and physical bodies; it is oval - egg-like - in outline, interpenetrating of course the physical and astral bodies, and

surrounding them with a radiant atmosphere as it develops - becoming, as I said, larger and larger as the intellectual growth increases. Needless to say, this egg-like form becomes a very beautiful and glorious object as the man develops the higher capacities of the mind: it is not visible to astral sight, but is clearly seen by the higher vision which belongs to the world of mind.¹⁸

Everyone from Fox to Buhlman has described this ovoid perceptual sphere, though they seldom differentiate it specifically as a “mental” vehicle. Here’s Fox’s description:

Occasionally I have not been able to see any astral body when I looked for it - no legs, no arms, no body! - an extraordinary sensation - just a consciousness, a man invisible even to himself, passing through busy streets or whizzing through space.¹⁹

Notice how Fox still refers to his body as “astral.” This suggests that one fades into this more subtle vehicle without necessarily being able to feel the change. Monroe, for example, never differentiates beyond the term “second body,” regardless of the realm he’s visiting:

In the early stages of OBE activity, you seem to retain the form of your physical body - head, shoulders, arms, legs, and so on. As you become more familiar with this other state of being, you may become less humanoid in shape. It is similar to gelatin when taken out of the mold. For a short period it retains the form of the mold; then it begins to melt around the edges and finally it becomes a liquid or a blob.²⁰

A Theosophical Initiate might explain that Monroe only noticed that his “Second” body changed when he began visiting the upper rings, which is to say, when he passed from the astral realm into the mental. Monroe himself never makes that differentiation, and he is so adept by now that he takes his egg-shaped spherical body for granted.

Because all of these bodies and their higher-dimensional environments interpenetrate the physical, the illusion is that we are “One.” We experience spacetime as physical monads, as single “vessels” containing relatively integrated sensations, feelings, thoughts and intuitions. However, this conviction of unity is illusory, for the truth is that we are not One at all: we are actually the fragments of a higher Essence, or “Self.” The proper Theosophical term for this transcendental organism is the causal body.

THE CAUSAL BODY

The causal body is the most vitally important, yet probably least understood, concept within the Perennial Philosophy. Without a firm comprehension of what it represents, anyone’s spiritual evolution is severely hampered. The consciousness represented by the causal body is nothing less than our true substance, our “essence,” the source of all our potential. In conception it corresponds exactly to the Jungian Self, as we shall see.

Each causal body is one of the sparks from the original Monad which has descended to the causal plane - that spiritual realm situated immediately above (when visualised three-dimensionally) the rarefied outer rings of the mental plane. (I use three-dimensional terms solely for ease in visualisation - in actuality, all realms interpenetrate.)

For all practical purposes, the causal plane represents the outer limit of “human” functioning. There are dimensions beyond this realm to be sure, but they are too ethereal for pragmatic apprehension at our level. In his last book, **Ultimate Journey**, Robert Monroe penetrated the spaces beyond the rings, but was “sent back” because he wasn’t ready to explore them yet. For now, we will be doing very well indeed if we can learn to orient our awareness to the causal body/Self and attune ourselves to its intentions.

The Perennial Philosophy observes that the soul (spark, monad, Self, or causal body), cannot itself descend lower than the causal plane. Instead it *projects* portions of itself into the denser mental, astral and physical dimensions below it. These salients into spacetime are human beings - each of us is but one projection of our respective causal body. Therefore, objectively imagined, we are not One at all: we are the second-generation “*descend-ents*” of those eternal first-generation monads projected during the Primary Emanation. Every causal body is an immortal reference point existing outside of space and time. This makes us, in essence, one half of a temporary dyad: the whole soul being dimensionally separated for the duration of each spacetime incarnation. The Kabbalah describes it this way:

In substance the souls as such remain above and do not enter into bodies at all but rather radiate sparks of themselves that can be called souls... by analogy only. The true soul hovers over a man, whether from near or afar, and maintains an immediate magic tie with its spark below.²¹

Which is to say: the Self repeatedly projects ego-bodies composed of mental, astral and physical matter into three-dimensional space. According to the Perennial Philosophy, the purpose of these incarnations is to gain experience leading to enlightenment, to ultimate union with the original Monad. Thus, it is not any given ego (“you,” your predecessors, or followers) who reap the full benefits of spacetime incarnation: instead, the experience of each ego-lifetime is absorbed by its causal body after death. Seen in this way, every ego is temporary: i.e., “mortal” - it is the Self, the monad, which is “immortal.” Looked at another way the ego *does* participate in immortality, but only as an organ of the Self, not as the whole entity. (The contrary might be compared to the hand or the foot hallucinating a separate existence from the body.)

Probably because it can contemplate the consequences of its choices in all of the dimensions, some Theosophists refer to the Self as “the Thinker”:

The growth of the permanent body, which, with the divine consciousness, forms the Thinker, is extremely slow. Its technical name is the causal body, because he gathers up within it the results of all experiences, and these act

as causes, moulding future lives. It is the only permanent one among the bodies used during incarnation, the mental, astral and physical bodies being reconstituted for each fresh life; as each perishes in turn, it hands on its harvest to the one above it, and thus all the harvests are finally stored in the permanent body.²²

The spacetime ego's fantasy that it is the centre of the psyche rather than just one of its causal body's many satellites is arguably the greatest misconception a human being can have and the first illusion to be eliminated before meaningful spiritual growth can take place.

Jung observes that the inner Self (causal body) is interpreted by uninitiated awareness as a "god-image." Which is to say: because the naive observer does not recognise this force as a part of his own psychological makeup, he perceives it as a divine personality (a "not me"), existing "outside" of himself - as God, Christ, Mohammed, Buddha, Moloch, whoever. Ironically, we "project" (in the psychological sense of the word) our conception of a supreme being onto that part of ourselves who has *projected us* (in the physical sense of the word) into spacetime!

Unfortunately, when a partial comprehension of the ego's true connection with the Self dawns, it is common for people to hallucinate that "they are God." Because such errors are obviously short-circuits in the individuation process, the phenomenon is a definitive diagnosis of faulty integration, or psychosis. We may be "God," (technically, "a god") at some level, but for all practical purposes these syntheses seldom, if ever, take place in the spacetime dimension and never with the ego as the focal point.

Jung notes that Christ is a common God-image of the Self in Western cultures. If we follow the symbolism of "the Father" as the emanating Monad (God), then "the Son" (Christ) is the projected monad, or Self, and each individual human ego is just one of the Self's projections into the spacetime dimension. Assuming that all higher dimensions are "within" (as described in the fourth article of this series; see *New Dawn* No. 74), then Christ's statement in John 14:20 becomes immediately clear:

On that day you will understand that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you.

This image of dimensional interpenetration makes little sense except within the cosmology of the Perennial Philosophy. Viewed this way, most of the divine entities worshipped by the world's religions are symbols emerging from the Objective Psyche which enable an uninitiated awareness to visualise its own inner essence.

Intellectually the self is no more than a psychological concept, a construct that serves to express an unknowable essence which we cannot grasp as such, since by definition it transcends our powers of comprehension. It might equally well be called the "God within us." The beginnings of our

whole psychic life seem to be inextricably rooted in this point, and all our highest and ultimate purposes seem to be striving towards it.²³

Nevertheless, because each Self is but one of many evolving monads on the causal plane, *it is essential to remember that it is by definition incomplete and has some distance to go yet before it can reunite with its own Source!* Although seemingly “godlike” from the uninitiated ego’s point of view, the Self is hardly a fully integrated entity - a subtle fact seldom understood even by psychologists.

From the unconscious emerges the ego - a fruit grown by the Self specifically for the furtherance of its own evolution. Implicit is the concept that the Self is not yet perfect, is indeed itself evolving, and though it possesses powers which the ego can hardly conceive of, it is not “God” in the sense of a totally perfected being.²⁴

If every earthbound human ego is but one of many projections of their own *incomplete*, discarnate, “god-image” Selves (each undergoing a multi-dimensional individuation process of its own), then we have a credible structure for understanding analogous “projections” of “gods,” “demons” and (especially) “archons” from hyperspace. It’s also a plausible context for evaluating virtually any psychic phenomenon. Is it possible that all those entities hiding behind the world’s “God-Images” aren’t quite as perfect as we imagine them to be?

FOOTNOTES:

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24. Neumann, Erich (1970). **The Origins and History of Consciousness**, Bollingen Series XLII, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ. (The page number of this quotation was not recorded, but I'm 90% certain it came from this source.)

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