

SOME NOTES ON THE ETHERS

Solar Systemic Ether and Cosmic Ether

In the study of the etheric envelope and prana lies the possibility of understanding the process of manifestation in the solar system. Etheric matter corresponds to worlds 43–46; and gross physical matter, to worlds 47–49. The study of recurring analogies may clarify many conditions.

For our study of the etheric envelope we apply the 1–4 and 5–7 division. We notice at once that, of the seven main subdivisions of physical matter, 49:5-7 (the lower three molecular kinds) form the organism and 49:1-4 (the atomic kind and the higher three molecular kinds) form the etheric envelope.

The middle molecular kind, 49:4, is of crucial importance. In the majority of people, the bulk of the matter of their etheric envelopes, and the major centres in particular, consist of this molecular kind. Etherization, the process starting with man's shifting of his focus of physical attention from the gross physical (49:5-7) to the etheric (49:1-4), must begin with his acquisition of objective consciousness in 49:4.

There is a very interesting analogy with the conditions just mentioned in the relation between the three worlds of man, 47–49, and the worlds of the planetary hierarchy, 43–46. Because from the cosmic viewpoint, the worlds of the solar system, 43–49, may be looked upon as one single world, the cosmic physical world. Correspondingly, worlds 36–42 are the cosmic emotional world; worlds 29–35, the cosmic causal-mental world, etc. For the necessary distinction of terms we now call world 49 the solar systemic physical world. Just as the solar systemic physical world (49) has seven solar systemic principal subdivisions (one atomic kind and six molecular kinds):

- 49:1 atomic
- 49:2 subatomic
- 49:3 superetheric
- 49:4 etheric
- 49:5 gaseous
- 49:6 liquid
- 49:7 solid,

so the cosmic physical world (43–49) has its seven cosmic principal subdivisions:

- 43 atomic
- 44 subatomic
- 45 superetheric
- 46 etheric
- 47 gaseous
- 48 liquid
- 49 solid.

The worlds of man, 47–49, thus are the cosmic analogy with the gross physical world visible to man, 49:5-7, whereas the worlds of the planetary hierarchy cosmically correspond to the etheric world, 49:1-4. If we understand this, many analogies at once are obvious to us. Just a few of them will be cited in the following. Man has objective consciousness in 49:5-7, only subjective consciousness in 49:1-4. On the whole, the human normal individual has consciousness only in 47–49, scarcely any consciousness in 43–46. It is particularly important to understand these analogies to understand consciousness development, human and superhuman.

The Fourth Solar Systemic Ether (49:4)

The fourth ether (49:4) is the ether which the seventh department (seventh ray) uses as a medium. It is the ether of which the majority of the etheric envelopes of men are made. It is the ether where the “devas of the shadows”, those violet devas which are closely concerned with the physical evolution of man, have their principal influence. It is the ether where, in the future, the human and the deva evolutions will touch. From the fourth ether the organisms are created. In the fourth ether occurs causalization in physical respect; only when the animal monad about to causalize is fully conscious in 49:4, is it possible to coordinate the physical, emotional, and mental consciousness of the monad so that the animal is able to causalize. The fourth ether has to be completely mastered and controlled by mankind in this eon; every human individual has to attain this mastery before the end of this eon. The fourth ether is the sphere where the first two initiations are undergone. The fourth ether holds the key to the mastering of gross physical matter (49:5-7). When the individual acquires objective consciousness in this ether, he begins to be able to control his emotional envelope and to pass into it and dwell in it increasingly often. When the individual can feel and see the fourth ether, the atomic film of the etheric envelope can begin to dissolve.

The Essential World, the Fourth Cosmic Ether (46)

The essential world, 46, is the great meeting-ground where groups of different kind meet to form greater communities.

The essential world is characterized in a peculiar way by the violet colour, and the seventh ray has a special relationship to the essential world. The violet colour marks the end of a cycle and the beginning of a new one.

The human evolution and the deva evolution are partially united in world 46, in such a manner that groups made up of both human and deva monads are formed there. Earlier, at certain fixed points, they temporarily approximated each other. In world 46, however, definite and permanent alliances are formed.

The Connection between the Fourth Systemic Ether (49:4) and the Fourth Cosmic Ether (46)

Simultaneously as the lowest ether (49:4) is now being investigated by scientists, world 46 is gradually becoming known to those advanced beings who are individually able to cognize their place in the planetary collective being. The energies of world 46 are beginning to make themselves felt in the causal envelopes of men simultaneously as the energies of fourth ether, 49:4, are starting to be utilized by man for mechanical purposes, for transportation, for illumination, and for healing. These four domains of utilization of etheric energy are actually the working out in the physical world of the corresponding utilization of essential (46) electromagnetic force.

General about the Development of Consciousness

Being impelled by lower consciousness, higher consciousness is activated, is roused from the slumber of potentiality. Being impelled by consciousness activity in higher emotionality and higher mentality, causal consciousness is activated.

Each atomic kind is the carrier of a unique and characteristic kind of consciousness. Thus for example emotional consciousness is completely different from both physical and mental consciousness. The successively lower molecular kinds within an atomic kind imply successive reductions, restrictions, or limitations of the consciousness of the atomic kind.

A lower kind of consciousness cannot ascertain or apprehend a higher kind, let alone

understand its nature. A higher kind of consciousness both understands a lower kind and can control it, directly or indirectly.

You cannot understand a higher kind of consciousness until you have started activating it. People can understand causal (47:2,3) and essential (46:5-7) consciousness only after they have started activating those kinds of consciousness. The individual's greater or lesser understanding of them is dependent on his greater or lesser activation of them. He must misunderstand all descriptions of them until he has activated those higher kinds of consciousness.

The consciousness most important to human beings is self-consciousness. Self-consciousness is an expression of causal consciousness (47:1-3), is possible only in causal consciousness. Mere mental consciousness (47:4-7) does not suffice for self-consciousness. All kinds of consciousness higher than causal are self-consciousness too. A fully developed causal self has permanent self-consciousness, whereas a mental self has only sporadic self-consciousness. Of course, all higher selves – essential selves (46-selves), superessential selves (45-selves), etc. – have permanent self-consciousness and in addition possess a group consciousness that expands in each higher molecular kind in succession so as to embrace more and more individuals.

The four higher solar systemic worlds (43–46) are the cosmic etheric worlds, the energy worlds of the solar system. Permanent self-consciousness is possible in them, because self-consciousness requires a higher energy level in the monads. Self-consciousness is nevertheless possible in causal consciousness, which is explained by the fact that this kind of consciousness is so close to the cosmic etheric energy worlds (43–46) that energy penetrates down from them to the higher three layers of the causal-mental world, that is to say: the causal world. This fact can be illustrated by the simile of a two-storey house in which only the upper storey is heated during winter. In the cold lower storey it is nevertheless possible to perceive warmth close to the ceiling but not further down. Similarly, the causal world but not lower worlds can be sufficiently energized by the four cosmic etheric worlds.

The process of evolution may also be described as a continuous involution of 46, 45, 44, and 43 matter, cosmic etheric matter, into the individual's etheric envelope. From the physical standpoint, this involution enables the individual to take the five initiations and, in the fifth initiation, to become an esoteric master, a 45-self. The crises accompanying the initiations may also be described as conflicts between cosmic etheric matter penetrating and previous matter of the etheric envelope. The rod of initiation administered by the initiator, the hierophant, at initiation is designed to effectuate the fixation of the involved cosmic ethers so that the initiate will be able to retain them in his etheric envelope. Upon the conclusion of the incarnation, this involved etheric matter is not dissolved along with the etheric envelope, but accompanies the monad to be involved anew in the new etheric envelope of the monad's next incarnation.

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