

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE DODECAHEDRON?

In geometry, the only regular polyhedra are called the “Platonic solids”. They are five in number: the tetrahedron (which has four exactly equal faces), the cube (six faces), the octahedron (eight faces), the dodecahedron (twelve faces), and the icosahedron (twenty faces). Rightly they should be called the “Pythagorean solids”, since Platon¹ had been taught them in the Pythagorean school. If to these five the point is added as the beginning and the sphere as the end, the septenary is obtained. Their order then is: (1) the point, (2) the tetrahedron, (3) the cube, (4) the octahedron, (5) the dodecahedron, (6) the icosahedron, and (7) the sphere. The point represents the number one of each septenary, or the beginning of manifestation; the sphere, the number seven, or the conclusion of manifestation; in our solar system, the point represents the manifestal world (world 43); the sphere, the physical world (world 49).

This gives us a first answer to the question, “What is the meaning of the dodecahedron?” It means the causal–mental world, the fifth world of the solar system. It also means the causal envelope, man’s one immortal envelope, his soul, his higher light body, the abode of immortality, and that which makes him self-conscious. It means particularly the centre of the causal envelope. This centre is usually called the “twelve-petalled lotus”, but we Pythagoreans also call it the dodecahedron, Greek for “having twelve sides” or “having twelve faces”. Each side, or face, of the dodecahedron is a regular pentagon. Also in this fact the dodecahedron proves to be the five, belong to the fifth world, be connected with man’s fifth envelope; moreover, with the fifth law of life, the law of destiny, which in the lives of men is executed by the Augoeides, who are said to belong to the fifth creative hierarchy. Of course, the dodecahedron is especially related to the fifth eon, when 60 per cent of mankind will succeed in acquiring at least subjective causal consciousness, the eon in which the Augoeides will rise to their full power (*Cosmic Intelligence*, 11.13.2).

The centre of the causal envelope is the vehicle of twelve essential qualities which the monad must develop to be able to pass to the fifth natural kingdom – the five once again. Laurency gives those qualities the following names: I – trust in life, II – trust in self, III – obedience to law, IV – uprightness, V – impersonality, VI – will to sacrifice, VII – faithfulness, VIII – reticence, IX – joy in life, X – purposefulness, XI – wisdom, XII – unity. It is emphasized that these names are more allusions than exhaustive definitions. The qualities in question comprise much more than what may be arrived at by comparison with mere human expressions or correspondences. To reach a preliminary understanding of these qualities one should carefully study and meditate on the additional information about them given by Laurency, for example in his essay, “The Conception of Right” in *Knowledge of Life One*.

When once you have acquired a preliminary understanding of these qualities one by one, you should try to apprehend them in their mutual relations. These relations appear better and clearer to your thought when presented three-dimensionally rather than two-dimensionally (in diagrams) and one-dimensionally (in text). This three-dimensional presentation is the dodecahedron and nothing else.

In the dodecahedron, each face is limited by five others. These five faces represent those five qualities which are particularly closely related to the sixth, enclosed face. As said, two of the essential qualities are wisdom and unity. These two can be said to sum up essentiality to an enhanced degree; indeed, essentiality is also called unity–wisdom. That face of the dodecahedron which represents the quality of unity is surrounded by five other faces, which therefore represent five qualities that have a particularly close relation to the unity aspect of essentiality. The corresponding is true of that face of the dodecahedron which represents the quality of wisdom; it too is surrounded by five faces, corresponding to qualities that are

¹ Platon is the original Greek form of this philosopher’s name. Plato is the later Latin form.

particularly related to wisdom.

The five qualities most closely related to unity are trust in life, uprightness, impersonality, will to sacrifice, and faithfulness. And the five qualities most closely related to wisdom are trust in self, obedience to law, reticence, joy in life, and purposefulness.

Thus the two faces representing the qualities of unity and wisdom will be furthest away from each other or, expressed differently, will form two opposite poles. This is also how unity and wisdom should be understood: as balancing and complementing each other.

Also the ten remaining qualities form such pairs of poles balancing and complementing each other, that is to say, trust in life and joy in life, trust in self and impersonality, obedience to law and will to sacrifice, uprightness and purposefulness, faithfulness and reticence. You will easily see the importance of this balancing, if you consider the fact that the true joy in life is possible only when it is based on trust in life, which is trust in the “truly living ones”, those who are on the “inside of life”, that is, our elder brothers in worlds 46–1, and their perfect organization; that uprightness cannot exist without understanding of the purpose of life, that is, consciousness development; that trust in self easily goes to extremes and turns into self-assertion if the impersonal attitude has not been acquired; that will to sacrifice easily leads to self-effacement if it is not balanced by understanding of the laws of life.

All these relations and connections of course are exceedingly suitable as subjects of meditation. In such meditation of course many more relations appear. For example, there appears an additional kind of connection between those three faces of the dodecahedron which are united in each angle (there are twenty such ones) and so the qualities represented by them; moreover, between three such qualities and the three other represented by those three faces which are united in the straight opposite angle; these six qualities are indeed three pairs of such qualities as appear as the poles of each other, which was described above. One example of this is given in the three qualities of wisdom, purposefulness, and trust in self, the faces of which are united in an angle. Directly opposite to this angle is that angle where the faces corresponding to unity, uprightness, and impersonality are united.

It is to be foreseen that as increasing numbers of esoteric students prefer Pythagorean hylozoics to the Theosophical manners of presentation and conception, just as people generally prefer electric light to paraffine lamps and tallow candles, the image of the lotus inspired by theosophy will in time be abandoned in favour of meditation on the dodecahedron as affording a more complete understanding of the centre of the causal envelope and its qualitative significance as vehicle of the twelve essential qualities.

L.A. March 20, 2012.