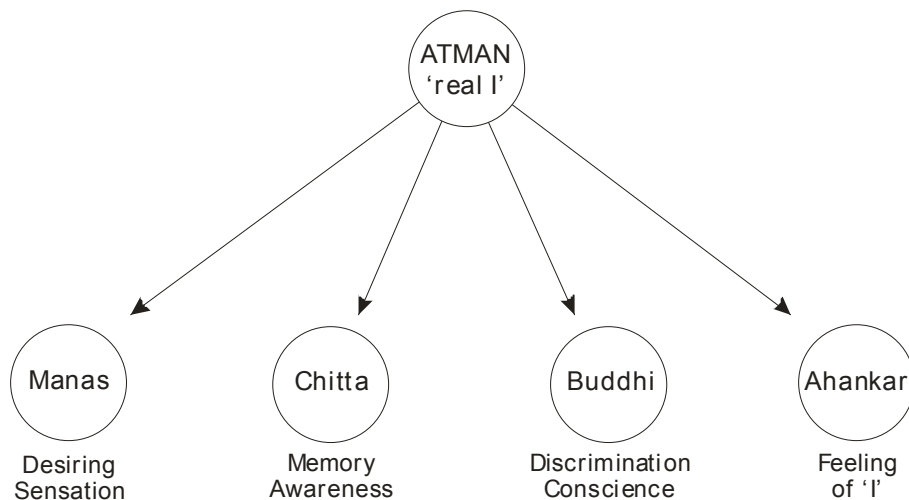


POINTS OF VIEW

Maps of the territory of the human endowment have different scales and perspectives and the terrain will appear differently depending on our point of view — even on the same map viewed from our individual positions. The simple picture the System provides of horse, cart, driver and Master is essentially a point of view from where we find ourselves, the nearest objects appearing the largest.

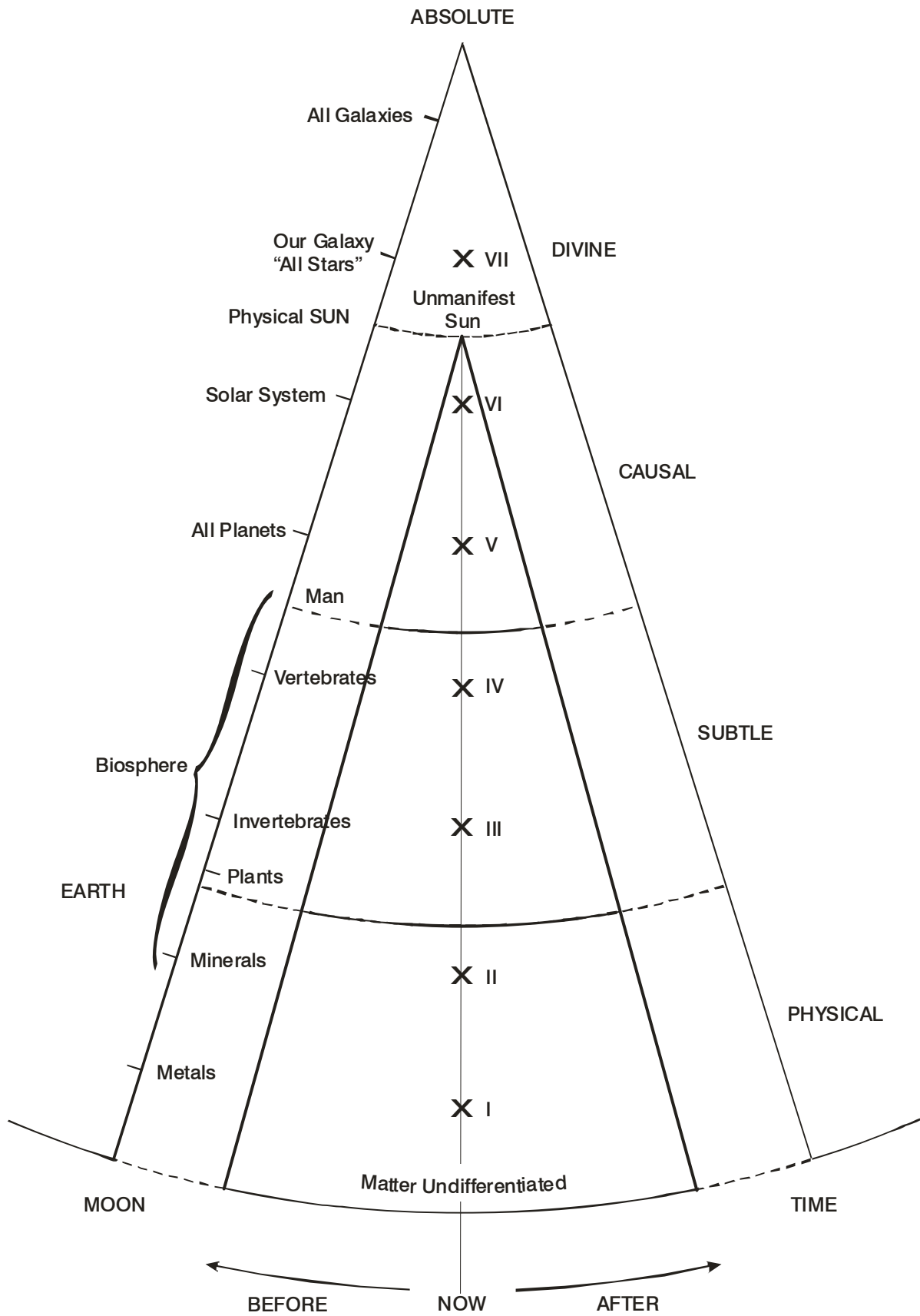
Carnal Body	Natural or 'Planetary' Body	Spiritual Body	Divine Body
CARRIAGE	HORSE	DRIVER (mind)	MASTER (real 'I' – Will)
Physical Body	Astral Body	Mental Body	Causal Body

The Advaita view is perhaps more 'top down' in that it shows how the pure 'light' or consciousness of the Atman, 'Real I' is focused by the different aspects of the human mind, like a series of lenses. These focus and colour the pure light to illuminate all the different fields of human experience. It is said these functions manifest only one at a time, their constant variety being provided by the interplay of the laws of three and seven.



All four of these lenses or functions has a wide range of field and a whole spectrum of 'colour' within its particular tone. In a practical fashion the Advaita system divides the function of these four parts of the mind into two possible states. Pure and impure. The impure state arises when we forget that all we have comes from the Atman. The key to the purity is in the function of Buddhi, discrimination or Conscience. If Buddhi remains awake it can learn to direct Manas to collect only impressions that are useful to the Atman; to remind the small ego that it is itself a spark of the divine.

Here again is that triad of refinement which produces neutralizing force, Sattva, whose attributes are light, clarity and integration.



The Western system attempts to unite everything we know about the Universe and ourselves all in one language and in a single diagram !

This whole picture shows the entire creation in relation to a central spindle of pure consciousness that exists eternally in the present moment of 'Now'. The further from the centre our individual consciousness retreats, the more it becomes obscured by the veils or sheaths of successive layers of materiality. At each level the number of 'laws' created by the greater and greater complexity of the interaction of the laws of three and seven produces the increasing materiality of our 'experience'.

Pure consciousness, to some degree, is available in every moment of 'Now' but that degree is dependent upon how deeply into this present moment we allow ourselves to be drawn to rest.

On this larger diagram we see that the highest level of consciousness available to human beings is related to 'the unmanifest Sun'. Perhaps this mysterious idea can be approached like this:

Imagine one is standing upon a distant point in our universe. The light of the stars shines out from the surrounding endless darkness of space. One such star is our Sun within whose field of light the planets revolve and from which light the whole of our material creation is spun and maintained. And yet the light itself is not ultimate; something other than the light creates, sustains and finally dissolves the light and all its creations. This 'something other' is completely unknown to us and yet lies within and throughout everything, containing also the darkness in which the light shines.

We can only approach this idea in terms of mystery, the Holy Ghost, the unmanifest Sun, of universal Love beyond all time and space. Physical light is finite, relative to the lifetime of the being from which it shines, whether it be a glowworm or a stellar supernova, but the source of the light of the soul is unmanifest, concealed within a sheath of mystery beyond any concept of experience.

Similarly we individuals too are points of light in a surrounding darkness; our own light illuminating, indeed creating the world we perceive.

Our conviction that 'experience' is the only reality is a large component of our ordinary point of view. When we fully understand that 'reality' can be found only in the present it begs the question as to whether any attempt to avoid an experience, or to seek out some new experience is actually a denial of that present moment. 'Experience' can be seen as the surface tension of 'now' — and that surface is a boundary between two worlds.

When the feeling of 'I' becomes identified with any point of the material creation it forgets its real nature — which is as one with 'Real I' at the centre of every moment — and the infinite possibilities of every 'now' are washed away by the endless waves of time. To sense a new dimension we have to take a direction at right angles to the one we are in.

Silence and stillness are two of the co-ordinates of that new direction.

Only the central spindle of consciousness at the heart of the present moment is an objective reality. All else, the whole multifarious world of creation, is an illusion, the world of Maya. To the delirious and thirsty traveller—and we are all one of those—the mirage of the oasis is entirely real, the only hope of life. But as the Shankaracharya says:

“Unreal though a mirage is, yet we cannot dispel it by any physical means. That is, we cannot dig it out with a spade or blow it away with artillery. As it is due to certain conditions of light it goes away only when those conditions have gone. Similarly, the mirage of the "world" is due to certain conditions of ignorance, and it goes away only when that ignorance is gone.” (1.8.1970)

The word ‘ignorance’ is a translation of the Sanskrit ‘Avidya’ which more exactly means ‘not-knowing’. Faulty knowledge, rather than true knowledge. All the levels shown on the diagram are in fact levels of ‘not-knowing’, however compelling our ‘experience’. But Maya, like everything else, is subject to the three forces and can be ‘pure’ or ‘impure’.

HH: Maya as described is certainly pure and impure in our experience. The pure Maya is that which is favourable, useful to the Atman, and impure is that which is not favourable, not useful. What is useful is defined as that which ends in goodness and happiness and Consciousness. Whatever ends in the opposite of these is unfavourable. (10.3.1970)

And our consciousness can become attracted to and take on the properties of any point in the creation. The sense of ‘I’ leaps in and takes the moment to itself, “I am this that I am experiencing”, so that the ‘Real I’ at the heart of the moment remains hidden and unmanifested.

H.H. Although individuals do feel a separate identity, in reality there is only one identity, and that is the Param-Atman. In our Antahkarana, the inner body, and in the subtle body, we have this individual Being, and because of ignorance and other influences it seems to feel a difference from the Param-Atman, and that is why it wants to unite with the Param-Atman. For this unity of the individual and the Universal it seems as if the effort is being made by the individual himself. The individual, if indeed he does anything at all, only removes the impediments which block his vision of his unity with the Param-Atman. In fact, the movement is only from the Param-Atman's side. It is Param-Atman who reaches out to the individual Himself.

Love or devotion should be developed by removing the impediments and that, of course, is possible through meditation and the attention which one brings into one's life; and this, in a way, removes this separate identity which is composed of our name, our form and our so called nature. All these things have got to be given up for the real Unity or for the real Love towards the Param-Atman. Some effort is, of course, made by the individual, but he makes little effort. The greater effort is made by the Param-Atman. Just as a small being or a child has small legs, so he can take only small steps but the grown man can walk swiftly and cover more ground. The same applies to the individual who is a very small being, and the Param-Atman which has no limit. This is how the unity of the individual and the Param-Atman should be.

(3.10.1972)

A sense of love for that ‘Real I’ in this present moment is the third required co-ordinate of a new dimension.

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