

OUR WORLD

Part 3 The esoteric view

On the same scale as last week's paper the Western System describes the known universe as three descending octaves of energy and matter, from Absolute All to Absolute Nothing. This 'Ray of Creation' depicts the universe as arising from the devolution of 'the will of the Absolute' (pure consciousness) into matter—quite the opposite to the current scientific view that consciousness arises from the evolution of matter¹. The progression of the Ray of Creation is one of increasing density and decreasing energy; at each succeeding level there is a doubling of the number of laws that determine the nature of that level. Each level is created and maintained by its own unique combination of laws, some laws arising at its own level together with all the laws from the levels above it.

In this manner, starting from the bottom, each level is wholly contained by the one above it, like a series of Russian dolls. This is the nature of holism. Each level is a complete whole for itself, but also forms an intrinsic part of the next complete whole above it. The next level above is always more expansive, more energetic, with fewer constraints, more freedom. And of course the process may be infinite.

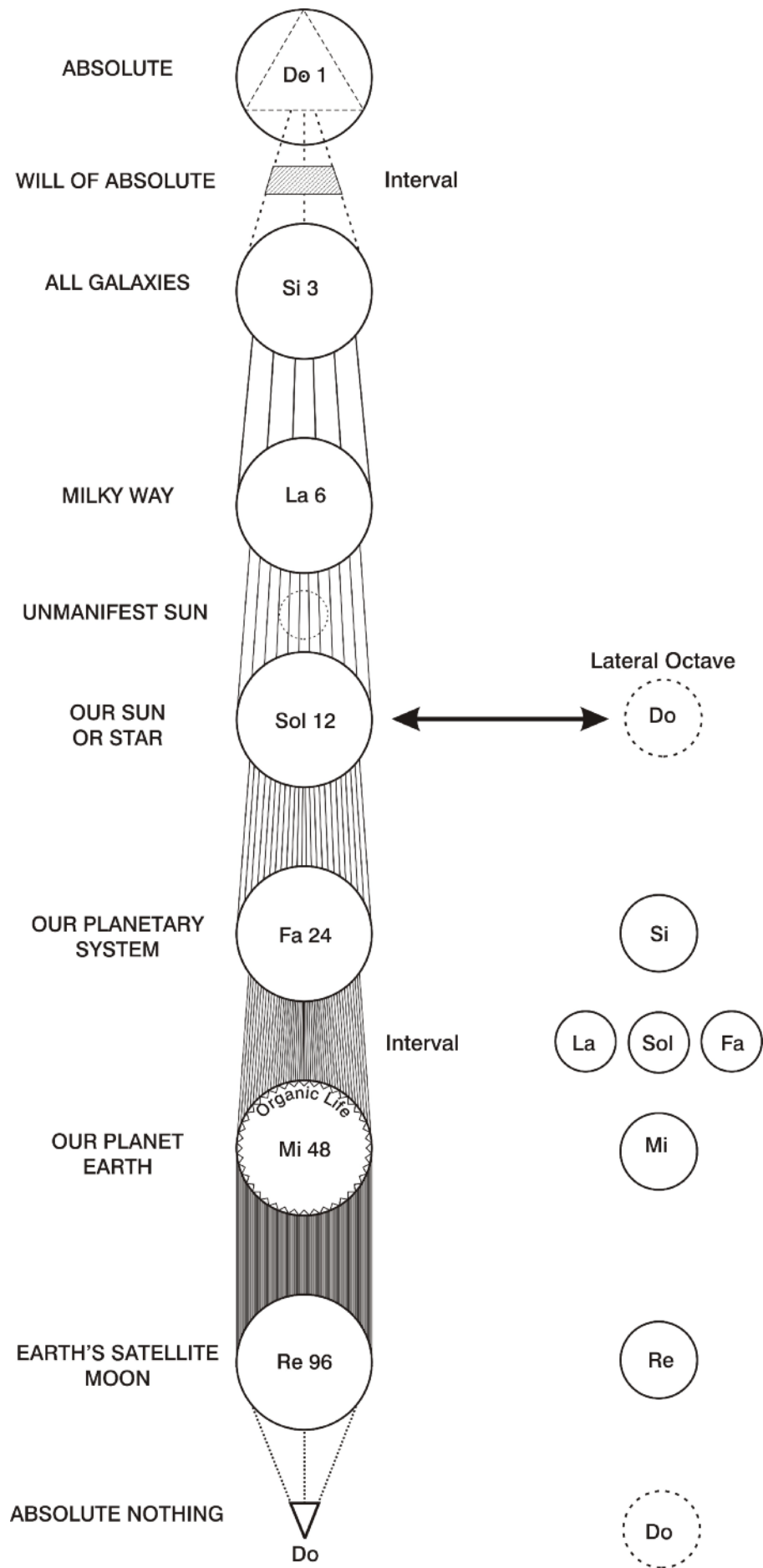
A well-known scientist (some say it was Bertrand Russell) once gave a public lecture on astronomy. He described how the earth orbits around the sun and how the sun, in turn, orbits around the center of a vast collection of stars called our galaxy. At the end of the lecture, a little old lady at the back of the room got up and said: "What you have told us is rubbish. The world is really a flat plate supported on the back of a giant elephant." The scientist gave a superior smile before replying, "But, Madam, what is the *elephant* standing on?" "You're very clever, young man, very clever," said the old lady. "But the *elephant* is standing on a giant turtle—and after that it's turtles all the way down!"

'Turtles all the way down' is quite a good way to represent what the System and the Advaita teaching both suggest, that the whole thing, this whole diagram, may represent just one holon, one atom in an infinite scale of universes.

But it is also useful to remember that as human beings we can only define the form of the laws we observe around us with our own human mechanism of perception—our own form of consciousness is inevitably a construction of our own particular level of being. So, time, space, cause and effect, even good and evil, may manifest as something quite different at another level.

And yet one of the most positive aspects of this Ray of Creation is that it shows that the three original laws of the Absolute itself, the Holy Trinity, are intrinsic to and available at every level, even as far as the lowest of the low.

If we want this knowledge to be actually useful we have to understand that this is also a psychological diagram. If we want to know ourselves, or to increase our being, it is clearly not enough to study just the physical body and the physical universe. To demonstrate the essential relationships of the octave the diagram shows only the physical level, but the System teaches that each whole entity shown on the diagram, each individual body, planet, sun or universe has the same three essential levels of being—physical, subtle and causal.



All three of these 'bodies' are subject to their own forms of the same laws that manifest the whole scheme. Thus, for instance, the mind and the heart are also subject to their own susceptibility to another form of the law of gravity; both can be 'light' or 'heavy' and so come to occupy a position on the Ray anywhere between the Moon and the Sun. But before proceeding to explore *that* we need to understand how the System accords with the Anthropic Principle—that human consciousness is an integral part of the whole scheme of creation.

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The Ray of Creation shows that the manifestation of organic life on earth, including the human species as its highest product, is an essential part of the whole cosmic scheme. Organic life, as a whole 'being', is said to be a necessary and vital mechanism to transmit certain influences, in both directions, between the Sun, the Planets and the Moon—just as our physical *organs* are required to receive, transmute and transmit the substances necessary for our existence. This essential function is produced by what is termed the 'Lateral Octave'—a subsidiary octave which starts in the Sun. (The human species is too small to be shown on the big Ray of Creation, but it can itself be seen to be—as a whole, remembering the principle of 'holism' above—one of the vital 'organs' that constitute Organic life.) .

Three notes, La-Sol-Fa of this lateral octave, are what constitute organic life, all living things, and these three notes together provide the extra force that the Absolute requires to fill the interval between Mi and Fa in the great octave of the Ray of Creation.

The lateral octave is describing the mechanism of the metabolism of food of some vast solar being. Basic materials are refined to provide fuel for higher functions and higher functions invest the whole being with life and consciousness. The System proposes that the human species, apparently a unique manifestation of the power of self-consciousness in the solar system, forms an intrinsic part of the same faculty of self-consciousness of a far greater 'being'.

Thus it is the psychological and spiritual aspects of this eternal cosmic scheme which can provide us with tangible practical help and the knowledge of what we really are, or could be—for it is this lateral octave from the Sun to the Moon that provides the framework for all our human possibilities. One ancient expression of this idea is Jacob's ladder:

And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.

And he dreamed, and beheld a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. *(Genesis 28. 11-16)*

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¹We might in fact reconcile these two opposing views by imagining them as co-existent, as two halves of a cyclical, circular process. The principle of a series of mutually enfolded 'wholes' demands that the laws of one level are manifested differently at a higher level. Thus, the linear time perceived at one level, becomes the third spatial dimension when perceived at the level above.

We can conceive a level at which all the apparent movement and progress throughout the temporal and spatial dimensions that, from our human point of view, we perceive in the universe, is in fact co-existent. Consciousness devolving into matter and matter being refined into consciousness simultaneously.