

OUR PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE

The diagram in the last paper showed all the different kinds of object in the universe in order of size from fundamental particles to galaxies, with humans in the middle. There was a warning attached to it that we do not see the universe or our position in it objectively. We can see this more clearly by taking a closer look at our position in relation to our more immediate environment. This can be done by using the Ray of Creation from the System, which at one level is equivalent to the Big Bang theory of the universe, starting with the creation of the whole of the matter of the universe from nothing, expansion, condensation into galaxies, formation of stars and then planets and moons.

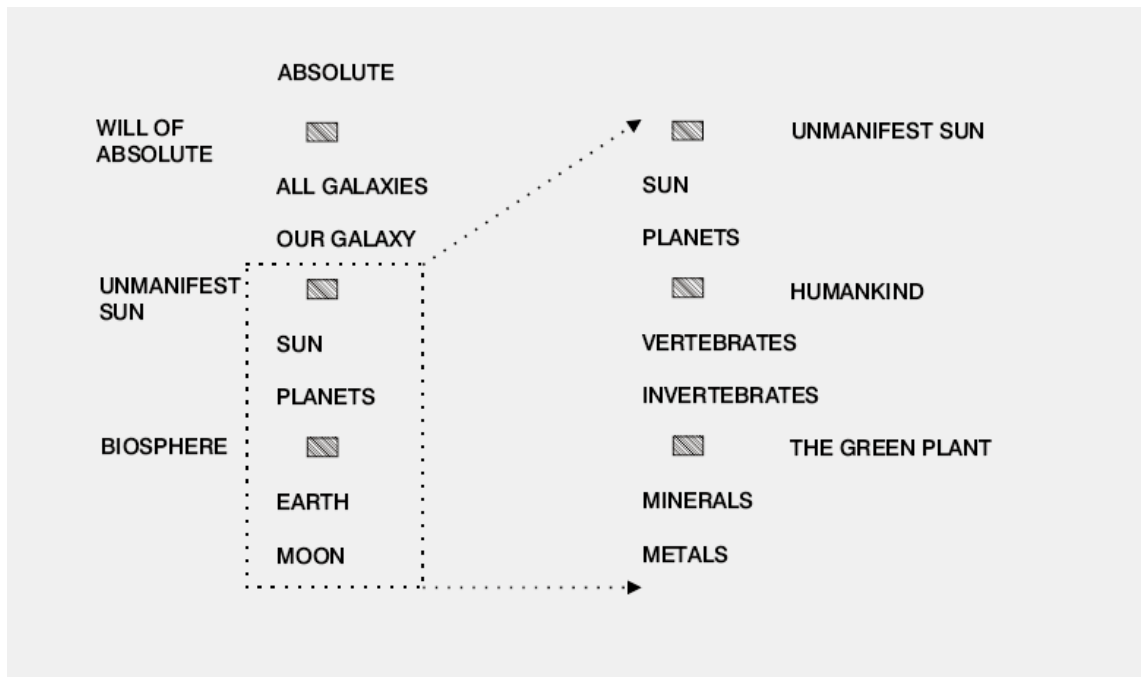


Fig. 1

The Ray of Creation shows our sector of the universe, our galaxy, our sun, the planets, the earth, our moon – all the readily observable objects, as in the top half of the diagram last week, as on the left side of Figure 1. The scale is so large that the human race does not appear on it at all - only as part of the whole of organic life, the biosphere. If we want to see the human race we have to zoom in, and we end up with our solar system (Figure 1, right). This diagram is an enlargement of the section roughly between the sun and the moon, and it starts to show constituents of the biosphere and the planet. Humankind then appears as a species, maybe representing the most highly evolved species.

It is worth repeating that this is just our sector of the universe. On other planets in other solar systems, things will be much the same, and indeed astronomers have recently detected hundreds of other planets (exoplanets) circling other stars in our galaxy and even one in another galaxy. It may be only a matter of time before life is detected on one of these exoplanets. It is just possible that we could communicate with intelligent beings on another exoplanet, but it's on the cards that there may be no-one within range. For most purposes we are literally limited to the solar system.

To return to the left side of Figure 1, the hatched boxes represent intervals in octaves (unusually there are three shown rather than the normal two). Creation proceeds largely from top to bottom, starting from the Absolute or Param Atman, but it is not automatic: there are intervals – critical places or times – where something else is needed. The first interval shown is said to be filled by the Will of the Absolute (though a cosmologist would hastily substitute ‘random fluctuations in the quantum vacuum’). The second interval is said to be filled by the ‘unmanifest sun’, and the role of that becomes a little clearer in the next diagram. The third interval is filled by the presence of organic life on earth in the biosphere, which is said to trap influences from other planets. On the enlarged scale of Figure 1 (right side), the human race fills (or could fill) the second interval. The third interval is filled by ‘The Green Plant’, which gave the biosphere its oxygen-rich atmosphere.

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It will be remembered that we can show an octave in an enneagram, and Figure 2 shows the two linear drawings of Figure 1 drawn as circles. The outer circle is the world of the observable universe. The middle circle is the world in which humans operate. Note the alignment of the intervals. Note that the Param Atman, the Absolute creates the world of humankind as much as it creates the world.

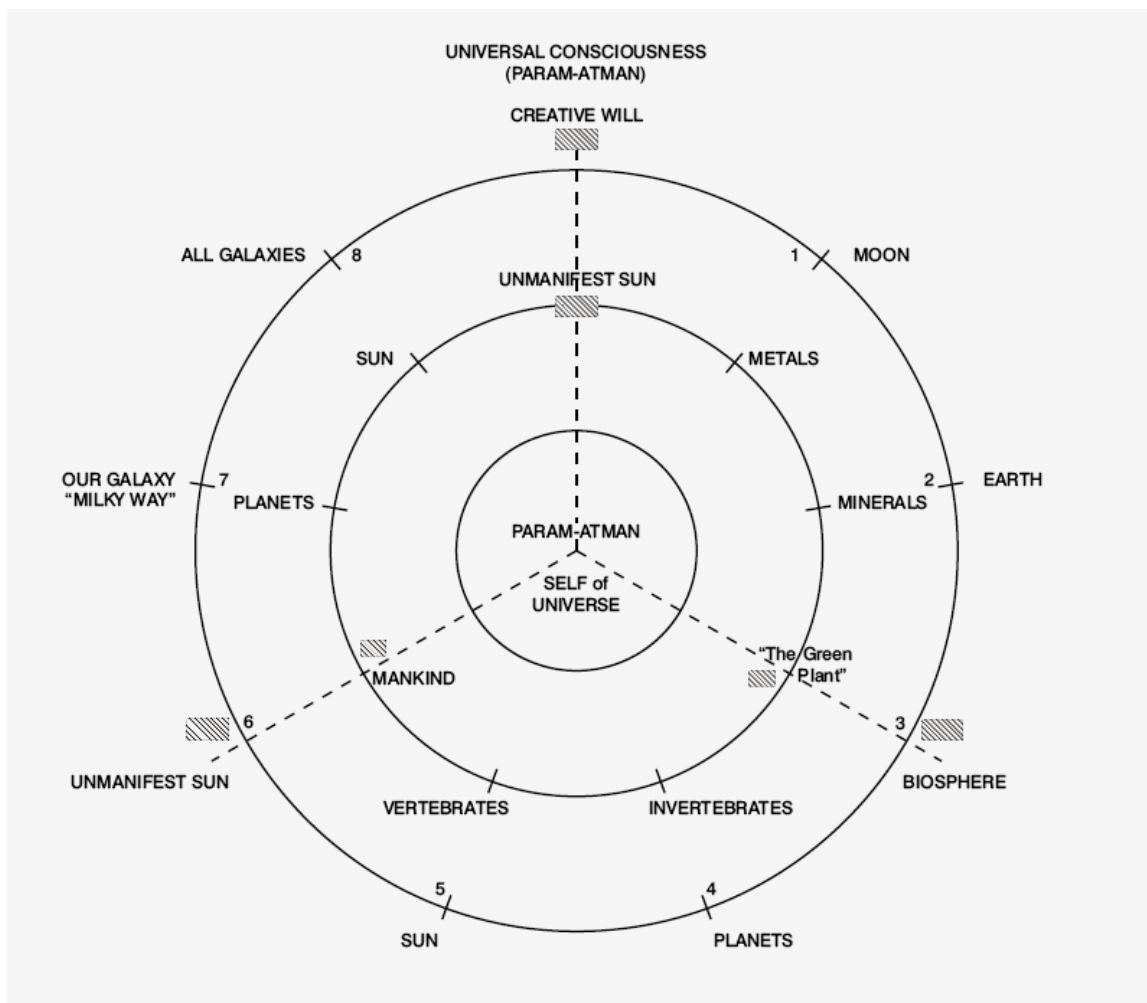


Fig. 2

In one of his papers in 1975 Dr Roles was at pains to point out that the fallacious point of view as denoted by the horizontal line in the diagram in the last paper arises because we fail to see things from the point of view of the Param Atman. It is hard to escape appreciating the position of the Param Atman in Figure 2: it is in the centre and it starts the creation by pouring energy along the vertical dotted line. In one sense this diagram is all we need to know about the world; if we view it correctly it is as objective, as close to how the Param Atman sees it, as we are likely to get. It would be worthwhile at this stage to revise the reasons for using a circular diagram, and then to ask questions of Figure 2.

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This widening of the point of view by considering the universe helps us to wake up, but it is easy for it to remain an intellectual exercise. The idea that the Param Atman is in everything is well put by Ernest Levy, a slave worker in seven Nazi camps, and finally liberated by Allied Forces from the last one, Belsen. He wrote:

When people ask me where God was in Belsen, I say he was down in the dust with me. As the psalmists say 'I am one with you in trouble'. People ask me, 'What then is God'. My reply is 'God is part of us. He is the imperceptible in our existence, the spiritual dimension in us, expressing Himself through our minds". [*Times* 5.11.09, obituary].

But the Param Atman *is* perceptible, and Dr Roles was perhaps trying to tell us that success in remembering the Param Atman comes not from an intellectual reminder, but from summoning up the feeling that we are being watched by the kindest, most forgiving, most loving, wisest being in the world. This being looks out of our eyes if we allow it to, and sees the world with complete understanding and compassion.

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